

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER: THE INTERWAR GERMAN AND JAPANESE MASS
MEDIA IN THE MAKING OF THE AXIS

Ricky W. Law

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Approved By:

Dr. Christopher R. Browning

Dr. W. Miles Fletcher III

Dr. Konrad H. Jarausch

Dr. Daniel V. Botsman

Dr. Dominic M. Sachsenmaier

Dr. Cemil Aydin

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ABSTRACT

RICKY W. LAW: Knowledge Is Power: The Interwar German and Japanese Mass Media in the Making of the Axis
(Under the direction of Christopher R. Browning and W. Miles Fletcher III)

This dissertation studies the historical impact of civil society on international relations by illuminating the process through which interwar Germany and Japan came to build an alliance in the 1930s. Specifically, it examines how opinion-makers in each country used the mass media to transform the Tokyo-Berlin Axis from an idea into reality. Contrary to conventional views that saw the German-Japanese alliance as the culmination of the long-term political and economic developments of both countries, the dissertation argues that the erosion of democracy in both interwar Japan and Germany prompted German and Japanese pundits to begin agitating for closer ties. Drawing on their firsthand experience abroad and influential positions in the media, German and Japanese commentators molded the image of each other in ways powerful enough to shape policies of the state. Using newspapers, films, pamphlets, lectures, books, and language textbooks as sources, my research has revealed that interwar Japanese observers idealized Germany as a model of science and order, while German area-specialists relied on outdated stereotypes of geisha and samurai to portray Japan.

The project makes three contributions to our understanding of the history of Germany, Japan, and international relations. First, it highlights the importance of perceptions in the management of foreign affairs. It argues that, despite publicized campaigns to bolster cross-cultural dialogue, Japan and Germany allied not so much with each other but with

romanticized imaginations of each other propagated in the media. These mutual fantasies were powerful enough to transcend the problem of race, which otherwise would have prevented the two xenophobic regimes from forging a bond. Second, the dissertation stresses the legacy of democracy in the 1920s. This period of liberalization, albeit brief, created an opening for citizens to voice their opinions and participate in politics that neither Nazi Germany nor militarist Japan could shut completely. Even in the 1930s, individuals and organizations not associated with the state still found room to steer foreign policy through the media. Third, this revelation sheds light on the role of information in the interplay between society and state. My dissertation points out that, although diplomacy had of course long been guarded as a prerogative of the government, the advent of the mass media empowered opinion-makers to pursue their own foreign-policy goals with clear effect on the state's decision-making. Indeed, whether in the democratic 1920s or the authoritarian 1930s, those who had access to more knowledge also had access to more state power.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| AEPM | Allgemeiner Evangelisch-Protestantischer Missionsverein |
| <i>Akahata</i> | <i>Akahata higōhō jidai no Nihon kyōsantō chūō kikanishi</i> 『赤旗 非合法時代の日本共産党中央機関紙』 |
| AO | Auslands-Organisation der NSDAP |
| APA | Aussenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP |
| <i>Asahi</i> | <i>Tōkyō Asahi Shinbun</i> 『東京朝日新聞』 |
| BA | Bundesarchiv Berlin |
| BAK | Bundesarchiv Koblenz |
| BAM | Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv |
| DAAD | Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst |
| DAI | Deutsches Ausland-Institut |
| DAP | Deutsche Arbeiterpartei |
| DB | Deutsche Bücherei |
| DJAG | Deutsch-Japanische Arbeitsgemeinschaft |
| DJG | Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft |
| DNB | Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro |
| DNVP | Deutschnationale Volkspartei |
| DTW | Deulig-Tonwoche |
| e. V. | eingetragener Verein |
| G | <i>Germania: Zeitung für das deutsche Volk</i> |
| IPA | International Phonetic Alphabet |
| <i>Japan Times</i> | <i>The Japan Times and Mail</i> |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| <i>Kokumin</i> | <i>Kokumin Shinbun</i> 『國民新聞』 |
| KPD | Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands |
| KZ | <i>Neue Preußische Kreuz-Zeitung</i> |
| NHK | Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai 日本放送協会 |
| NSDAP | Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei |
| NSFP | Nationalsozialistische Freiheitspartei |
| NSKK | Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrkorps |
| PA | Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts |
| OAG | Ostasiatische Gesellschaft (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens) |
| OAM | Ostasienmission |
| RF | <i>Die Rote Fahne: Zentralorgan der kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands</i> |
| RPA | Rassenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP |
| SA | Sturmabteilung |
| SPD | Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands |
| SS | Schutzstaffel |
| Ufa | Universum Film-AG |
| UL | Universitätsarchiv Leipzig |
| UTW | Ufa-Tonwoche |
| V | <i>Vorwärts: Berliner Volksblatt, Zentralorgan der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands</i> |
| VB | <i>Völkischer Beobachter: Kampfblatt der nationalsozialistischen Bewegung Großdeutschlands</i> |
| VZ | <i>Vossische Zeitung: Berlinische Zeitung von Staats- und gelehrten Sachen</i> |
| <i>Yomiuri</i> | <i>Yomiuri Shinbun</i> 『讀賣新聞』 |

INTRODUCTION

IN THE BEGINNING WERE THE WORDS

How can two islands almost nine-thousand kilometers apart be bridged?

With paper and just enough ink for a hyphen.

Consider the hyphen for a moment. At first glance, in the clan of punctuations the hyphen seems a dull character without much personality. It lacks the finality of a period or the versatility of a comma. It exhibits none of the inquisitiveness of a question mark or the emotion of an exclamation mark. It does not possess the ability of abridgement of ellipses or that of insertion of brackets. It can neither raise expectations like a colon nor even cause confusion of use like a semicolon. It has not been honored with a hand gesture like quotation marks, but it was dishonored by Woodrow Wilson as “the most un-American thing in the world” and by Winston Churchill as “a blemish, to be avoided wherever possible.”¹ It has been nearly disowned as “the pest of the punctuation family.”²

Yet on a second thought the hyphen commands strengths matched by few, if any, of its relatives. It can not only merge distinct peoples into one identity (Anglo-Saxon), but also divide “one nation indivisible” into subgroups (hyphenated Americans). It lets modern scholars fuse two ancient cultures into a single phenomenon (Greco-Roman) and knitted together a dual monarchy as a unified ancien régime (Austria-Hungary). It can articulate the

¹ Quoted in Lynne Truss, *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation* (New York: Gotham Books, 2004), 168.

² Sophie C. Hadida, *Your Telltale English*, rev. ed. (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1942), 133. Quoted in Bryan A. Garner, *Garner’s Modern American Usage*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 679.

nuances of a “special relationship” across an ocean (Anglo-American), as well as the soured comradeship stretching along a border (Sino-Soviet). It can moreover elide dogmatic differences (Judeo-Christian) or invent ideological affinities (Islamofascism). It, uniquely among punctuations, even had a “war” fought over itself (Czechoslovakia versus Czechoslovakia).³

That a dissertation on the relations between Germany and Japan in the interwar era begins with a discussion on a punctuation mark may at first glance appear to digress, but it does not. The hyphen’s great power to connect disparate entities demands that it be used with great responsibility. Indeed, the hyphen in the phrase “Japanese-German” is at once convenient and dangerous.⁴ It enables writers and readers alike to traverse mentally—literally at one stroke—the great chasms separating the two countries. On the one hand, it effortlessly summarizes the bilateral links in multiple areas (personal, commercial, scholarly, political, etc.), but on the other, it nonchalantly masks the difficulty, uncertainty, contradiction, and transformation of German-Japanese interactions from the 1920s to the 1940s. One needs to look no further than the problems of physical and temporal distances inherent to the Tokyo-Berlin Axis: The hyphen, exactly one-millimeter long on this page, condenses the eight-thousand-nine-hundred-and-twenty-nine-point-six kilometers of the Earth dividing the two islands, Honmaru 本丸 and Spreeinsel, in the centers of the respective capitals.⁵ Bear in mind

³ “The Cold War and the Hyphen War,” *The New York Times*, 6 May 1991.

⁴ Some grammarians, especially those trained in British English, prefer the en dash (–) for describing relations between two equal parties, as in “husband–wife communication.” The en dash also implies subtexts of movement (Berlin–Baghdad Express) or tension (UNC defeated Duke 100–0), qualities that certainly recommend the en dash as the sign to link interwar Germany and Japan. Nevertheless, the principal meaning of such a symbol must be “between,” which the en dash does not convey, and thus I choose the hyphen. See, *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 333.

⁵ Interestingly, there was a royal palace on each of the island. The Honmaru, surrounded by a ring of moats, is an artificial island where the Edo Castle once stood. Today the Honmaru is a park open to the public, while the

that this span measures only how a crow would fly between the two points; human travelers would have to schlep for far longer. While it takes us less than a second to type a hyphen, in the interwar years one would have to spend anywhere from forty-six hours (on an experimental long-distance flight) to one-hundred-and-two hours (on a one-time Zeppelin voyage) to at least ten days (by rail) to two weeks (with Lufthansa) to almost a month (by sea) to cross the eight time zones to and from Germany and Japan.

In spite of the real, significant barriers, physical or intangible, standing between the two countries, interwar Japan and Germany somehow chose each other as the comrade-in-arms for the wars to determine their destinies for years to come. In the mid-1930s, the two governments faced the same dilemma posed at the beginning of this Introduction, namely, how could they bind their faraway lands together in a meaningful way? The answer they arrived at, as it turned out, mirrored the one furnished above—with paper and a bit more ink. In late 1936 the two regimes concluded the Anti-Comintern Pact and thereby embarked on the twisted road to collaboration that terminated at the end of World War II.

How did Germany and Japan come see each other as a suitable partner? Hitherto scholars have attempted to answer the question by successively employing methodologies derived from political, social, economic, and cultural history. Moreover, since the bonds between the two countries ultimately materialized as agreements promising diplomatic or military mutual assistance in the late 1930s and 1940s, researchers have trained much of their attention to examining Japanese-German interactions in the narrow confines of a diplomatic-military context between 1936 and 1945. Yet these previous approaches do not fully explain

imperial residence is located on a neighboring island within the castle grounds. The Spreeinsel is a natural island in the Spree River where a palace of some sorts had stood for centuries. The last was the Prussian and then Imperial City Palace of the Kaiser. It survived World War II but not the East German regime, which demolished it in 1950 and replaced it with the so-called Palace of the Republic. That in turn was torn down after German reunification to make way for a reconstruction of the old palace.

the factors influencing the development within the bilateral relations, especially since much of the scholarship focuses on the consequences and mechanics of the alliance rather than the causes that led to the rapprochement. This dissertation thus argues that the history of interwar German-Japanese relations must be treated as intellectual history as well, as the story of a figment of imagination that grew from the confines of a small circle of opinion makers to the adopted policy of two nation-states.

The History of Japanese-German Relations, 1914–1945

If we are to understand and explain the making of the Berlin-Tokyo Axis, an overview of the interplay between Japan and Germany from just before the First World War to the end of the Second is needed to provide context and background information. On the eve of the Great War the two states maintained formal, correct ties, but improving mutual relations hardly occupied the top priority in their foreign-affairs agendas. Germany was far more concerned with its security in continental Europe, while for Japan the alliance with Britain anchored its diplomacy.⁶ Nor did the Japanese military unduly favor Germany in its procurement of weapons. In fact, the competition between British and German suppliers for contracts was so heated that it led to the Siemens Scandal that toppled a Japanese cabinet in 1914. Likewise, the interactions between the populations were marked by friendly appreciation rather than an overt preference for the other country. True, many Japanese studied in Germany, but even more went to America. Similarly, the German expatriate

⁶ In the early 1910s, some leaders in the Japanese military and bureaucracy did toy with the idea of collaborating with Germany or Russia, but their schemes had not gone beyond the discussion stage by the outbreak of World War I, after which Japan quickly delivered an ultimatum to Germany. For more on pro-German Japanese statesmen, see Frederick R. Dickinson, *War and National Reinvention: Japan in the Great War, 1914–1919* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

community in Japan was dwarfed by the English-speaking ones.⁷ In short, Japan treated Germany as but one among several Western nations, while Germany, to the extent that it thought of Japan at all, saw the country within the context of the “Far East.”

Only days after the Great War broke out in Europe in August 1914, Japan declared war on Germany in accordance with the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Japan expelled many of its resident Germans and seized their properties, hunted for the German East Asia Squadron, and attacked German possessions in the Asia-Pacific region. With little bloodshed it conquered some of the German Pacific colonies and the stronghold of Tsingtau (Qingdao) in China. The German prisoners of war, many of whom had only recently been deported from Japan, were treated humanely and shipped back to Japan for internment in camps. Later in the war, the Japanese navy also dispatched units to the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea to guard the sealanes against German and Austro-Hungarian submarines and raiders. Meanwhile Germany, desperate to resume unrestricted submarine warfare in the Atlantic despite American warnings, concocted a plan in early 1917 to keep the United States out of the war by proposing a partnership with Mexico. The resultant Zimmerman Telegraph, notorious for the outrageous scheme, contained an equally fantastic suggestion to invite Japan to the alliance. What negligible chance of the plot ever succeeding was definitely killed when British intelligence officers deciphered and published the note.

Japan’s contributions to the Allied victory earned it a seat at the negotiating table at Versailles in 1919. Japan received as spoils a handful of German U-boats and minor surface vessels, in addition to a tiny portion of the reparations levied on Germany. Far more

⁷ In the interwar years, the number of Japanese in Germany seldom exceeded one thousand, while more than one hundred thousand Japanese nationals were in the United States, many of course as emigrants. Meanwhile, the German expatriate colony never exceeded two thousand persons, and it was never larger than either the British or American one. See, Naikaku tōkeikyoku 内閣統計局, ed., *Nihon teikoku tōkei nenkan* 『日本帝國統計年鑑』 (Tokyo: Tōkyō tōkei kyōkai 東京統計協會, 1919–1937).

consequentially, the Japanese conquest and control of the Marshall, Mariana, Caroline, and Palau Islands were sanctioned as mandates of the League of Nations. The treaty also transferred to Japan Germany's former concessions in China, even though China had joined the Allies in 1917 with the expectation of abolishing those very privileges. As a result, China refused to sign the treaty, opting instead to end its hostilities with Germany independently.

With the ratification of Versailles in 1920, German-Japanese diplomacy was nominally restored, though substantive Japanese-German relations took much longer to rehabilitate. The only instance of cooperation came about accidentally, as Japanese troops in Siberia and German *Freikorps* militiamen in the Baltic both combated the Red Army. Otherwise, one could hardly speak of any official bilateral collaboration, since Germany and Japan had other, more urgent foreign-policy objectives. The Weimar Republic struggled in its nascent years just to survive, and whatever diplomatic capital it could spare was spent on softening the blows of Versailles, so that bettering its ties with distant Japan would at most amount to an afterthought. Moreover, Germany found a willing partner in China that also resented Versailles and the victors.⁸ Ironically, the loss of colonies gave Germany a moral advantage in China vis-à-vis those powers that kept their concessions and made it politically possible for the Chinese Republican government to hire German military help for training and equipping its army. The two countries, both short on cash, also developed a mutually beneficial trade based on barter. Meanwhile, Japan channeled its diplomatic energy to multilateral organizations like the League of Nations and agreements like the Nine-Power Treaty, and focused its attention on managing the all-important relations with China and the

⁸ William C. Kirby, *Germany and Republican China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984).

United States.⁹ As a matter of fact, Japanese-German ties occupied such low priority that it took the two sides until 1927 to conclude a new treaty of commerce and navigation to replace the one nullified by war in 1914.

In this vacuum of official attention, then, the task of maintaining bilateral links fell mostly onto those outside of government. Only a few months after the war ended, in 1919, Japanese academics and merchants were already returning to Germany to continue their studies or explore commercial opportunities. At the same time, many of the released German POWs in Japan resumed their previous positions of influence in academia and business in the country. Although few Germans could afford to visit Japan, those who did, like Nobel laureates Fritz Haber and Albert Einstein, were received warmly and spoke well of Japan upon their return. Haber in particular became a vocal, active advocate for closer German cooperation with Japan. Even the German ambassador, Wilhelm Solf, in Japan from 1920 to 1928, concentrated much of his attention not on diplomacy but on cultural activities; with his participation or encouragement several bi-national associations were founded in both countries. Moreover, the 1920s saw the birth of popular international tourism, facilitated by the reopening of the Trans-Siberian Railway and abundant capacities on ocean liners. One also got a glimpse of the advancement in transportation technologies when in 1929 the airship *Graf Zeppelin* sailed nonstop from Germany to Japan.

The outbreak of the world economic crisis the same year marked a turning point in interwar Japanese-German relations. The international order in which Germany and Japan had sought to integrate themselves started to disintegrate. Most damaging were the withdrawal of foreign capital from Germany and the imposition of high tariffs and trade

⁹ Thomas W. Burkman, *Japan and the League of Nations: Empire and World Order, 1914–1938* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008); and, Ian Hill Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy in the Interwar Period* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2002).

barriers by other countries to shut out cheap Japanese goods. Squabbling politicians in both Germany and Japan seemed incapable of meeting the challenges of the exceptional times, and thus radical ideas gained a wider following. In particular, the emergence of Hitler and Nazism caught the imagination of a number of Japanese opinion makers, who began in the early 1930s to call in the mass media for stronger bonds with Germany. At the same time in Germany, the rise of Hitler gave an opening to loyally Nazi but amateurish “diplomats” or self-styled “foreign-policy experts” who held the unorthodox position of favoring Japan, in contradiction to the established policy of cultivating China.

Notwithstanding the more fertile conditions for rapprochement, the partnership did not come early or easily. In one of its last diplomatic acts, in 1932 the Weimar Republic took part in compiling the Lytton Report for the League of Nations that denounced the Japanese separation of Manchuria from China and led Japan to walk out of the organization.¹⁰ In addition, once in power Hitler had to consolidate his position in Germany and in Europe, and in the first years of his regime the Foreign and War Ministries remained largely in the hands of the pro-China traditionalists. Most importantly, he very much preferred an alliance with Britain to one with Japan. Only after an arrangement with Britain no longer seemed likely did Hitler agree to allow Joachim von Ribbentrop to pursue in earnest, behind the Foreign Ministry, working with Japan.¹¹ In Japan, the Foreign Ministry likewise held reservations about the international repercussions of an agreement with Nazi Germany, supported most ardently by the army officer Ōshima Hiroshi 大島浩. Yet by the mid-1930s Japan had few

¹⁰ For more on the League’s role in attempting to mediate the Sino-Japanese conflict, see Christopher Thorne, *The Limits of Foreign Policy: The West, the League and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1931–1933* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1973).

¹¹ John P. Fox, *Germany and the Far Eastern Crisis 1931–1938: A Study in Diplomacy and Ideology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

options left in the international arena. Its war in China and withdrawal from the League alienated the liberal democratic West, and its internal suppression of communists antagonized the Soviet Union. Lastly, the Foreign Ministry and civilian rule in general were undermined by a series of coups and assassinations perpetrated by radicalized officers. The convergence of these factors finally allowed the two regimes to come together, resulting in the Anti-Comintern Pact signed in November 1936.

The pact, seemingly a high point in bilateral ties, in fact reflected the uneasy nature of Japanese-German diplomacy. It was not meant to be an exclusive marriage of the two sides; instead, Britain, Poland, and China were all invited to join. Moreover, neither Germany nor Japan was prepared to confront the Soviet Union openly, so the Comintern was chosen as a proxy, least-offensive boogeyman—never mind that the communist movements in both countries were effectively destroyed and thus rendered the phrase, “anti-Comintern,” meaningless.¹² In other words, the pact in some ways represented the lowest common denominator that Germany and Japan could agree on, while risking angering the fewest number of other nations. Therefore, some in Germany fantasized eventually including Britain in the arrangement or dreamed that Germany might continue working with both China and Japan. Meanwhile Japan still attempted to negotiate with the Soviet Union over the issue of sharing fisheries off the coast of maritime Russia. All these illusions of course came to naught, thanks to the Anti-Comintern Pact.¹³

¹² In an official statement the Japanese Foreign Ministry mentioned its concern regarding the spread of communist activities in China as a motive for the pact. It remained unexplained, however, what legitimized Japanese intervention in China’s internal affairs. On the contrary, the Chinese Nationalist government had succeeded in forcing the Chinese Communist forces to flee far inland (the celebrated “Long March”). It was the steady Japanese incursions into China that compelled the Nationalists to strike a truce with the Communists to form a united anti-Japanese front.

¹³ For more on the negotiations leading to the pact and its aftermath, see Gerhard L. Weinberg, *Hitler’s Foreign Policy 1933–1939: The Road to World War II* (New York: Enigma Books, 2010), 263–70.

The treaty did give heart to those pundits in the mass media who had agitated for closer cooperation and now churned out even more self-fulfilling prophecies promoting and celebrating bilateral bonds. A flurry of propagandistic pronouncements, high-profile visits, and official exchanges followed the pact in the next couple of years. Indeed, in November 1938, two years to the date of the pact, Germany and Japan signed an agreement to facilitate and encourage cultural interactions. The anniversary also coincided with the technological feat of a German aircraft flying from Berlin to Tokyo within forty-eight hours with only three refueling stops, though ominously it crash-landed in the Philippines on its return leg.

The events preceding the outbreak of World War II in Europe in 1939 almost led to a breaking point in Japanese-German relations. Germany did not inform Japan that it intended to risk a general war with Britain and France by launching a local one against Poland. Adding great insult to injury, and in violation of a secret protocol of the Anti-Comintern Pact, in late August 1939 Germany also concluded the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, at the very same time when Japanese soldiers were dying in a disastrous war with the Red Army on the border between Mongolia and Manchuria. Germany's about-face in the non-aggression pact, along with the Soviet rout of Japanese forces in Manchuria, toppled a prime minister in Japan, undercut the pro-German, anti-Soviet faction in the government and the army, and advanced the navy's agenda of targeting European possessions in Asia.

Ultimately, the tide of war in Europe kept afloat the prospect of German-Japanese cooperation. By September 1940, Germany had conquered the Netherlands and France, and seemed on the verge of invading Britain itself. Japan saw a golden opportunity to take over the orphaned Dutch and French colonies in Asia, and actually successfully browbeat Vichy France into accepting the Japanese occupation of northern French Indochina. In the same

month Germany, Japan, and Italy forged the Tripartite Pact, an ostensibly defensive treaty for mutual military assistance. Tokyo, taking a cue from Berlin, also signed a non-aggression pact with Moscow in April 1941 to secure its continental Asian front.

Yet two months later, Germany invaded the Soviet Union, having again kept its plans hidden from Japan. The terms of the Tripartite Pact did not dictate that Japan join the war, and indeed Japan maintained its neutrality, having resolved to embark on its southward advance into Southeast Asia. Most crucially for German-Japanese ties, the attack on the Soviet Union severed the last and most reliable link, the Trans-Siberian Railway, between the two countries. The railroad had hitherto ferried people and goods between the ends of the Axis, but from June 1941 onward Berlin and Tokyo would have to depend on the few lucky blockade runners that managed to evade the Royal Navy. The seas were made even more hazardous for the Axis when in December Japan returned Germany's favor by attacking Pearl Harbor and the European colonies in Asia without giving prior notice to its allies. The Tripartite Pact did not mandate that Germany open hostilities against America, but Hitler had responded to enquiries by Japanese diplomats by assuring them that he would support it in a hypothetical conflict with the United States, and he kept his words by declaring war a few days after Pearl Harbor.

Now that Japan and Germany were fighting mostly overlapping enemies, they might at last collaborate in military matters. Nevertheless, in 1942, the Axis partners devoted almost all their efforts to conducting their parallel wars. Japan diligently observed its neutrality toward the Soviet Union, bending over as far backwards as refraining from attacking ships carrying American Lend-Lease materials to Vladivostok.¹⁴ Meanwhile, Germany engaged the United States in the Atlantic largely in the context of destroying

¹⁴ Many of the vessels were American-built but sailed under the Soviet flag and crewed by Soviet seamen.

supplies for Britain and the Soviet Union. Germany did send some auxiliary cruisers and submarines to the Indian Ocean with Japanese consent, but they were not tasked with helping the Japanese war effort per se. Rather, they operated there to cut off shipments bound for Britain from India and Australia.¹⁵ Not until January 1943 did Japan and Germany conclude an economic agreement to formalize the exchange of technology and materials, well after it had become all but impossible to uphold regular traffic between the two countries.

The immutable fact remained that no number of pacts, treaties, or propaganda, that is, words on paper, could shrink the vast distance separating Germany and Japan even by one centimeter. Traffic on land was ruled out; grand visions of the two armies converging in India never came close to reality. Just one roundtrip flight between Europe (from the Eastern Front) and East Asia was undertaken—by an Italian crew in an Italian aircraft in 1942. Germany had planned a few more such stunts, but Japan demurred because it did not want to risk violating Soviet air space.¹⁶ Some blockade runners slipped supplies into German-controlled ports, but these possibilities dried up as the Allies gained superiority in the seas. The only transportation option remaining was ultra-long-range submarines. A small number of them managed to complete the voyage between the bases in occupied France and the occupied East Indies. They carried from Europe to Asia blueprints and parts of advanced weapons, and from Asia to Europe raw materials like rubber. The voyages took three months each way, demanded heroic efforts from the crews, and became increasingly dangerous as the Allies perfected submarine-hunting technologies and tactics. Yet the amount of goods successfully transported paled against the mountains of stuff shipped from the Arsenal of

¹⁵ Paul Schmalenbach, *German Raiders: A History of Auxiliary Cruisers of the German Navy, 1895–1945* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1979).

¹⁶ See Peter Herde, *Der Japanflug: Planungen und Verwirklichung einer Flugverbindung zwischen den Achsenmächten und Japan 1942–1945* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000).

Democracy to its allies. Even one Allied convoy would have carried more war materials than all the Axis cargo submarines put together. Ultimately, even the airwaves and word of mouth were rendered unsafe. Allied code-breakers deciphered the messages sent from Ambassador Ōshima in Berlin to Tokyo.¹⁷ In Japan, the celebrated German communist spymaster Richard Sorge collected and relayed confidential intelligence to Moscow, including the crucial Japanese decision not to attack the Soviet Union that allowed Stalin to concentrate his forces against Germany.¹⁸ In short, the Berlin-Tokyo Axis lived by words and died by words.¹⁹

The Historiography of Interwar German-Japanese Relations

An international alliance as unusual as that between Japan and Germany has naturally garnered interest and scrutiny from contemporary observers and posterior scholars alike. Almost as soon as the Anti-Comintern Pact was signed, some foreign commentators began to portray the alliance as little more than a marriage of convenience or an exhibit for Machiavellian *Realpolitik*, with both countries distrustful of each other and scheming to benefit from mutual exploitation. For example, the English author Freda Utley, still

¹⁷ Carl Boyd, *Hitler's Japanese Confidant: General Ōshima Hiroshi and MAGIC Intelligence, 1941–1945* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993).

¹⁸ Chalmers Johnson, *An Instance of Treason: Ozaki Hotsumi and the Sorge Spy Ring* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964).

¹⁹ After Germany surrendered unconditionally in May 1945 there ceased to be any official German-Japanese collaboration, though several Germans in China provided intelligence and propaganda services to the Japanese military on a contract basis. Their leader was Lothar Eisenträger, an intelligence officer sent to China in 1941 to gather information. In 1946, an American military commission in China convicted twenty-one of these men for war crimes by persisting in their military activities even after Germany had officially surrendered. The men, later imprisoned in Germany, filed a suit in an American court claiming that they should have been granted the protection proffered by the United States Constitution because they were tried by an American commission. The case eventually made it to the United States Supreme Court (*Johnson v. Eisentrager*), which ruled in 1950 that courts in the United States had no jurisdiction over war criminals detained overseas. The decision became relevant in the 2000s over the legal status of the handling of suspected terrorists captured abroad and interned in offshore military bases.

sympathetic to communism in the mid-1930s, argued vociferously that the pact constituted a plot to divide the world between two similarly aggressive, dictatorial regimes.²⁰

The outbreak of World War II made dissecting the dynamics of German-Japanese interactions an urgent priority for the Allies. As mentioned, the Allies did not merely observe passively the interplay between the two countries. Rather, their armed forces and spies actively sought to disrupt the traffic and to intercept the communication between Tokyo and Berlin. In the areas of boosting morale and mobilization, the Allied governments, especially American officials, also had to motivate its citizens to sustain a total war effort at home and endure heavy casualties abroad against far-flung enemies. Yet the exigencies of war favored simple, even simplistic, caricatures over nuanced analysis, so that in 1943 the American documentary *Why We Fight* praised the Allies as a united “free world” and lumped the Axis nations as one monotonous “slave world.” The narrator went on to highlight the uniformity of the German Nazis, Japanese militarists, and Italian Fascists:

Although these countries were far apart and different in custom and in language, the same poison made them much alike. Each strutted in a new uniform. In Italy the new bosses wore black shirts. In Germany the shirts were brown. In Japan they hid behind the uniform of the army... In Germany they call the new order National Socialism, or Nazism. In Italy they have a shorter word, Fascism. In Japan they have lots of names for it—the New Era of Enlightenment, the New Order in Asia, the Co-prosperity Sphere—but no matter how you slice it, it was just plain old-fashioned militaristic imperialism... They say trouble always comes in three... It was inevitable that these countries should gang up on us.²¹

In addition, Allied propaganda posters and postcards often featured the portraits of Hitler, Hirohito, and Mussolini side by side, all to convey the straightforward message that the Axis stemmed from the enemies’ likeness.

²⁰ Freda Utley, “Germany and Japan,” *The Political Quarterly*, vol. VIII, 1 (1937), 51–65. See also, Freda Utley, *Japan’s Feet of Clay* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1937).

²¹ *Why We Fight: Prelude to War*, dir. Frank Capra, Department of War, Washington, D.C., 1943.

A proper, document-based reckoning of the Japanese-German alliance became possible only after the dust of World War II had settled, with the concomitant opening of German and Japanese files, and the interrogation of individuals formerly in positions of power or influence. In some ways, then, the war crimes tribunals at Nuremberg and Tokyo represented the first systematic investigation of the underlying causes of the Axis. Yet trial records present specific challenges when used as historical documents. Prosecutors, defense attorneys, and defendants crafted questions and answers with the goal of obtaining certain verdicts, and the justices often seemed more interested in highlighting consequences than discerning causes. Moreover, the charge of a “conspiracy for crime against peace” favored interpretations alleging a premeditated scheme for joint German-Japanese world domination by inserting a certain teleological element in the cross-examinations.

Fortunately the Allies also captured troves of Axis ministerial records to complement, verify, or contradict the tribunal testimonies. These documents ushered in a blossoming of diplomatic history in the 1950s, when standard narratives of the Axis were written that remain useful today. The dominance of diplomatic history in the period and the propagation of the totalitarian theory perceptibly influenced scholars’ research and angles of interpretation. Ernst Presseisen’s *Germany and Japan: A Study in Totalitarian Diplomacy, 1933–1941* approached the subject from Germany’s perspective and characterized the alliance as a union of convenience.²² From the Japanese side, Frank Iklé’s *German-Japanese Relations, 1936–1940: A Study of Totalitarian Diplomacy* reached a similar conclusion.²³ As their titles indicated, these two works emphasized the totalitarian nature of German and

²² Ernst L. Presseisen, *Germany and Japan: A Study in Totalitarian Diplomacy, 1933–1941* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1958).

²³ Frank Iklé, *German-Japanese Relations, 1936–1940: A Study of Totalitarian Diplomacy* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1956).

Japanese foreign-policy decision-making by depicting the leaders as actively but cynically pursuing closer cooperation in their individual schemes for world conquest.

Presseisen's and Iklé's masterpieces of diplomatic history were followed by further research and publications. Johanna Menzel Meskill's *Hitler and Japan: The Hollow Alliance* continued Presseisen's narrative to show how little strategic cooperation took place between the two countries.²⁴ The 1950s were also a time for organization of the archives. In 1954 Gerhard Weinberg published the secret protocol to the Anti-Comintern Pact that confirmed the Soviet Union as the true target of the agreement.²⁵ Echoing wartime depictions of the Axis, postwar works of the totalitarian school often underlined the similarly authoritarian heritages shared by Germany and Japan ever since the Wilhelmine and Meiji eras. As Meskill argued, the two regimes' common refusal to compromise contributed mightily to the demise of the Axis.²⁶ Thus, the very feature that had been touted as a source of strength for the Axis in wartime appeared in the 1950s as its Achilles heel.

Meanwhile, the Marxist-Leninist school on the other side of the Iron Curtain offered an alternative line of investigation. Seeing events through the lenses of class struggle and internationalism, communist historians emphasized the imperialistic and capitalistic aspects of Japan and Germany. This line of argument had a long history; in the early 1920s the Soviets likely saw collusion between German *Freikorps* aggression in the west and Japan's Siberian Intervention in the east as a concerted scheme to wreck the communist experiment.

²⁴ Johanna Menzel Meskill, *Hitler and Japan: The Hollow Alliance* (New York: Atherton Press, 1966).

²⁵ Gerhard L. Weinberg, "Die geheimen Abkommen zum Antikominternpakt," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 2 (1954), 193–201.

²⁶ Meskill, 188–9.

Thus, during World War II Soviet propagandists had a readily available template for painting Germany and Japan with the same brush.

Shunning the totalitarian model, postwar Marxist depictions of German-Japanese relations followed Soviet wartime portrayals of both nations as capitalist, fascist, and imperialist. As Japan and West Germany marched in lockstep with the United States during the Cold War, Marxist historians in China and East Germany denounced the allegedly continuing fascism in their respective neighbors. The East German historian Karl Drechsler depicted Nazi Germany's choices as between ideological affinity to fascist Japan and the imperialist temptation to exploit Chinese manpower and resources.²⁷ Even in the current century, some Chinese scholars still cling to the notion that militarist Japan and Nazi Germany made natural co-conspirators due to their shared fascist outlooks, and that World War II constituted a struggle by "peace-loving peoples of the world against fascism."²⁸ Ideology thus drove some scholars in communist countries to search for a common fascist trait in both Germany and Japan.

Beginning in the 1960s, as the postwar enthusiasm for newly opened archives waned, scholars began to develop theory-based models to explain the formation of the Axis. What one might call the latecomer theory emerged as the preeminent concept for understanding Japanese-German relations.²⁹ The politico-sociologist Barrington Moore's *Social Origins of*

²⁷ Karl Drechsler, *Deutschland-China-Japan, 1933–1939: Das Dilemma der deutschen Fernostpolitik* ([East] Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964).

²⁸ Yang Xin-ya and Yang Cong-biao ■ 新涯 ■ 从彪, "Deguo riben zhongguo: jinian shijie fanfaxisi zhanzheng shengli liushi zhounian 德国·日本·中国: ■ 念世界反法西斯 ■ 争 ■ 利六十周年," *Zheng gong xue kan* 政工学刊, December 2005: 16–17.

²⁹ The earliest articulation of a late-developing Germany is Thorstein Veblen's *Imperial Germany and the Industrial Revolution* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915). On Japan as a latecomer, see Robert A. Scalapino, *Democracy and the Party Movement in Prewar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953), 396–7.

Dictatorship and Democracy, while not overtly embracing the theory, became a blueprint for the latecomer theorists.³⁰ Simply put, the theory states that countries belated in national unification, industrialization, and conquest of overseas colonies would have had to catch up with those that accomplished these tasks earlier. In order to compete with the established powers, then, the latecomers would have to resort to oppression at home and aggression abroad. The resultant policies included reckless arms races and colonial competitions with the old empires, and revolutions from above by officials willing to plunder the middle and lower classes to fund modernization campaigns centered on rapid industrialization, enhancement of national unity, and military development in the name of national greatness. Thus the world was divided between “have” or satiated powers typically represented by Britain, France, and the United States, and “have not” or revisionist upstarts exemplified by Germany, Italy, and Japan.

In the context of German-Japanese relations, latecomer theorists linked the two countries’ tardy modernization and reasoned that their shared have-not status inevitably bound them together in an alliance.³¹ According to this line of interpretation, the roots of the common bonds intertwining Japan and Germany could be traced to the 1870s, when both became centralized states well after Britain, France, and even the United States had done so. The theorists cited as evidence Germany’s impact on Meiji Japan in the fields of medicine, law, science, and education, with a special emphasis on Prussian influence on the Meiji Constitution. While no scholars drew a straight line from 1870 to 1940, they often explained

³⁰ Barrington Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966).

³¹ For example, see Peter Weber-Schäfer, “Verspätete Demokratie: Parlamentarismus in Japan und Deutschland,” *Japan und Deutschland im 20. Jahrhundert*, eds. Klaus Kracht, Bruno Lewin, and Klaus Müller (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1984), 137–149.

the Berlin-Tokyo Axis by using events from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as proof of significant similarities between the two nations, and dismissed German warnings about the Yellow Peril, Japanese resentment of the Triple Intervention, and World War I as mere aberrations from a long-term trend.

The theory's emphasis on structures and impersonal forces inspired works that focused less on the top leaders and ideology than the totalitarian and Marxist schools tended to do.³² Historians also began to examine the roles of individual diplomats and officers such as Ribbentrop, Ōshima, and even *Abwehr* (counterintelligence) chief Wilhelm Canaris.³³ Moreover, scholars started to put Japanese-German relations in an international context by investigating the impact of Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union, and China.³⁴ Still others concentrated on bilateral interactions in realms outside formal diplomacy such as the economy,³⁵ technology,³⁶ and the military.³⁷

³² For an example of a work still using the latecomer label, see Charles P. Kindleberger, *World Economic Primacy: 1500 to 1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

³³ See Wolfgang Michalka, *Ribbentrop und die deutsche Weltpolitik, 1933–1940: Aussenpolitische Konzeption und Entscheidungsprozesse im Dritten Reich* (Munich: W. Fink, 1980); Ōhata Tokushirō, “The Anti-Comintern Pact, 1935–1939,” *Deterrent Diplomacy: Japan, Germany, and the USSR 1935–1940*, ed. James William Morley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 1–112; Tajima Nobuo, “The Berlin-Tokyo Axis Reconsidered: From the Anti-Comintern Pact to the Plot to Assassinate Stalin,” *Japanese-German Relations, 1895–1945: War, Diplomacy and Public Opinion*, eds. Christian W. Spang and Rolf-Harald Wippich (London: Routledge, 2006), 161–179; Tajima Nobuo 田嶋信雄, *Nachizumu Kyokutō senryaku Nichidoku bōkyō kyōtei wo meguru chōhōsen* 『ナチズム極東戦略 日独防共協定を巡る諜報戦』 (Tokyo: Kōdansha 講談社, 1997); and, Carl Boyd, *The Extraordinary Envoy: General Hiroshi Ōshima and Diplomacy in the Third Reich, 1934–1939* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1980).

³⁴ See *Deterrent Diplomacy*; Theo Sommer, *Deutschland und Japan zwischen den Mächten 1935–1940: Vom Antikominternpakt zum Dreimächtepakt* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1962); and Bernd Martin, *Japan and Germany in the Modern World* (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1995).

³⁵ See Akira Kudō, *Japanese-German Business Relations: Cooperation and Rivalry in the Inter-war Period* (London: Routledge, 1998); and Erich Pauer, “Die wirtschaftlichen Beziehungen zwischen Japan und Deutschland 1900–1945,” *Deutschland-Japan: Historische Kontakte*, ed. Josef Kreiner (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1984), 161–210.

³⁶ See Erich Pauer, “Menschen, Muster und Motoren: Die technische Zusammenarbeit zwischen Deutschland und Japan von 1930 bis 1945,” *Formierung und Fall der Achse Berlin-Tōkyō*, eds. Gerhard Krebs and Bernd Martin (Munich: Iudicium Verlag, 1994), 95–128; and Bernd Martin, “Japanese-German Collaboration in the

In the 1970s the departure from documentary evidence and the reliance on theoretical frameworks in the study of international relations reached a peak when Kenneth Waltz propounded his theory of neorealism.³⁸ Neorealists sought to reduce the complex human decision-making process in foreign relations to a simple mathematical calculation of material factors. Thus, they downplayed the unique, intangible attributes of each nation such as history and culture, and focused instead on quantifiable data such as GDP, population, and arms production figures in studying how nations acted. In the context of German-Japanese relations, neorealism led a generation of politico-economists such as Randall Schweller to treat Germany, Japan, and other powers as “like units,” and to attempt to explain the building of alliances using concepts such as balance of interests and “power polarity.” These scholars placed structural constraints and production capacities above leadership personalities and ideological peculiarities.³⁹

Ever since Charles S. Maier declared the end of the “era of territoriality” in 1980, historians have been experimenting with ways to study how peoples related to others beyond the exchange of territories and subjugation of populations by making use of previously

Development of Bacteriological and Chemical Weapons and the War in China,” in *Japanese-German Relations, 1895–1945*, 200–214.

³⁷ See for example John W. M. Chapman, “Japan and German Navy Policy, 1919–1945,” *Deutschland-Japan: Historische Kontakte*, ed. Josef Kreiner (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1984), 211–264; Sven Saaler, “The Imperial Japanese Army and Germany,” in *Japanese-German Relations, 1895–1945*, 21–39; and Hans-Joachim Krug, et al., *Reluctant Allies: German-Japanese Naval Relations in World War II* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2001).

³⁸ See Kenneth Neal Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979). One of the goals of neorealism is to refine realism to portray international relations in logical, predictable, and scientific terms.

³⁹ For an application of neorealism to the understanding of interwar international relations, see Randall Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler’s Strategy of World Conquest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998). Balance of interests is sometimes known as “bandwagoning,” in which weaker powers attach themselves to stronger powers for benefits.

neglected primary sources.⁴⁰ Some recent works of this “new diplomatic history” consider the impact of money, gender, race, and mutual perceptions in international relations, such as those on dollar diplomacy, the role of gender in the Cold War, African Americans in East Asia, and racist war propaganda in the Pacific theater.⁴¹ Specifically for Japanese-German relations, some scholars began in the 1990s to study the roles of culture, perceptions, and individuals in building links between the two countries.⁴² The most prominent works include the edited compilation *Japanese-German Relations, 1895–1945: War, Diplomacy and Public Opinion* and the three-volume *The History of Japanese-German Relations (Nichidoku kankeishi 1890–1945 『日独関係史 一八九〇–一九四五』)*. Both cover a timeframe stretching decades and topics ranging from politics to the economy, society, culture, and

⁴⁰ See Charles S. Maier, “Marking Time: The Historiography of International Relations,” in *The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States*, ed. Michael Kammen (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 355–387. See also Michael J. Hogan, “The ‘Next Big Thing’: The Future of Diplomatic History in a Global Age,” *Diplomatic History* 28 (January 2004): 1–21; and Lynn Hunt, “Where Have All the Theories Gone?” *Perspectives* 40 (March 2002): 5–7.

⁴¹ See Emily S. Rosenberg, *Financial Missionaries to the World: The Politics and Culture of Dollar Diplomacy, 1900–1930* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); Robert D. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001); Marc Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japan and China: Black Internationalism in Asia, 1895–1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); and John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987).

⁴² For examples, Heinrich Mehl, “Das wahre Gesicht Japans? – Das Japan-Bild in deutschen illustrierten Zeitschriften der letzten 150 Jahre,” *Vertraute Fremde: Anmerkungen zu Kultur, Politik und Pädagogik in Japan und Deutschland*, Festschrift Satoru Kurisaki, eds. Heinrich Mehl and Hansjörg Meyer (Munich: Iudicium Verlag, 1994), 29–59; Iwamura Masashi 岩村正史, *Senzen nihonjin no tai doitsu ishiki 『戦前日本人の対ドイツ意識』* (Tokyo: Keiō gijuku daigaku shuppankai 慶應義塾大学出版会, 2005); Nakano Yoshiyuki 中埜芳之, *Doitsujin ga mita Nihon Doitsujin no Nihonkan keisei ni kansuru shiteki kenkyū 『ドイツ人がみた日本 ドイツ人の日本観形成に関する史的 연구』* (Tokyo: Sanshūsha 三修社, 2005); Till Philip Koltermann, *Der Untergang des Dritten Reiches im Spiegel der deutsch-japanischen Kulturbegegnung 1933–1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009); Inge Hoppner and Sekikawa Fujiko 関川富士子, eds., *Brückenbauer: Pioniere des japanisch-deutschen Kulturaustausches 『日独交流の架け橋を築いた人々』* (Munich: Iudicium Verlag, 2005); and, Katō Tetsurō 加藤哲郎, *Waimāruki Berurin no Nihonjin yōkō chishikijin no hantei nettowāku 『ワイマール期ベルリンの日本人 洋行知識人の反帝ネットワーク』* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten 岩波書店, 2008).

military affairs.⁴³ The analysis of the interactions between Germany and Japan has thus come a long way since the days of attributing the alliance to the two countries' shared fetish with uniforms.

Dissertation Objectives

Although contemporary observations, wartime propaganda, postwar tribunals, the totalitarian model, Marxist school, latecomer theory, neorealist structural framework, and new diplomatic history have their own strengths, in recent years some of the assumptions and arguments underlying these interpretations have come under challenge. Specifically, explanations that rely on highlighting Japan's and Germany's similarities, parallel paths, or common developmental features do not seem to explain fully the development and especially the timing of an alliance. These approaches also neglect contingent factors inhibiting German-Japanese rapprochement such as their incompatible ideologies that espoused rabid xenophobia and conflicting racial assessments, ambitions of economic autarchy, and clashing commercial interests in China and the rest of Asia. In addition, mirroring the emphasis of the war crimes tribunals, so far scholars have overwhelmingly focused on political and military interactions between Japan and Germany between 1937 and 1945—the consequences rather than the causes of German-Japanese cooperation.

Moreover, as the policies of Japan and Germany in the 1930s and 1940s amply demonstrated, rationale, logic, or considerations of *Realpolitik* did not always undergird the

⁴³ Christian W. Spang and Rolf-Harald Wippich, eds., *Japanese-German Relations, 1895–1945: War, Diplomacy and Public Opinion* (London: Routledge, 2006); and, Kudō Akira 工藤章 and Tajima Nobuo 田嶋信雄, eds., *Nichidoku kankeishi 1890–1945*, 3 vols. (Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku shuppankai 東京大学出版会, 2008). Another title worthy of mention is, Mochida Yukio 望田幸男, ed., *Kindai Nihon to Doitsu hikaku to kankei no rekishigaku* 『近代日本とドイツ 比較と関係の歴史学』 (Kyoto: Mineruva shobō ミネルヴァ書房, 2007). See also the other edited works cited previously.

decisions of fanatical, dictatorial regimes. If calculations invoking production figures or population sizes had indeed played a decisive role in the decision-making processes in the two countries, Germany and Japan would likely not have challenged the far bigger, more populous, and resourceful Soviet Union and the United States. Additionally, the course of World War II showed that there was nothing convenient in marrying one's fate with that of another almost nine-thousand kilometers away. If nothing else, the Tokyo-Berlin Axis does not even qualify for the old adage of "the enemy of one's enemy is one's friend," since Japan never did join Germany in opening hostilities against the Soviet Union.

In the meantime, pure diplomatic history had long since fallen out of fashion. No new significant archival finds have been unearthed since the 1950s, and none can be expected. A new generation of research has cast doubt on descriptions of nineteenth-century Germany and Japan as uniformly authoritarian, and the existence of fascism in prewar and wartime Japan remains an unresolved topic. Moreover, the latecomer theory, though certainly useful for compiling similarities and arguably the most influential of the explanations, suffers from several weaknesses. For example, the oft-cited "Prussian" advisor for the Meiji Constitution was actually Bavarian, liberal, and a bitter enemy of Bismarck.⁴⁴ In addition, Germany hardly held exclusive sway in Meiji Japan, whose officials sampled and experimented with policies and models drawn from various Western nations. Britain and the United States, for example, influenced key sectors such as the navy, technology, and agriculture. Furthermore, when applied to Germany the latecomer theory became entangled with the *Sonderweg* (special way) thesis alleging a peculiar developmental path that doomed the Weimar Republic and perhaps even made Nazism inevitable. On some level, one may perceive the

⁴⁴ See Johannes Siemes, *Hermann Roesler and the Making of the Meiji State* (Tokyo: Sophia University Press, 1966).

latecomer theory as a collective Sonderweg for late developers. For if Germany modernized along a Sonderweg, then Japan, which supposedly modeled itself in the image of Germany, must necessarily have followed down the same path.⁴⁵ It may even appear that all special paths led to a Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis. Yet, despite the efforts to portray Japan and Germany as counterparts with similar developmental histories, these interpretations do not fully explain the convergence of the two countries. If commonalities alone sufficed to ground an alliance, then surely Imperial Germany and Imperial Japan would have qualified as better candidates than racist Nazi Germany and anti-Western militarist Japan. Instead, the two countries went to war in World War I.

Lastly, analyses belonging to the new diplomatic history relying on cultural factors sometimes risk reverting back to the clichéd notion of the “Prussia of the East” from the early 1900s, even though the links between the “Prussia of the West” and Nazi Germany no longer seem so solid, not to mention those with faraway Japan. The recent compendiums on German-Japanese relations, albeit wide-ranging, suffer from the weaknesses that plague all edited works to a certain degree. Namely, while the individual articles or essays explore their individual topics in much detail and thoroughness, they lack a central narrative to place them within a proper context to highlight their significance, so that, the whole is less than the sum of the parts.

With this dissertation I aim in particular to address some of the shortcomings in previous lines of investigation and refine our understanding of the changes in Japanese-German relations, and in general to elaborate on the interplay between knowledge and power by experimentally combining the methodologies of international history and intellectual

⁴⁵ See Bernd Martin, ed., *Japans Weg in die Moderne: Ein Sonderweg nach deutschen Vorbild?* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 1987).

history. For these purposes the project raises and answers three related questions. First, how exactly did Germany and Japan, and more specifically, Japanese and Germans, engage each other in the 1920s and 1930s? Hitherto much of the research on the Berlin-Tokyo alliance has adopted either a long-term perspective that traced its genesis to the late nineteenth century or a short-term one that dissected the diplomatic maneuvering leading immediately to the Anti-Comintern Pact. The decade-and-a-half preceding the pact has received relatively less attention, largely because diplomacy took a backseat in the period, even though during that time the eventual proponents of the alliance were gaining, refining, and sharing their knowledge about the other country. Moreover, most nation-level narratives on bilateral cooperation neglect to account for the obstacles in transportation and communication between the two peoples, most of whom never had a chance to meet the other and so had to rely on cultural intermediaries in the public realm for information about the other country.

Second, how was Germany depicted in Japan in its mass media, and vice versa? Since in the 1920s and 1930s the German government hardly paid attention to its image in Japan, and Japanese officials only did marginally more to manage their nation's reputation in Germany, mutual perceptions between the two countries became monopolized by those few Germans and Japanese with firsthand experience abroad. For better or for worse, these knowledge generators created the material in the media such as newspapers, motion pictures, books, lectures, and textbooks that stood for their own nations' collective understanding about the outside world. Examining these works should thus shed light on what Japan and Germany knew of each other and might have expected from a proposed alliance.

Third, how did these German and Japanese opinion-makers respond to the changes in their own and each other's countries in the early to mid-1930s? These few years marked the

turning point in Japanese-German relations from one of cordial but distant relations to rapprochement and even a sense of shared mission in the world. Studying and analyzing the messages these commentators and observers were propagating in the mass media should help explain the factors that made the other country appear as an attractive collaborator.

The answers to these questions all revolve around the dissertation's central thesis that international history should and indeed must also be treated as intellectual history. For despite impressive technological innovations in transportation and communication in the interwar years, the inescapable truth remained that Germany and Japan, and Germans and Japanese, had little direct contact with each other. The hardship, time, and cost involved in intercontinental travel priced most of the population out of ever stepping foot in the other continent or meeting each other. In fact, it made little sense to discuss interwar Japanese-German relations, but only German-Japanese diplomacy or commerce, and even those did not amount to much.

Consequently, those with the means and leisure to wander and gain firsthand knowledge of the world, namely academics, businessmen, journalists, missionaries, and the like, exercised a near-monopolistic dominance in shaping their fellow citizens' imagination of foreign lands. For most Japanese and Germans, "Germany" or "Japan" materialized less as a place or populace than as words or images seen in newspapers, watched on films, listened to in lectures, read in books, looked up in dictionaries, or memorized as new vocabulary. Given these conditions in the interwar years, the dissertation presents the case that, in order to understand the international history between Japan and Germany, one must also understand it as part of the intellectual history of Germany and Japan.

Accordingly, the project experiments with new uses for subfields such as intellectual history and the history of everyday life by applying them to unconventional subject matters. In this endeavor I take inspiration from the multidisciplinary approach found in Louise Young's *Japan's Total Empire* on elite and popular visions and fantasies of Manchuria in Japan, and Eric Weitz's *Weimar Germany*, which takes readers for a virtual stroll through the streets of 1920s Berlin.⁴⁶ In my dissertation I invite readers to journey back in time to tour the imagined and conceptualized Germany and Japan that Japanese and Germans respectively explored and visited in newsstands, on silver screens, in lecture halls, in bookstores and libraries, in voluntary associations, and in language classes.

The dissertation should shed some light on themes within European history and East Asian history, with relevance for societies navigating modern international relations, and on the causal connection between knowledge and power. The project can broaden our knowledge of Japan and Germany in the 1920s and 1930s, especially their places in the world and their perception thereof, and the role of open society under increasingly authoritarian states. It participates in the longstanding scholarly discourse over continuities in German and Japanese histories by arguing that Japanese-German rapprochement had little to do with long-term developmental trends. Rather than following a "special path," Nazi Germany and militarist Japan in fact took a "twisted road" to the Tokyo-Berlin Axis.

Furthermore, within the studies of international relations the project should help elucidate the mechanics through which seemingly distant, unrelated regimes of incompatible ideological leanings could work together toward common goals. Rather than brushing off their pronouncements as mere propaganda or fanatical rants, for the sake of peace and

⁴⁶ See Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); and, Eric D. Weitz, *Weimar Germany: Promise and Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

security the international community would do well to pay close attention to their ideas and concepts. After all, their worldviews, however detached from reality, do serve as a blueprint of sorts for the actions they intend to take. I would also like to demonstrate the agency and initiative of unofficial organizations or even individuals in intercultural relations. If it can be proved that even in oppressive regimes like Nazi Germany and militarist Japan, and that even in a traditionally aristocratic field like diplomacy, shrinking civil society could still find room to influence foreign affairs, then perhaps we should revisit extant assumptions about the mechanics of international relations, and rethink broadly the ways citizens can impact cross-cultural interactions.

Dissertation Organization

In order to recapture fully the influence that the opinion makers exercised in society through the mass media in Japan and Germany, the dissertation is divided into two substantive parts, each with four corresponding chapters. The first half examines the portrayals of Japan in interwar Germany. It begins with Chapter One, “Japan as Fine Print: Japan in Newspapers,” which studies the reporting on Japan in six German newspapers across the political spectrum. Chapter Two, “Japan as Motion Pictures: Japan on Silver Screen,” explores the presentation and representation of Japan in German newsreels, documentaries, and feature films. Chapter Three, “Japan between Covers: Japan in Books,” analyzes the appearance of Japan in German publications. Lastly, Chapter Four, “Japan as Hobby: Japan in Voluntary Associations,” investigates the role that Japan played in German interest clubs.

The second half deals with the depictions of Germany in interwar Japan. It starts with Chapter Five, “Germany as Fine Print: Germany in Newspapers,” which inquires into the press reception of Germany in five Japanese newspapers of various political stances. Chapter Six, “Germany as Sound: Germany in Lectures and Pamphlets,” considers the opinions regarding Germany in popular Japanese speeches and booklets. Chapter Seven, “Germany between Covers: Germany in Books,” surveys the reactions to Germany in Japanese publications. Finally, Chapter Eight, “Germany as Words: Germany in Language Texts,” examines the experience of learning the German language in Japan.

The dissertation ends with the conclusion, “In the End Were Also the Words,” which summarizes and compares the mutual conceptualizations between Japan and Germany. It also explains the impact of opinion makers in the making of the Berlin-Tokyo Axis and applies the dissertation’s findings to aspects of the relationship between knowledge and power.

Within each half of the dissertation the four chapters are designed and arranged to simulate what I call the step pyramid of knowledge acquisition. That is, together the four chapters should mimic the steps a German or Japanese layperson would take in order to learn more about the other country. For instance, a non-expert German interested in Japan would most likely begin the quest for information by reading newspapers, the most frequent, affordable, and accessible source of knowledge in the interwar era. Or, conversely, an article on current events might have piqued the curiosity of a reader so he/she wanted to discover more about Japan. After newspapers he/she would probably find the cinema the next most convenient and convincing source, especially since films had the power to animate and illustrate a narrative. Those still eager to find out more would then seek more knowledge in books published by area specialists or others with experience in Japan. Finally, those who

lived in a metropolis like Berlin or Hamburg might join a bi-national voluntary association where they could meet Japanese members and thus learn firsthand about the people. Likewise, a lay Japanese in the 1920s and 1930s would begin his/her quest with newspapers, then move on to the ubiquitous and frequent lectures and pamphlets, and then to the hundreds of books on Germany. Lastly, he/she could master the German language and thus independently access publications in German without relying on middlemen like journalists and pamphleteers.

Together the chapters within each half should demonstrate the dominance of some of the opinion makers in crafting the image of the other country in every layer of knowledge creation and propagation. The chapters will also illustrate the effectiveness with which the German and Japanese commentators promoted the message of bilateral rapprochement since the early 1930s in different channels of the mass media. Fundamentally, they will show how the opinion makers exercised knowledge as power by wielding words as a sword.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Speaking of words, a few notes about translation and linguistic conventions in this dissertation may be added here. Unless otherwise noted, all translated quotations are mine. Where alternative translations are available, they are mentioned as well. Names of Japanese individuals are given in the last name–first name format. The first time the names of Japanese people and titles of Japanese works are mentioned, they are given in both rōmaji and Japanese. Lastly, old kanji is used for all Japanese terms mentioned in the period before 1945.

CHAPTER ONE

JAPAN AS FINE PRINT: JAPAN IN NEWSPAPERS

Still stehen eigentlich nur die Zeitungsmänner, die vom Zentrum rechts, die von der Rechten links und die von der Linken in der Mitte (kompliziert, aber warum soll denn alles einfach sein?), die fast jedem Fußgänger schön zusammengefaltet etwas geistigen Inhalt auf den Weg mitgeben, und zwar eine politische Meinung, eine gewisse Kenntnis der neuesten Vorfälle und ein bißchen (wenn auch etwas feuilletonistisch verdorbene) Melancholie des Sommerabends—kurz, gegen Erlag von fünf bis zwanzig Pfennig alles, was ein kompletter Mensch an Empfindung und Wissen für einen Wochentagsabend braucht.

—*Berliner Tageblatt*, 4 September 1928¹

Deutschland und Japan, nicht gewillt, das Treiben der Kommunistischen Hetzer länger zu dulden, sind nunmehr zur Tat geschritten. Der Abschluss des heute von Deutschland und Japan unterzeichneten Abkommens gegen die kommunistische Internationale ist ein epochales Ereignis. Es ist ein Wendepunkt in dem Abwehrkampf aller ordnungs- und kulturliebenden Nationen gegen die Mächte der Zersetzung. Mit dem Zustandekommen dieses Vertrages haben unser Führer und Seine Majestät der Kaiser von Japan eine geschichtliche Tat vollbracht, die erst von kommenden Generationen in ihrer vollen Tragweite gewürdigt werden wird.

—Statement of the German News Bureau, 25 November 1936²

¹ “Only the newspaper hawkers are standing still. From the center right, from the conservative left, and from the left center (complicated, but why should everything be simple?). They offer not only something intellectual, folded neatly, for almost every pedestrian to take away, but also a political opinion, some knowledge about the latest events, and a little melancholia of the summer evening (even if somewhat trashy)—that is, a man can find the sentiment and knowledge he needs for a weekday evening for a price of five to twenty cents,” in “Einhundertfünfzig pro Minute,” *Berliner Tageblatt*, 4 September 1928. Article reproduced in Günther Bellmann, ed., *Potsdamer Platz: Drehscheibe der Weltstadt* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1997), 121–4. An alternative translation can be found in Weitz, 45.

² “Germany and Japan, unwilling to tolerate the activity of the communist agitators any longer, will from now on tackle the task. The conclusion between Germany and Japan of the pact against the Communist International is an epochal event. It is a turning point in the defensive struggle of all order- and culture-loving nations against the forces of disruption. With the signing of the agreement, our Führer and His Majesty the Emperor of Japan

For centuries in the history of Europe, the command of language, in addition to those of arms and of money, formed the barriers between those with and without power. In pre-modern Europe, these lines of separation approximately overlapped the boundaries dividing society into the three Estates of the Realm: The first, the clergy, controlled the words. The second, the nobility, controlled the weapons. The third, the commoners, or at least the great financiers among them, controlled the wealth. Successive moments of liberalization since the Renaissance began to erode this rigid division within society and to weaken the elites' monopolistic claim to these sources of power, so that increasingly more of the population partook in the creation and use of knowledge, authority, and resources. The confluence of these forces reached such a stage that by the eighteenth century some saw the rise of a "fourth estate" in print journalism—the business of making profit and influencing public policy through selling mass-produced information to the population.

The German lands in the center of Europe certainly experienced breakdowns of the old order like the Reformation, abolishment of the Holy Roman Empire, and emancipation of the Jews that allowed the expression of a wider range of thoughts. The fissures—religious, geographical, ethnic, and ideological—that hindered the German kingdoms, grand duchies, principalities, and free cities from forming a unified state also provided fertile grounds for the proliferation of newspapers to cater to readers of different tastes. If nothing else, the fractured political landscape resulted in multiple publishing centers to discuss the current affairs within specific locales. The eventual unified state, the *Kaiserreich*, and its successor, the Weimar Republic, maintained a decentralized structure that preserved some diversity in the publication of newspapers. In particular, the republic adopted a liberal constitution that

have accomplished an historical feat whose momentousness will be appreciated by generations to come," in press release of the Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro (DNB), Bundesarchiv, R901/60320, Auswärtiges Amt, 25 November 1936.

tolerated even some of the most extreme opinions. In the days before television and widespread radio ownership, newspapers reigned as the most popular form of the mass media.

Accordingly, this chapter examines the treatment of Japan in interwar German newspapers and its implications for German-Japanese relations. How did the press depict Japan in the 1920s and 1930s? Why and how did happenings in Japan become news in faraway Germany? Which topics caught the attention of German correspondents? How did the changes in the two countries in the early 1930s affect the appearance of Japan in the press? What role did journalism play in the making of bilateral rapprochement? The chapter presents the case that Japan attracted the curiosity and attention of the German press through its participation in international athletic events and its portrayals in popular artistic and literary works in Germany. Despite the frequently positive depictions of Japan in these lighthearted news reports, the level of understanding of Japan was often superficial and compliments for Japan were mixed with petty prejudices. Then, in the early 1930s, the economic and geopolitical crises in East Asia propelled Japan to the front pages and editorials of newspapers across the political spectrum. While the reports on arts and culture often highlighted aspects of traditional Japan, the articles on the economy and politics underscored a Westernized—and ironically but precisely for that reason—dangerous Japan. The Marxist newspapers in particular excoriated Japan for its invasion of China and its suppression of communists. Yet with the rise of the Nazis, leftist voices in Germany itself were soon silenced. The new masters of the country had a different worldview from those prevalent during the Weimar years, so that what republican Germany saw as Japanese brutality and lawlessness became in the eyes of the Third Reich forcefulness and decisiveness—values that found resonance within the Nazi outlook. The investigation of

Japan's place on newsprint shall begin with an overview of what the press as a source of information and opinion meant in interwar Germany.

Newspapers in Interwar Germany

Some comments on interwar German newspapers will help contextualize the argument and explain how the press influenced and reflected popular sentiments. In Germany, as the Kaiserreich collapsed under defeat and revolution at the end of World War I, so disappeared all wartime media censorship.³ Leftist and rightist forces fought over leadership of the country using both force and rhetoric, as each side churned out propaganda to gain converts and discredit its opponents. Ultimately, the Weimar Coalition of the Social Democrats, German Democrats, and Center Party established a republic and adopted a constitution quite liberal in the world at the time. Article 118 proclaimed that “every German is entitled, within the bounds set by general law, to express his opinion freely in word, writing, print, image or otherwise... There is no censorship.”⁴ Although the constitution seemed to shield the freedom of expression from encroachment, the chink in this armor remained “the bounds set by general law” beyond which the press might not trespass. Indeed the republic during its crises issued numerous ordinances, regulations, and emergency decrees that limited somewhat the latitude of the media.⁵

³ See Bernhard Fulda, *Press and Politics in Weimar Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), Peter J. Fliess, *Freedom of the Press in the German Republic, 1918–1933* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1955); Kurt Koszyk, *Deutsche Presse 1914–1945: Geschichte der deutschen Presse Teil III* (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1972); Modris Eksteins, *The Limits of Reason: The German Democratic Press and the Collapse of Weimar Democracy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), 70–103; and, Rudolf Stöber, *Deutsche Pressegeschichte: Einführung, Systematik, Glossar* (Constance: UVK Medien, 2000).

⁴ Weimar Constitution, < http://www.zum.de/psm/weimar/weimar_vve.php > (accessed 3 October 2011).

⁵ Eksteins, 70. On Weimar press censorship, see Klaus Petersen, *Zensur in der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart: Verlag J. B. Metzler, 1995), 113–55. For example, the police frequently banned papers for espousing

Yet the state's attempts to contain and control the press also conceded a tacit acknowledgement of the newspapers' power to influence the public and to channel popular sentiments into political actions. Although the political rallies in the 1920s and 1930s were impressive events, speeches lacked newspapers' staying power and ability to reach the remotest hamlets. Printed words could also explain nuanced arguments with clarity and perform the crucial task of ideological news interpretation.⁶ Moreover, Germany was overwhelmingly literate, and most midsized towns had access to their own dailies to complement larger papers from nearby cities. Considering the broad reach of the press in informing the public and mobilizing opinion, we may study it as the starting point on the step pyramid of acquiring knowledge about Japan.

This chapter examines six German newspapers spanning the entire political spectrum. From the far left stemmed *Die Rote Fahne* (*The Red Banner*). It was founded in November 1918 as the official organ of the Spartacus League and later the Communist Party of Germany (Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands, KPD), and enjoyed an initial circulation of 30,000. Despite the readiness of Weimar censors to ban the paper for its incendiary language, circulation expanded to 140,000 by 1933. After the Reichstag Fire in February 1933, the Nazi regime outlawed the KPD and all communist publications.⁷

inflammatory language before key parliamentary or presidential elections in an attempt to reduce street violence. Generally speaking the communist press suffered from censorship much more often than the rightwing papers.

⁶ Eksteins, 71.

⁷ Kurt Koszyk, "Die Rote Fahne (1918–1933)," *Deutsche Zeitungen des 17. bis 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Heinz-Dietrich Fischer (Pullach bei München: Verlag Dokumentation, 1972), 391–403. Hereafter *Deutsche Zeitungen*. For more on the *Rote Fahne*, see Manfred Brauneck, *Die Rote Fahne: Kritik, Theorie, Feuilleton 1918–1933* (Munich: Fink, 1973); Burkhard Asmuss, *Republik ohne Chance? Akzeptanz und Legitimation der Weimarer Republik in der deutschen Tagespresse zwischen 1918 und 1923* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1994), 63–6; Koszyk, *Deutsche Presse*, 321–45; Stöber, 223–7; and the reborn *Rote Fahne*'s website, *Die Rote Fahne*, <<http://die-rote-fahne.de/>>.

Adherents to the socialist German Social Democratic Party (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, SPD) made their voices heard in their official organ *Vorwärts* (*Forward*), established in 1876 when various leftist factions merged their publications to create a unified paper. The *Vorwärts* hit its crest in 1918, with a circulation of 300,000 for both morning and evening editions. Throughout the 1920s, support for the SPD slowly atrophied and the paper's circulation figure shrank to 82,000 in 1929. In May 1933, the Hitler regime dissolved the SPD and drove the *Vorwärts* underground.⁸

Liberals and democrats represented themselves in the *Vossische Zeitung* (*Voss's Newspaper*), the oldest newspaper in Berlin. First published unofficially in 1617, the paper survived Prussian censors and gained a reputation for political independence and support for liberal causes. By 1848 "Tante Voss" (Auntie Voss) reigned as the largest newspaper in Germany. In the 1920s, the paper mostly advocated democracy and moderate, pro-business politics. Circulation peaked in 1931 at around 81,000 before dwindling to 41,000 in 1934, shortly before the regime terminated its publication.⁹

The *Germania*, affiliated with the German Center Party (Deutsche Zentrumspartei), represented Catholic interests. In 1871, the small Catholic community in Berlin founded the newspaper to counter hostile government and press attacks in the national capital, deep in predominantly Protestant northern Germany. Largely due to its skill in polemics and politically strategic location, the *Germania* eventually became a semi-official channel of the Center Party even though it lacked the type of advertising revenues and subscription clout

⁸ Volker Schulze, "Vorwärts (1876–1933)," *Deutsche Zeitungen*, 329–47. For more on the *Vorwärts*, see Asmuss, 60–2; Koszyk, *Deutsche Presse*, 303–21; Stöber, 221–3; and the website of the resurrected *Vorwärts*, *Vorwärts*, <<http://www.vorwaerts.de/>>.

⁹ Klaus Bender, "Vossische Zeitung (1617–1934)," *Deutsche Zeitungen*, 25–39. For more on the *Vossische Zeitung*, see Koszyk, *Deutsche Presse*, 250–8; and, Stöber, 211–3.

available to Catholic papers in the Rhineland and Bavaria. Circulation reached 43,000 in 1929.¹⁰

The *Neue Preußische Kreuz-Zeitung* (*New Prussian Cross Newspaper*) appealed to the traditional, nationalistic conservatives. Though never an official party organ, the *Kreuz-Zeitung* cooperated closely with the rightist German National People's Party (Deutschnationale Volkspartei, DNVP) and its paramilitary formation Stahlhelm (Steel Helmet). Since the DNVP served as the junior coalition partner in the Hitler cabinet, the *Kreuz-Zeitung* managed to survive until 1939. Maximum circulation was about 60,000.¹¹

To the extreme right belonged the *Völkischer Beobachter* (*People's Observer*), the official organ of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, NSDAP).¹² In 1920, the Nazi Party purchased and renamed a bulletin of a Munich suburb and transformed it into an outlet for rightwing propaganda, and throughout the 1920s the party and paper's vitriol kept both in the political margin. Circulation surged after the Nazi electoral breakthrough in 1930, so that after Hitler's appointment in 1933 the figure reached 310,000.¹³

While the circulation figures of these newspapers may appear small in a nation of some 65 million, it bears stressing that some of these papers, like the *Germania* and

¹⁰ Klaus Martin Stiegler, "Germania (1871–1938)," *Deutsche Zeitungen*, 299–313. For more on the *Germania*, see Asmuss, 52–4; Koszyk, *Deutsche Presse*, 290–302; and, Stöber, 217–20.

¹¹ Meinolf Rohleder and Burkhard Treude, "Neue Preussische (Kreuz-) Zeitung (1848–1939)," *Deutsche Zeitungen*, 209–24. For more on the *Kreuz-Zeitung*, see Koszyk, *Deutsche Presse*, 240–2; and, Stöber, 214–7.

¹² The word *völkisch*, a cognate of the English "folk," defies concise translations. *Volk* convokes the romantic image of a clan or tribal community jelled together by ethnic, historical, mythical, and cultural ties.

¹³ Margarete Plewnia, "Völkischer Beobachter (1887–1945)," *Deutsche Zeitungen*, 381–90. For more on the *Völkischer Beobachter*, see Detlef Mühlberger, *Hitler's Voice: The Völkischer Beobachter 1920–1933*, 2 vols. (New York: Peter Lang, 2004); Adolf Dresler, *Geschichte des "Völkischen Beobachters" und des Zentralverlages der NSDAP* (Munich: F. Eher Nachf., 1937); Asmuss, 39–43; Koszyk, *Deutsche Presse*, 380–8; and, Stöber, 227–31.

Vossische Zeitung, were focused almost exclusively on the market in Berlin. Also, the fragmented state of the interwar press meant that no paper dominated nationally as *The Times* did in Great Britain. Germany's political and publishing landscapes, with regional capitals such as Leipzig and Frankfurt competing with Berlin, contributed too to this decentralization. Moreover, non-subscribers could read newspapers posted on boards in public places, in restaurants and cafes, barbershops, and libraries. Lastly, flagship papers like the *Rote Fahne* and *Völkischer Beobachter* appeared in regional editions as well, and the political parties did not hesitate to churn out competing publications in any one market. For instance, the Nazi Party in early 1930—even before its electoral breakthrough—already owned seventy newspapers of various publishing frequencies.¹⁴ Nazis in Berlin could choose between the *Beobachter* and *Der Angriff* (*The Assault*), socialists between the *Vorwärts* and *Der Abend* (*The Evening*), and communists among the *Welt am Abend* (*World in the Evening*), *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung* (*Worker's Illustrated Newspaper*), and *Rote Fahne*.¹⁵ Altogether party-affiliated newspapers constituted half of all papers, with the rest often taking their cues from ideological standard bearers like the *Beobachter* or *Vorwärts*. The politically diverse newspapers examined in this chapter should furnish a fair representation of the press in interwar Germany.

¹⁴ Hans-Dieter Kübler, "Lenkung, Zensur und Propaganda. Die Presse unter dem NS-Regime," in *Die Kultur der 30er und 40er Jahre*, ed. Werner Faulstich (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2009), 158. For more on other Nazi publications, see Russel Lemmons, *Goebbels and Der Angriff* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1994); Dennis Showalter, *Little Man, What Now? Der Stürmer in the Weimar Republic* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986); Peter Stein, *Die NS-Gaupresse, 1925–1933: Forschungsbericht, Quellenkritik, neue Bestandsaufnahme* (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1987); and, Oron J. Hale, *The Captive Press in the Third Reich* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964).

¹⁵ For more on other communist publications, see Sean McMeekin, *The Red Millionaire: A Political Biography of Willi Münzenberg, Moscow's Secret Propaganda Tsar in the West, 1917–1940* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

Japan in the Press

In the period examined, German newspapers exhibited a persistent interest in Japanese athleticism, culture, and traditions, yet despite this inquisitiveness they often still viewed Japan with some lingering exoticism. In addition, the press at times portrayed Japan as economically unstable but menacing, emphasized its role in upholding the existing imperialist world order, and criticized Japanese aggression and dishonesty in its interaction with the League of Nations. Although Japan did not always appear positively in the 1920s and early 1930s, Germany changed so drastically since the Nazi “seizure of power” that it began to see Japan differently.

In the interwar years, German newspapers showered much attention and admiration for Japanese athletes, especially tennis players and swimmers who participated in international events. In 1933, the Japanese tennis team arrived in Berlin to compete with Germany for advancement in the Davis Cup tournament. The *Vossische Zeitung*, having already noticed during the French Open that the Japanese were “fast like weasels,” anticipated a tough match for the home team.¹⁶ The *Kreuz-Zeitung* likewise feared a challenge for the Germans.¹⁷ Yet the visitors’ complete annihilation of the host players still shocked and impressed the newspapers. An account of the singles matches praised the “resourceful, cold-blooded and strong Japanese player.”¹⁸ The next day’s article on the

¹⁶ „Vor allem Nunoï zeigte phantastische Sachen; beide sind schnell wie die Wiesel und nehmen die schwersten Bälle,“ in “Japans hervorragendes Doppel,” *Vossische Zeitung: Berlinische Zeitung von Staats- und gelehrten Sachen*, 27 May 1933, Evening Edition. Hereafter VZ. In German, comparing someone to a weasel carries none of the negative connotations as in English.

¹⁷ “Unsere Chancen gegen Japan. Die Gäste rechnen mit leichtem Sieg,” *Neue Preußische Kreuz-Zeitung*, 9 June 1933. Hereafter KZ.

¹⁸ „Gottfried von Cramm fand von Spielbeginn an gegen S a t o h sein Selbstvertrauen nicht, und es war einem so findigen, kaltblütigen und starken Gegner gegenüber zu spät, als er seine sonstige Form gewaltsam erkämpfte,“ in “Japans entscheidender 2:0 Vorsprung,” VZ, 10 June 1933.

doubles matches blasted the lackluster German team but also gave credit to the “fair and tireless” Japanese team for its tactics and for playing “like a machine.”¹⁹ Japanese swimmers too captured headlines. After a solid showing in the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics, Japanese swimmers impressed German sports writers with victories over the hitherto dominant Americans in 1931. A reporter for the *Germania* looked forward to an exciting rematch in the 1932 Games in Los Angeles but also lamented the “totally hopeless situation” of German aquatics.²⁰ By 1933, a sufficiently impressed contributor for the *Völkischer Beobachter* reported that the Japanese held the world’s top positions in a whole range of aquatic events.²¹

The papers generally appreciated interaction with Japan in other sports as well. The *Vossische Zeitung*, for example, urged Berliners to consider the invitation by the *Osaka Asahi Daily* to a Brandenburg soccer club for exhibition games in Japan.²² The *Rote Fahne* also looked forward to the first ever jiu-jitsu and judo matches between German working-class athletes and Japanese, “both masters in their classes.”²³ When Professor Kanō Jigorō 嘉納治五郎, the founder of judo, visited Germany in mid-1933, the *Völkischer Beobachter* somehow linked Kanō’s effort to promote exercise in daily life in Japan with Nazi youth

¹⁹ „Wie eine tadellos arbeitende Maschine spielten die fairen und ermüdlichen Gäste zusammen,“ in “Japan hat’s schon geschafft. Unsere Davispokal-Niederlage – Satoh-Nunois leichter Sieg im Doppel,” VZ, 11 June 1933.

²⁰ „Ganz hoffnungslos aber ist die Lage für die deutschen Kraulschwimmer,“ in “Japans Schwimmer vor Amerika,” VZ, 4 September 1931. See also “Japan besiegt Amerika,” *Germania: Zeitung für das deutsche Volk*, 4 September 1931. Hereafter G.

²¹ “Japans Schwimmer in Front,” *Völkischer Beobachter: Kampfblatt der nationalsozialistischen Bewegung Großdeutschlands*, 8–9 January 1933. Hereafter VB.

²² “Japanische Einladung an den V.B.B. Eine Berliner Vereinself soll nach Japan,” VZ, 8 October 1931.

²³ „Zum ersten Male starten Japaner gegen Arbeitersportler in Deutschland. Beide sind Meister ihrer Klasse,“ in “Japaner am Start Essen-Berlin,” *Die Rote Fahne: Zentralorgan der kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands*, 1 October 1932. Hereafter RF.

indoctrination programs.²⁴ Whatever their ideologies, the newspapers all found something they could admire in Japanese athleticism. Yet despite this respect for Japanese sportsmen and their achievements, the press ultimately seemed far more interested in German athletes. Praise for Japanese excellence in tennis and aquatics served merely as a mirror to reflect on Germany's dismal performance, and the more politically extreme papers liberally cherry-picked what suited their ideologies in Japanese athletics.

In addition, the newspapers showed a definite interest in Japanese culture and tradition by featuring performance and visual arts, films, literature, travelogues, and expert commentaries. Frequently the papers advertised artistic performances with Japanese themes, indicating a strong public curiosity in Japan. One of the most successful musical comedies, *The Geisha*, commanded such popularity among German audiences that it ran continuously for at least seventy-five nights just in the first half of that very turbulent year of 1919.²⁵ Even in 1932, well over thirty years after the musical's birth, a commentator still found it interesting enough to warrant a preview of a performance.²⁶ German opera fans also had access to Japanese culture in the form of *Madama Butterfly* by Giacomo Puccini.²⁷ On the big screen as well moviegoers could watch Japan-themed films like *Die Kwannon von Okadera* (*The Kwannon of Okadera*), directed by the pioneer cinematographer Carl Froelich (for more on German motion pictures on Japan, see Chapter Two).²⁸

²⁴ "Exz. Professor Dr. Jigoro Kano in Berlin," VB, 17 June 1933.

²⁵ Advertisement, "DIE GEISHA," VZ, 29 March 1919.

²⁶ Dr. Fritz Brust, "'Die Geisha,'" G, 1 January 1932.

²⁷ Advertisement, KZ, 21 January 1932.

²⁸ Advertisement, VZ, 1 January 1921.

Besides performance arts and films, Japanese visual arts and literature also received much press attention. For example, the *Vossische Zeitung* recommended an exhibition of woodblock prints showcasing Japan's portrayals of Westerners in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.²⁹ The *Germania* meanwhile had an expert contribute an article to familiarize readers with Japanese poetry.³⁰ Readers could also find short stories, such as one on *Yoshiwara*, the pleasure quarter of old Edo, by the acclaimed journalist and author Hans Natonek.³¹ The Marxist *Rote Fahne* and *Vorwärts* appropriately carried poems and short stories describing the livelihood of workers in Japan.³²

As international travel would not become popular until after World War II, during the interwar period readers curious about other countries had to make do with firsthand accounts written by notable individuals for the newspapers. In the 1920s and early 1930s, travelers could find only two consistently reliable options to journey from Germany to Japan—the Hamburg-Amerika Line or the Norddeutscher Lloyd Line.³³ Such a costly and time-consuming undertaking naturally remained out of reach to most people; small wonder then readers had to experience Japan vicariously. Hanns Maria Lux, a writer of some standing,

²⁹ M. O., “Japanischer Europäer-Spiegel. Die ältesten künstlerischen Darstellungen,” VZ, 29 September 1931.

³⁰ P. Dr. Andreas Eckardt, “Japanische Poesie,” G, 3 March 1932.

³¹ Hans Natonek, “Yoshiwara,” VZ, 3 August 1919. Natonek authored several novels and short stories, and worked as the chief editor of the *Neue Leipziger Zeitung* from 1917 to 1933.

³² Moriyama Kae, “Aus der Mandschurei zieht der Sturm auf,” RF, 15 March 1932; and Fritz Tenes, “Takagi streikt. Aus dem japanischen Arbeiterleben,” V, 5 October 1932.

³³ Advertisement, “Deutsche Frachtdampferlinie nach OSTASIEN,” VZ, 4 November 1921. The Trans-Siberian Railway, reopened to regular traffic only in the mid-1920s, depended on Soviet goodwill and political stability, while flying to East Asia resembled an adventure more than a means of transportation. The first flight from Germany to Japan took place in 1928 and lasted thirty days. Lufthansa did not attempt to fly to Tokyo until 1938, when the super long range “Condor” became operational. The flight spanned three days for a total of 42 flying hours. For more on Lufthansa's development, see Joachim Wachtel, *As Time Flies By: The History of Lufthansa since 1926* (Frankfurt am Main: Lufthansa Druck & Distribution GmbH, 2002).

shared his tour of Japan's ancient capital Nara with readers of the *Germania*.³⁴ Adventure seekers reading the *Völkischer Beobachter* would certainly relish the account by Wolfgang von Gronau when he made a stop in Japan during his round-the-world flight in 1932 (for more on German travelogues on Japan, see Chapter Three).³⁵

In addition to travelogues, the newspapers regularly carried expert commentaries to enlighten the public about Japan. For example, the journal by Professor Carl Heinrich Becker, a former Prussian minister of culture, appealed to the educated and businesslike audience of the *Vossische Zeitung*.³⁶ Of the six papers surveyed, only the *Vossische Zeitung* had its own correspondent in Japan, Professor J. Plaut, to contribute frequent articles to explain aspects of Japanese culture like New Year's rituals.³⁷ Meanwhile the *Völkischer Beobachter* used its own Japanologist, Professor Karl Haushofer, the so-called "father of geopolitics," to educate readers about conditions in Japan (more on Haushofer in Chapter Three).³⁸ After several fires in Tokyo the paper pointed out sarcastically that half of the buildings in the "so-called 'modern' city Tokyo" were still constructed with wood and paper.³⁹ The Japanese emperor

³⁴ Hanns Maria Lux, "Reisebrief aus Nara-Japan," G, 9–10 September 1931. Lux served as leader of the Nazi *Reichsschrifttumskammer*, clear evidence that he occupied a notable place in the literary scene.

³⁵ Wolfgang von Gronau, "Hier erzählt: W. von Gronau. Im deutschen Flugboot um den Erdball," VB, 11–13 December 1932. Gronau fought as a pilot during World War I, and his 1932 circumnavigation flight was already his third. During World War II he served as a military attaché in the German embassy in Tokyo.

³⁶ C. H. Becker, "Reise-Eindrücke aus Ostasien," VZ, 5 February 1933.

³⁷ J. Plaut, "Neujahr in Japan," VZ, 21 February 1921.

³⁸ Prof. Dr. Karl Haushofer, "Sitten und Gebräuche in Japan," VB, 15–16 January 1933. The German army dispatched Haushofer to Japan in 1908 as an advisor and instructor for the Japanese army, and there Haushofer became a convinced Japanophile.

³⁹ „Die sogenannte ‚moderne‘ Stadt Tokio,“ in Walter Rietschel, "Warum brennt es so viel in Tokio?" VB, 7 January 1933.

too aroused some interest. A journalist for the *Kreuz-Zeitung* related anecdotes of the monarch disguising as a commoner to inspect his subjects' livelihood under his reign.⁴⁰

Although the newspapers expressed real curiosity in Japanese culture and tradition, they remained firmly a product of the Orientalist stereotypes and Eurocentrism prevalent in the period. The *Kreuz-Zeitung* applauded Tokyo's decision to require students to learn Romanizing the Japanese alphabet and predicted enthusiastically that abandoning the Asian characters would only bring positive results to Japan, as amply proven by Atatürk's Latinization of the Turkish script.⁴¹ Nor could the commentators refrain from making blanket statements like "the Japanese found no architectural style of their own."⁴² Moreover, oftentimes the press seemed much more interested in how well known German culture had become in Japan rather than in Japanese culture itself. The nationalistic *Kreuz-Zeitung* understandably celebrated the popularity of German war movies in Japan and the adoption of German print technology by Japanese newspapers.⁴³ Meanwhile Catholic *Germania* discussed the reception in Tokyo of German paintings depicting Jesus and Mary.⁴⁴ Even the internationalist *Vorwärts* expressed pleasant surprise that Japanese orchestras and choirs

⁴⁰ Hans Helbig, "Der Doppelgänger des Mikado," KZ, 6 January 1933. It is uncertain to which specific episode the reporter was referring.

⁴¹ "Japan schreibt Lateinisch," KZ, 23 June 1933.

⁴² „Die Japaner haben keinen eigenen neuen Stil gefunden," in Erich v. Salzmänn, "Neu-Tokyo," VZ, 8 June 1921, Evening Edition.

⁴³ "Film-Aufschwung in Japan," *Kreuz-Zeitung*, 20 January 1933; and "Japans Zeitungsriesen: Deutsche Maschinen – musterhafte Einrichtungen," KZ, 12 April 1933. Note that the German newspaper realized the enormous size of its Japanese counterparts.

⁴⁴ "Mutter und Kind in Japan. Die Ausstellung in Tokio," G, 28 May 1933.

performed Beethoven's symphonies and sang Haydn's *Die Schöpfung* (*The Creation*) in German.⁴⁵

Thus, although the press expressed much inquisitiveness in Japanese traditions, at times Japan seemed to garner compliment merely for being a diligent student of Western civilization rather than for maintaining its own culture. Furthermore information on Japan in the press stemmed overwhelmingly from Westerners writing about Japan and not from the Japanese themselves, as Western writers created the operas, movies, short stories, travelogues, and commentaries accessible to the proverbial German in the street. In particular the plots of both *The Geisha* and *Madama Butterfly* revolved around the interaction between a European man and a Japanese woman. In *The Geisha*, a betrothed English sailor justified his kissing a geisha by claiming that he was only introducing her to the magic of the Western way of life.⁴⁶ In *Madama Butterfly*, a geisha jilted by an American sailor stoically committed ritual suicide because she could not bear the shame of seeing her lover marry an American woman: "To die with honor, when one can no longer live with honor."⁴⁷ Although there is no

⁴⁵ Klaus Pringsheim, "Deutsche Musik in Japan. Ein Beitrag zur inneren Wandlung der japanischen Kultur," V, 9 July 1932.

⁴⁶ The dialogue between the sailor Fairfax and the geisha Mimosa is too good to miss:

Fairfax: You don't give away a heart with every verse, do you, little Almond-eye—not even a kiss!

Mimosa: A what?

Fairfax: A kiss!

Mimosa: A kiss? We do not have them in Japan.

Fairfax: What? No kisses in this country? Now, here's something for me to teach you.

Mimosa: What is it—a kiss?

Fairfax: You're a charming little geisha,

Quite the nicest girl in Asia,

But I fear there's something missing,

Oh, my pretty Japanese!

English, French and German misses

Do not ask me what a kiss is,

They are all expert at kissing.

From Act I, in Sidney Jones, *The Geisha: A Story of a Tea House, a Japanese Musical Play in Two Acts* (London: Hopwood & Crew, 1896).

⁴⁷ Giacomo Puccini, *Madama Butterfly: A Japanese Tragedy* (New York: G. Ricordi, 1905).

sure way to uncover whether German audiences seriously believed what we today consider stereotypes about Japan, we have seen unmistakably that the journalists' depiction of Japan was highly romantic and consisted mainly of Western constructs of how they imagined Japan *should* be.

Since the newspapers already had a stubborn preconception of Japan, they voiced their surprise and explained as mysteries when Japanese reality defied their expectation. One such preconceived notion had it that close ethnic and cultural ties linked China and Japan in one East Asian bloc. The *Vossische Zeitung*, commenting on the Manchurian Incident, suggested that Japan had forgotten the Chinese origins of its script, literature, art, statecraft, and religion.⁴⁸ The *Vorwärts* remarked too that Japanese and Chinese should be “ethnic brothers.”⁴⁹ Yet when the conflict persisted, the press became frustrated in its inability to understand East Asian affairs. The *Kreuz-Zeitung*, after searching in vain for answers to the question, “What is this ‘yellow war’ all about?”, advised readers to pay close attention to Asia’s inscrutable “sphinx face.”⁵⁰ The *Vossische Zeitung* meanwhile mused that the war made no political sense to anyone outside the Japanese officer corps.⁵¹ When Japan’s representative to the League of Nations, Matsuoka Yōsuke 松岡洋右, attempted to justify Japan’s action in Manchuria by arguing that the Japanese mentality differed fundamentally from that of the West, the *Vorwärts* commented dryly that if Japan could not comprehend elementary moral concepts then indeed its mentality would stand totally foreign to a

⁴⁸ “Japan fühlt sich jeder Lage gewachsen,” VZ, 22 December 1931.

⁴⁹ „Beide können viel leichter Russisch als die Sprache des Rassenbruders erlernen,“ in Nathan Gurdus, “Chinesisch-Japanische Momentbilder,” V, 3 December 1931.

⁵⁰ „Aber Asiens Sphinxgesicht erfordert unsere Aufmerksamkeit, und es ist immer besser, auf Entwicklungen vorbereitet zu sein, als sich von ihnen überraschen zu lassen,“ in “Der gelbe Krieg,” KZ, 6 March 1932, Pictorial Supplement.

⁵¹ Dr. Sven von Müller, “Der Schwarze Drache,” VZ, 17 May 1932.

“Western” one.⁵² The *Kreuz-Zeitung* verged on giving up trying to solve the mystery, “What does Japan want?”—a question “almost impossible for the white men to answer.”⁵³ It also complained that the European simply could not put himself into the position of the Japanese, since “the thought and feeling of the Asians remained perpetually secretive and unsolvable.”⁵⁴ Finally, the *Vossische Zeitung* conceded that Japanese domestic politics presented quite a “riddle” for Western observers to tackle.⁵⁵ Thus by the newspapers’ own admission Japanese domestic and external politics confronted Europeans with a puzzle wrapped in an enigma.

In the years between 1919 and 1933 the German press also paid very close attention to Japan’s economy and concentrated on three conflicting but related aspects: the economy expanded as Japan engaged in forceful territorial acquisition and rearmament, the resultant state of crisis the economy plunged into from overheating, and Japan’s worrisome strategy to export its way out of its financial straits.

Japan’s economic growth in the 1920s and relatively quick recovery from the world economic crisis after 1929 definitely impressed German observers in the press. After the Versailles Conference, the *Germania* carried an article detailing how the Japanese economy

⁵² „Man soll also lieber die Konsequenzen ziehen und Japan aus dem Völkerbund ausscheiden lassen, der auf jenen elementaren ‚westlichen‘ Moralbegriffen beruht, die den Japanern völlig fremd sind, als daß man der anders gearteten japanischen Mentalität zuliebe das schuldlose und ohnmächtige China seinem Schicksal preisgibt,“ in “Neue japanische Gewalttaten. Während der Völkerbund verhandelt...,” V, 23 November 1932, Evening Edition.

⁵³ „Bei der Rätselhaftigkeit der ostasiatischen Denkart für uns weißbrassige Menschen erscheint es schwierig und fast unmöglich, mit einiger Gewißheit die Frage ‚Was will Japan?‘“ in “Was will Japan?” KZ, 7 January 1933.

⁵⁴ „Dem Europäer wird das Denken und Fühlen des Asiaten immer geheimnisvoll und unlösbar bleiben; er vermag sich in seine Gedankengänge mit ihren tiefsten hintergründen kaum hineinzusetzen,“ in “Alarmschüsse aus Japan,” KZ, 18 May 1932.

⁵⁵ „Das merkwürdige Geheimnis, mit dem der Fall umgeben wird, und das für Außenstehende lächerlich geringe Gewicht der Gründe, die für die Notwendigkeit des Regierungswechsels ins Feld geführt werden, geben dem abendländischen Beobachter wieder einmal Rätsel der japanischen Innenpolitik auf,“ in “Faschismus in Japan?” VZ, 24 May 1933.

had benefited from the Great War at Europe's expense by reducing foreign debt and increasing exports.⁵⁶ The expansion in Japan's shipping industry in particular caught the attention of the papers. In 1921, the *Vossische Zeitung* advised readers not to dismiss lightly the claim by the shipping concern Nippon Yusen Kaisha 日本郵船會社 to be "the world's largest shipping company."⁵⁷ After the outbreak of the world economic crisis the same newspaper reported that while Europe languished in economic doldrums, Japanese shipping remained active and profitable.⁵⁸ As Japan imported more iron from Germany in 1933 to sustain its invasion of North China and rearmament program, the *Vossische Zeitung* celebrated with a sigh of relief Japanese purchasing power in a time of plummeting commodity prices.⁵⁹

Though impressed with Japan's economic performance after World War I and during the world economic crisis, the German press by no means blinded itself to Japan's serious financial difficulties, several of which resulted precisely from the phenomenal expansion. In fact the word "crisis" (*Krise*) appeared regularly in articles on the Japanese economy.⁶⁰ Already in 1921, merely two years after Versailles, the *Vossische Zeitung* pointed out that Japan, a Great War victor, suffered from the typical postwar ailments of inflation and

⁵⁶ "Die Entwicklung des japanischen Handels," G, 4 August 1919, Evening Edition.

⁵⁷ „Nippon Yusen Kaisha. Größte Handels-Reederei der Welt,“ in "Von der japanischen Schifffahrt," VZ, 7 January 1921.

⁵⁸ "Schiffarts-Konjunktur in Japan," VZ, 23 March 1933; and "Lebhafte Ostasienfahrt," VZ, 2 April 1933.

⁵⁹ "Japanische Käufe am Eisenmarkt," VZ, 30 March 1933, Evening Edition; "Ostasiatische Eisenkäufe," VZ, 5 January 1933; and, "Japan als Eisenkäufer. Vollbeschäftigte Rüstungsindustrie," VZ, 2 February 1933, Evening Edition.

⁶⁰ For example, „Angesichts der schweren wirtschaftlichen Krise, welche Japan im verflossenen Jahre durchgemacht hat, und die es noch lange nicht überwunden zu haben scheint, wenn auch vielleicht die schwierigsten Augenblicke vorüber sind, dürften einige Angaben über die japanischen Finanzen von allgemeinem Interesse sein,“ in "Japanische Finanzen," VZ, 14 February 1921, Evening Edition; and Wilhelm Schulze, "Der Yen in der Krise," VZ, 15 June 1933.

government spending swollen by military provisions, which in Japan's case ate up an atypical fifty per cent of the whole budget. The correspondent, the abovementioned Professor Plaut, simply could not conceal his shock, "In the history of the world there exists no precedent in which military outlay made up *half of the entire budget* of a people in peacetime."⁶¹ Six years later, when Japan launched a naval construction program to replace older vessels, he revisited the issue of military spending and again question why Japan wanted new weapons in a time of financial stress when it recognized no obvious enemies beyond the horizon.⁶² Later, in the aftermath of the Manchurian Incident, the press across the political spectrum attributed heavy financial burdens to Japan's adventurism. The *Völkischer Beobachter* reported that Tokyo had to float thirty to fifty million Yen of debts to pay for the expedition.⁶³ As Japan abandoned the gold standard late in 1931 the *Germania* traced the reason behind this course of action to the costs of operation in Manchuria.⁶⁴ The *Vossische Zeitung*, while acknowledging Japan's desire to protect its investments in Manchuria, remarked that the war in China pushed the border of economic rationality by risking American sanctions.⁶⁵ Both Marxist papers, the *Vorwärts* and *Rote Fahne*, perceived the conflict as one in which a capitalist imperial power lashed out aggressively in response to economic pressures.⁶⁶

⁶¹ „In der Geschichte der Welt liegt kein Präzedenzfall dafür vor, daß die militärischen Ausgaben eines Volkes in Friedenszeiten n a h e z u d i e h ä l f t e s e i n e r G e s a m t a u s g a b e n betragen sollen,“ in J. Plaut, “Die Sorgen der Sieger,” VZ, 24 February 1921.

⁶² J. Plaut, “Japans Flottenprogramm,” VZ, 9 January 1927, Post Edition.

⁶³ “Völkerbundsrat schwätzt – Japan marschiert,” VB, 24 November 1931.

⁶⁴ “Japan verläßt den Goldstandard. Die Kosten des mandschurischen Abenteuers,” G, 17 December 1931.

⁶⁵ “Washington sanktionsbereit. Gemeinsamer Wirtschaftsdruck auf Japan,” VZ, 28 February 1932.

⁶⁶ “Japan als Wirtschaftsmacht. Kräfte und Ziele des japanischen Imperialismus,” V, 3 February 1932; and, “Der Krieg im Ferne Osten und die internationale Lage,” RF, 3 February 1932.

Besides viewing Japan's armament program and military engagement as "overextending itself," the press also demonstrated how Japan lay at the mercy of boycotts of Japanese goods by China, Japan's most important export market.⁶⁷ In 1919, when Japan had its right to inherit Germany's concessions in China recognized at Versailles, student protests and worker strikes broke out in Beijing and Shanghai, followed by a nationwide boycott of Japanese merchandise. Known as the May Fourth Movement, the demonstrations and boycott impressed the *Germania* enough to attribute a local Japanese withdrawal to the movement's damage to Japan.⁶⁸ As to be expected, the Manchurian Incident triggered another patriotic wave of refusals to buy Japanese. The *Vossische Zeitung* detailed that Japan's exports to China shrank to sixty per cent of the previous volume and depicted Japan's retreat from the gold standard as part of the fallout.⁶⁹ Another commentator noted that while in the short term Japan effortlessly captured city after city in China, in the long run time worked for China, "Japan's most dangerous opponent."⁷⁰ The *Vorwärts* went so far as to praise the boycott as beneficial to stimulating the growth of Chinese manufacturing and a just economic weapon against "the Japanese bomber pilots."⁷¹

In order to reduce its dependence on China and diversify its export destinations, Japan attempted to open new markets by sending its goods to other parts of Asia and Europe, an act the German press perceived as a threat to European economic primacy. In 1921, the

⁶⁷ B. B., "Japan übernimmt sich," VZ, 19 January 1933, Evening Edition.

⁶⁸ "Wie das chinesische Volk die Japaner boykottiert," G, 2 August 1919, Evening Edition.

⁶⁹ "China boykottiert Japan," VZ, 22 December 1931.

⁷⁰ „Der gefährlichste Gegner Japans ist – C h i n a. Die Feststellung klingt gewagt in einem Zeitpunkt, wo die japanische Armee fast widerstandslos eine chinesische Stadt nach der andern besetzt... Aber die Zeit arbeitet für China," in B.B., "Japan übernimmt sich," VZ, 19 January 1933, Evening Edition.

⁷¹ "Chinas Boykott gegen Japan. Wirtschaftliche Waffen gegen Bombenflieger," V, 3 November 1931.

Vossische Zeitung detailed how industries in Thuringia had to compete with Japan, which had taken advantage of the wartime Allied blockade of Germany and penetrated markets previously dominated by Thuringian exports, especially in the areas of toys, porcelains, and Christmas-tree decorations.⁷² The export of rayon provided another realm of market competition between Germany and Japan. The *Kreuz-Zeitung*, noting “the fantastic development of the Japanese rayon industry,” asked its readers, “Is Japan spinning a web around us?”⁷³ When Gandhi organized a boycott of British products in India, Japan stepped right in to satisfy the demands of “fellow Asians.” Two separate newspapers, however, described the event menacingly as “Japan conquering India.”⁷⁴ What admiration the press showed for Japanese economic strength had thus evolved into wariness of a growing threat.

Although one cannot doubt that the Japanese economy attracted much coverage by the German press, attention alone does not equal automatic approval, and one can detect a strong whiff of resentment in the articles on Japan. This phenomenon naturally became visible whenever Germany entered into direct competition with Japan, which allegedly enjoyed unfair advantages of a depressed currency, longer working hours, and low wages.⁷⁵ The correspondent who wrote on the expansion of Japanese shipping lamented that it was Europe’s tragic and senseless self-destruction during World War I and the disbandment of the German merchant fleet that opened the way for the upstart to penetrate into areas of

⁷² Dr. W. H. Edwards, “Thüringen und Japan,” VZ, 7 September 1921.

⁷³ “Spinnt uns Japan ein? Die phantastische Entwicklung der japanischen Kunstseideindustrie,” KZ, 15 January 1921. See also, “Japans Kunstseide-Konkurrenz,” VZ, 27 February 1933, Evening Edition.

⁷⁴ “Japan erobert Indien. Die Wirkung von Gandhis Boykott-Parole,” VZ, 18 September 1931; and, “Japans erobert Indien,” G, 12 March 1933.

⁷⁵ “Rückgang im Ostasien-Geschäft,” VZ, 15 April 1933, Evening Edition.

previous European dominance.⁷⁶ Nor did the papers neglect the social and diplomatic costs behind Japan's growth and expansion. The *Vossische Zeitung* reminded its readers that Japan produced its competitively priced textiles by literally trapping girls in a labor system bordering on slavery. Should Japan fail to sustain its level of exports, "the distressful social situation of the Japanese industrial workers would further degenerate."⁷⁷ One writer even composed a short story, complete with a poem, to expose the despair of the factory girls—and all these criticisms from a pro-business newspaper.⁷⁸ As Japan extended its economic activities into China, the press also noticed its growing dependence on and vulnerability to the Chinese market, ultimately contributing to the economically irrational adventure in Manchuria and resultant Chinese boycotts. In addition, the press harbored no illusion regarding Japan's paranoiac arms buildup and its detrimental effects on the economy, an unnatural condition, as one commentator saw it, reminiscent of the Kaiserreich's on the eve of World War I.⁷⁹ Putting together these images of the Japanese economy in the German press, one gathers the unmistakable impression that Japan's finances teetered on the brink of disaster and stood one wrong move away from a total meltdown, a trap Japan attempted to escape by exporting aggressively and thereby hurting German interests.

German newspapers across the Weimar political spectrum all portrayed Japan as one among many imperialist powers. Already on 20 September 1931, just two days after the

⁷⁶ "Von der japanischen Schifffahrt," VZ, 7 January 1921.

⁷⁷ „Elend, wie die sozialen Bedingungen der japanischen Industrie-Arbeiter schon sind, würden sie sich noch wesentlich verschlechtern, wenn Japan die auswärtigen Absatzmärkte nicht halten und erweitern könnte,“ in Prof. Dr. Hermann Levy, "Japans Wirtschaftskampf. Verhängnisvolle Expansionspolitik," VZ, 5 December 1931.

⁷⁸ Hermann Lint, "Kimono," VZ, 14 January 1932, Evening Edition. One can only wonder whether the paper would criticize German businesses as harshly had they treated their employees as egregiously.

⁷⁹ Erich von Salzman, "Japans wirtschaftliche Lage," VZ, 18 July 1921, Evening Edition.

outbreak of conflict in Manchuria, the *Germania* placed Japanese actions on the same level as America's continental expansion, English overlordship in Egypt, and French prerogatives under the Versailles Treaty.⁸⁰ The *Völkischer Beobachter* likewise saw the Incident happening under the auspices of Anglo-French-Japanese friendship.⁸¹ Not surprisingly the Marxist *Vorwärts* and *Rote Fahne* described the struggle as part of a global imperialistic war to subjugate peasants and workers. "Japanese policies against China," proclaimed the socialist paper, "never followed the tune of racial feelings but clear *imperialistic power politics*."⁸² Furthermore the newspaper attributed the helplessness of the League of Nations to the connivance of Japan with other powers—"the League of Nations was powerless because the great powers controlling it wanted it to be so."⁸³ The communist sheet minced no words and denounced the League outright as the center of an organization of war criminals and the Manchurian Incident an imperialistic plot against Chinese communists.⁸⁴ Interestingly enough, the *Rote Fahne* and *Völkischer Beobachter* found themselves speaking in unison to accuse France as the merchant of death for shipping arms to Japan.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ "Explosionsgefahr," G, 20 September 1931.

⁸¹ J. Frenck, "Die japanische Politik in China," VB, 2 October 1931.

⁸² „Japans Politik gegen China war nie ein Spiel auf den Saiten des Rassegefühls, sondern klare imperialistische Machtpolitik," in Peter Garwy, "Sturmzeichen im Fernen Osten. Imperialistischer Machtkampf um die Mandschurei," V, 22 September 1931.

⁸³ „**Aber der Völkerbund war machtlos, weil die Großmächte die ihn beherrschen, es so gewollt haben**," in "SAI. und IGB. gegen Japan. Und gegen das Versagen der Völkerbundsmächte," V, 7 February 1932. The S.A.I. and I.G.B. stood respectively for Sozialistische Arbeiterinternationale (Socialist Workers International) and Internationale Gewerkschaftsbunde (International Federation of Unions).

⁸⁴ "Hände weg von den chinesischen Sowjets! Der Krieg um die Aufteilung Chinas. Die japanische Regierung befiehlt allgemeine Mobilmachung – Amerika tritt auf den Plan – Der Völkerbund als Organisationszentrum der Kriegsverbrecher – Ein imperialistisches Komplott gegen die chinesischen Sowjets," RF, 16 October 1931.

⁸⁵ "Französische Kanonen für Japan," RF, 26 January 1932; and, Dr. T., "Frankreich ist Japans Waffenlieferant," VB, 13 February 1932.

Yet words alone did not quite fulfill the newspapers' purpose to depict Japan as just one of several imperialist powers, so they deployed clever illustrations to convey their message. As early as December 1921, during discussions among Japan, America, Britain and France at the Washington Naval Conference on disarmament, the *Vossische Zeitung* carried a cartoon to caricature the unwillingness of the victorious powers from World War I to step forward for arms reduction. Titled "Disarmament Conference: 'You first, then I!'", the drawing featured some soldiers to represent the participants, with each holding on to his dear weapons and volunteering the man next to himself for disarmament (Fig. 1.1). The soldier on the far left appeared Japanese, with the standard five-cornered star on his helmet and the hilt of his sword just visible below his belt. In this image the Japanese soldier represented just one of the powers, indistinguishable from the rest.



Fig. 1.1 Cartoon by Paul Simmel in the *Vossische Zeitung* on 4 December 1921. The soldier on the left symbolizes Japan, which, like the other major powers, was reluctant to disarm voluntarily.

An illustration in the *Kreuz-Zeitung* developed further still this theme of Japan as one of the heavily armed powers. In an article attacking Versailles's restriction on the size and equipment of German armed forces when other powers armed themselves to the teeth, the author marshaled a visual aid to get across his message (Fig. 1.2). The chart on the right showed how Germany lacked an air force while other nations freely developed military

aviation. The other two charts highlighted Germany's deprived conditions on land and at sea. Each chart included Japan's state of armament alongside those of other powers as a point of reference. The illustrator certainly saw no "have-not" solidarity between Germany and Japan, which appeared as an enforcer of the Versailles *Diktat* despised by nationalistic Germans.



Fig. 1.2 Illustrations in the *Kreuz-Zeitung*, on 7 December 1931, comparing the armaments of various countries. The one on the left compares the navies, with Japan being the third largest in the world. The middle one compares the armies, and the right one compares the air force, which Germany did not officially have.

While the *Kreuz-Zeitung* saw the League as stifflingly pacifistic, the *Rote Fahne* viewed it as menacingly militant, all the while maintaining that Japan constituted but one member of an imperialistic bloc. In a cartoon titled "The League of Nations at work," a monstrous creature wearing the League's hat rains down death and destruction on a city (Fig. 1.3). Readers could not have missed the Japanese flag flying alongside those of the United States, France, and Britain, just as the imperialist powers collaborated to let Japan occupy and exploit Manchuria. In a drawing of the "Geneva Disarmament Swindle," a monster representing the weapons industries of various nations basks in the sun (pun intended probably) of Japanese arms contracts while slithering its way to China (Fig. 1.4). Once again Japan appeared as one of the imperialist powers conspiring to subjugate a peaceful people.

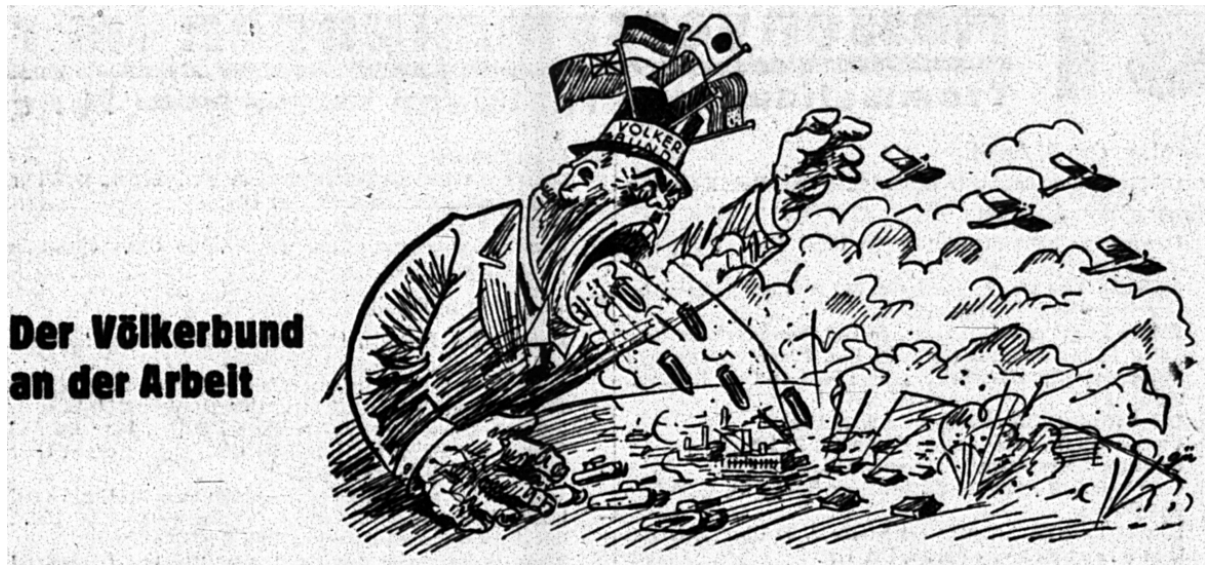


Fig. 1.3 Cartoon in the *Rote Fahne*, on 3 April 1932. The League of Nations is portrayed as a monster raining bombs, and unleashing tanks and warplanes against a Chinese city. The Japanese flag is prominently featured on the hat of the monster.



Fig. 1.4 Cartoon in the *Rote Fahne*, on 26 February 1932, urging workers to strike against the armaments industries supplying arms to Japan. Japan is symbolized by a sun labeled “Japanese contracts” that shines on a creature snaking toward Shanghai.

Even in less controversial and relevant contexts the German newspapers still situated Japan alongside other powers. In 1932, after Gandhi successfully wrested some concessions from the British government, the *Vorwärts* carried a cartoon to celebrate his nonviolent approach to seek political changes. In the drawing, a circle of officers wearing neat uniforms surrounds in wonderment a half-naked, scrawny Gandhi, remarking, “Strange, that this teeny civilian represents some sort of power” (Fig. 1.5). The Japanese officer, stereotypically shorter than the others, takes his place as one power alongside the Italian, Russian, French, British and American. Finally, during the 1933 London Economic Conference, the

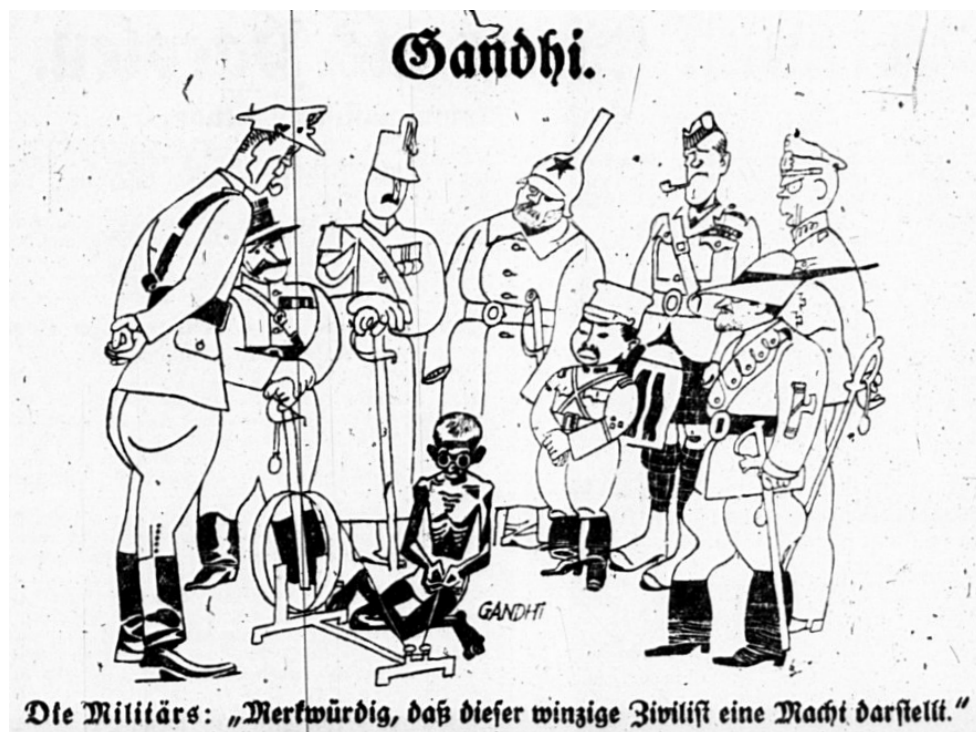


Fig. 1.5 Cartoon in the *Vorwärts*, on 5 January 1932. The imperialist forces gather to marvel at the moral power that one peaceful man could command. Japan, caricatured as a short figure, stands alongside other imperialist powers.

Völkischer Beobachter printed an image to mock the selfishness and helplessness of the powers in face of the global economic crisis (Fig. 1.6). As the patient “World Economy” lies dying, Uncle Sam representing the United States bickers with a man personifying the French

Republic. Tucked in the far right stands a short figure depicting Japan, looking rather clueless and squinting through the indispensable horn-rimmed glasses.

There can remain no doubt that the German press portrayed Japan as just another imperialist power. In addition, the cartoons mocking the disarmament and economic conferences deliberately set a distance between Germany and the other empires by omitting a figure representing Germany and showing the powers', including Japan's, inability to handle the world economic crisis and unfair suppression of Germany's reasonable aspirations.



Fig. 1.6 Cartoon by Mjölur in the *Völkischer Beobachter* on 21 June 1933. The major powers, including a figure representing on the right, squabble while the patient “world economy” is dying. Mjölur was the pseudonym of the artist Hans Schweitzer, who created numerous posters for the Nazi regime.

Additionally, in the period examined by far the most prominent news items on Japan in German newspapers revolved around the Manchurian Incident and the subsequent drawn-

out deliberation in the League of Nations. From the numerous articles on Japan's negotiation with the League one can see a Japan that was aggressive and dishonest. The press relentlessly attacked the League's inability to rein in a belligerent Japan; from right to left the papers hurled harsh criticisms at the League. The *Völkischer Beobachter* ridiculed the League's "capitulation" in the face of Japanese action,⁸⁶ while the *Kreuz-Zeitung* called attention to the "helpless" state of the League's council when Japan refused to halt its operation in Manchuria.⁸⁷ Throughout October and November 1931 the more moderate *Germania* and *Vossische Zeitung* wondered again and again if Japan would submit to the League's authority. "Will Japan come around?" became almost a weekly headline.⁸⁸ The answer always disappointed: "Japan does not yield,"⁸⁹ or "Japan repudiates the council."⁹⁰ Newspapers from the left showed even less patience with Japan's ability to invade China while the League wrung its hands. The *Vorwärts* decried the League's "withdrawal,"⁹¹ while the *Rote Fahne* accused the League of downright complicity in Manchuria by giving Japan virtual license.⁹²

To make a deeper impact with their messages, the newspapers relied on visual means to underline Japan's truculence and the League's helplessness. The *Vorwärts* deployed its artists most effectively to highlight Japan's aggressiveness and threat to world peace. In a cartoon titled "Attention—Kid-nabbing!" a mother, personifying the League, naps while kidnappers, dressed as Japanese soldiers and clenching ninja daggers between their teeth, lay

⁸⁶ "Die Kapitulation der Völkerbundes vor Japan," VB, 27–28 September 1931.

⁸⁷ "Der hilflose Völkerbundsrat," KZ, 24 September 1931.

⁸⁸ See for example, "Lenkt Japan ein?" VZ, 9 November 1931, Evening Edition.

⁸⁹ "Japan gibt nicht nach," G, 13 October 1931.

⁹⁰ "Japan lehnt den Rat ab," VZ, 11 October 1931.

⁹¹ "Rückzug des Völkerbundes," V, 26 September 1931.

⁹² "Imperialistisches Banditentum in Genf," RF, 20 October 1931.

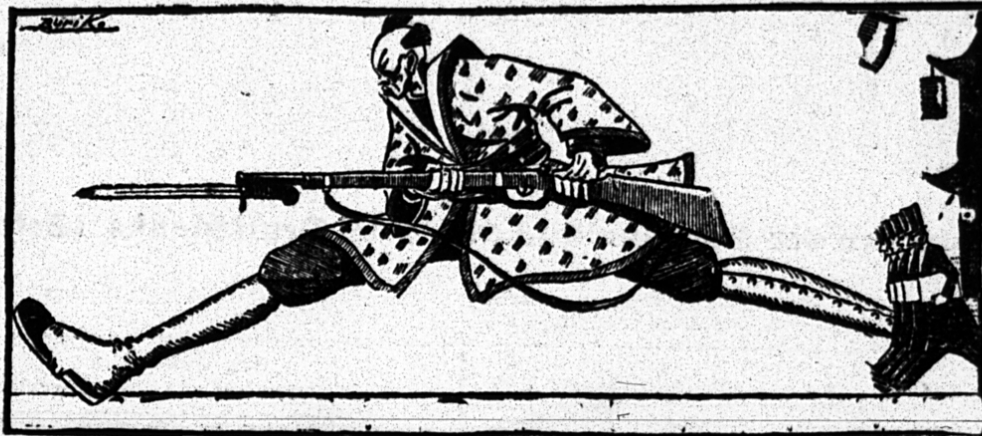
their hands on an innocent baby symbolizing peace (Fig. 1.7). The caption warned, “Nations, beware! The child kidnappers are at work again!”



Fig. 1.7 Cartoon in the *Vorwärts* on 19 May 1932. The mother, “the League of Nations,” takes a nap while her baby, “peace,” is about to be snatched away by Japanese militarists as kidnappers.

An illustration by the *Rote Fahne* emphasized Japan’s aggressiveness, abetted by the League’s timidity. Titled “The Japanese Pacemaker of the League of Nations,” the cartoon portrayed a giant of a Japanese with a bayonet making great strides and leaving behind League commission members armed only with folders (Fig. 1.8). As if the League could not appear any more pathetic in the face of Japanese bullying, the *Völkischer Beobachter* shared with readers its own interpretation of the situation. In a cartoon labeled “Nothing Learned,” a portly Chinese man tries vainly to thwart the bayonet thrust of a Japanese soldier by threatening to complain to Geneva, “Hold on! Or I’ll tell the League of Nations!!” (Fig. 1.9).

Der japanische Schrittmacher des Völkerbunds



Karikatur auf die Genfer Mandschurei-Kommission

Fig. 1.8 Cartoon in the *Rote Fahne* on 27 March 1932. It caricatures the commission dispatched by the League to determine the situation in Manchuria. Japan, symbolized by a samurai with a bayonet, far outpaces men (on the right) in suits armed only with folders.



Fig. 1.9 Cartoon by Mjölnir in the *Völkischer Beobachter* on 6 January 1933. The Chinese city of Shan Hai Kwan is burning in the background, while a man symbolizing China futilely threatens to complain about his Japanese attackers to the League of Nations.

Besides depicting Japan as an aggressor, the papers portrayed Japan as a liar in the Manchurian affair and its interaction with the League. The Japanese government insisted that the “incident” did not constitute a war, since that would mean Japan had broken the Nine-Power Treaty preserving China’s territorial integrity and the Kellogg-Briand Pact outlawing war. To showcase the hollowness of Japan’s claim, a *Völkischer Beobachter* reporter first described in detail an offensive by Japan and then annotated a press release by the Japanese War Minister, “The Japanese War Ministry proclaimed that it would be *a great error* to think that Japan was waging a war in China (A good ‘joke’). Japan’s action in Manchuria amounted solely to *purely policing measures* (!!).”⁹³ One may find it remarkable that the Nazi paper refrained from using racist terms or logic to criticize Japan’s action or explain China’s weakness, which indicated a lack of predilection for either people. The *Kreuz-Zeitung*, while criticizing the League for allowing itself to be duped by Japan, sarcastically agreed that Manchukuo would indeed be truly independent, that is, from China but not Japan!⁹⁴ Likewise the *Germania* always used quotation marks when mentioning “independent” Manchuria.⁹⁵ Meanwhile the normally subdued *Vossische Zeitung* grew sick of the platitudes Japan was force-feeding the League, blasting the explanation given by the Japanese delegate as “the most contorted, sorry, and helpless blabbering” that one had yet heard in the hall of the League council.⁹⁶ When Japan announced in March 1933 after its own

⁹³ „Der japanische Kriegsminister erklärte, es sei ein g r o ß e r I r r t u m, zu denken, daß Japan gegen China Krieg führe. (Ein guter ‚Witz‘.) Bei dem japanischen Vorgehen in der Mandchurei handle es sich lediglich um r e i n p o l i z e i l i c h e M a ß n a h m e n (!!)" in “Aber kein Krieg....” VB, 20 November 1931.

⁹⁴ “Der Völkerbund läßt sich dupieren,” KZ, 18 February 1932; and “Unabhängigkeitserklärung der Mandchurei,” KZ, 18 February 1932.

⁹⁵ “‘Unabhängige’ Mandchurei?” G, 16 January 1932.

⁹⁶ „Die folgende Erklärung des japanischen Ratsdelegierten S a t o war das gewundenste, verlegenste und hilfloseste Gestammel, das man aus dem Munde dieses sonst so gewandten Diplomaten jemals im Ratssaal

withdrawal from the League that it would form a competing league of Asians, the *Vossische Zeitung* pointed out that only Japanese and one Manchurian representative attended the event, which dodged issues like the role of China, even though plenty of government bigwigs appeared for propaganda purposes.⁹⁷ Lastly, the two leftist papers spared no feelings and called Japanese answers to other nations for what they were—hypocrisy.⁹⁸

To hammer home the message of a dishonest Japan, the papers again deployed images. In February 1932, the *Vorwärts* printed a cartoon titled “Summit of Pacifism,” in which the Japanese representative to the League of Nations waxes eloquent to other bored members, “The best proof that we are not waging a war is the fact that our bomb raids engage only peaceful civilians” (Fig. 1.10). Against the background of bombs exploding amid Chinese men, women and children incapable of returning fire (hence no “war”), the representative’s explanation rang hollow. Another cartoon in the *Vorwärts* mocked Japan’s dishonesty in its interaction with the League of Nations. The caption explained, “In Geneva it is declared: ‘The Japanese troops are engaged nonstop in *clearing out* of Manchuria’” (Fig. 1.11). In the drawing Japanese soldiers are indeed *clearing out* the possessions of Chinese peasants in a campaign of pillage. The *Rote Fahne* too printed a cartoon to show how Japan would dupe the commission to be dispatched by the League to investigate the situation in Manchuria. Titled “The ‘State of Peace,’” the drawing depicted a commissioner encountering some Japanese soldiers transporting an oversized cannon (Fig. 1.12). The commissioner asked naively, “Where are you heading [with the cannon]? I thought the war is over...” The

gehört hat,” in “Japan macht Schwierigkeiten in Genf. Zweistündige Prozedur-Debatte im Rat,” VZ, 30 January 1932.

⁹⁷ “Japans Abkehr von Genf: Ein asiatischer Völkerbund?” VZ, 11 March 1933.

⁹⁸ “Heuchelei der Japaner in Genf. Leere Versprechungen – der Krieg geht weiter,” V, 5 March 1932; and “Heuchlerische und provokatorische Antwort Japans an die Sowjetunion,” RF, 22 March 1932.



Fig. 1.10 Cartoon in the *Vorwärts* on 3 February 1932. The Japanese representative to the League waxes poetic about Japanese peaceful intentions and actions in China, while Japanese warplanes rain death and destruction on Chinese villagers.



Fig. 1.11 Cartoon in the *Vorwärts* on 5 November 1931. It sarcastically declares that the Japanese troops are engaged in the “clearing out” of Manchuria, not in the sense of evacuating, but that of robbing it clean.



Fig. 1.12 Cartoon in the *Rote Fahne* on 10 April 1932. The Japanese soldiers are asked where they are going with a large cannon. They answer, “Just a little sparrow hunt in Vladivostok!”

soldiers answered, “Yes, sir, we are just heading to Vladivostok for a little sparrow hunt!”

Not only did the cartoonist want to show Japan’s duplicity and the League’s credulousness, he also wanted to convey the message that Japan’s aggression in Manchuria directly threatened the Soviet Union.

Indeed withering hostility to the League stood out as a recurrent theme in the Weimar press, and Japan’s action in Manchuria merely confirmed what each newspaper knew all along about the League. On the one hand nationalists despised Geneva as the enforcer of the Versailles *Diktat* and administrator of formerly German territories like Danzig and Saarland. While the League bullied a disarmed Germany not capable of threatening anyone, in the face

of real aggression from Japan it retreated with its tail between its legs. On the other hand Marxists resented the League for not granting Soviet membership at first and perpetuating colonial rule in the Middle East and Africa in the mandate system. Japanese impunity in Manchuria merely showcased the collusion among the imperialist powers controlling the League. Just as the reporting of Japanese athletic achievements served to highlight German failures, the real focus of press coverage of Japan's interactions with the League lay with German resentment toward Geneva, which the papers ideologically interpreted as either a hypocritical defender of pacifism or aggressive enforcer of colonialism.

Means of Depiction

The means through which the German press portrayed Japan can reveal just as much as the newspapers' actual depictions of Japan, for they shed light on the thought and information filtering processes the papers used to make sense of events thousands of kilometers away. In general the German press deployed three methods: familiarization through juxtaposition, ideological interpretation, and visualization. While these means of depiction usually made news events easier to understand for the public, they often also distorted or obscured the facts and thus made the reports less than accurate.

Journalists everywhere frequently juxtapose a foreign concept next to a domestic one to bring faraway ideas closer home, and interwar German reporters were no exception in their articles on Japan. Even simple juxtapositions could work rather effectively. Readers unfamiliar to Japanese politics would find the Seiyūkai 政友會 comprehensible since the papers paired it with conservative parties in Europe.⁹⁹ Whereas few Germans would grasp the

⁹⁹ "Die japanischen Wahlen," G, 23 February 1932.

significance of Kasumigaseki 霞ヶ関 in Japan, by labeling it “Tokyo’s Wilhelmstraße” the reporter handily conveyed the centrality that it had in Japanese foreign policymaking.¹⁰⁰ Anticipating that readers might struggle to keep track of Manchurian cities like Harbin, Dairen and Fushun, writers searched for European counterparts to give the cities some individual identity and familiarity. Thus Fushun became the Manchurian Cardiff, Dairen the Asian Karlsruhe, Schwerin or Breslau, and Harbin the “Paris of the East” or Chicago.¹⁰¹ One reporter found enough similarities to warrant calling Manchuria the “Asian Belgium.”¹⁰² Although juxtaposing Asian cities to European ones made comprehension easier, by using this technique the journalists also made a value judgment. For example, readers should admire Harbin as a melting pot like Chicago since its residents came from many different countries. By highlighting only the positive quality in the comparison, the author ignored the reality that the Japanese were living in the city because they had just conquered it, a fact not so surprising since the writer held Japan in high regard.

Facing the conundrum of the Manchurian Incident, the newspapers detected lessons from Europe that Asia could apply to resolve its problems. To help readers contextualize the entangled relationship between China and Japan, which as already mentioned should supposedly behave as ethnic brethren, one commentator compared the Sino-Japanese struggle to those between Bulgarians and Serbs, Czechs and Poles, or communists and

¹⁰⁰ „...Kasumigaseki, der Wilhelmstraße Tokios,“ in Wilhelm Schulze, “Japan sieht Blockadegespenster,” VZ, 3 May 1933. The area around Wilhelmstraße in Berlin was the heart of the government district, containing the chancellor’s office and the foreign ministry.

¹⁰¹ Joern Leo, “Mandschurische Schätze,” VZ, 29 December 1931, Evening Edition; Wilhelm Schulze, “Drei mandschurische Städtebilder,” VZ, 9 April 1933; Wilhelm Schulze, “Auf heißem Boden in Asien. Charbin, das Zentrum der Nordmandschurei,” VZ, 26 March 1933.

¹⁰² Julius Elbau, “Mandschurische Feuerwehr,” VZ, 15 November 1931.

fascists.¹⁰³ Another writer suggested that the Chinese, torn by internal strife and bullied by surrounding powers, could look to the strengthening of post-1871 Germany as an incentive to get their house in order and unite against external threats.¹⁰⁴ Noting the increasing influence wielded by the military in Japanese politics, the *Vorwärts* warned that Japan would suffer Imperial Germany's fate as when Ludendorff triumphed over Bethmann-Hollweg.¹⁰⁵ To this effect the paper also printed a cartoon, titled "The 'Prussia of the East,'" to mock how the Japanese military could "in grand European fashion" demand the resignation of the war minister (Fig. 1.13). The abovementioned pro-Japanese reporter reasoned that Japan's



Fig. 1.13 Cartoon in the *Vorwärts* on 18 May 1932. A cabal of Japanese soldiers threatens the War Minister. It is unclear to what event the cartoonist was referring. The cartoon might well allude to the recent assassination of the Japanese prime minister by military cadets and junior officers on 15 May 1932, but the would-be putschists did not specifically demand the resignation of the army minister.

¹⁰³ Richard Katz, "Graben im Osten," VZ, 31 October 1931, Evening Edition. Katz will be mentioned in some length in Chapter Three.

¹⁰⁴ Dr. A. Wirth, "Japan und Rußland," KZ, 29 May 1932.

¹⁰⁵ "Japans Militarismus," V, 5 February 1932.

difficulties in international affairs lay not so much with the substance of its policies but with its bad reputation, much like hostile foreign propaganda vilified Germany prior the Great War.¹⁰⁶ Also in the context of World War I, the *Rote Fahne* warned that war mania in Japan in February 1932 eerily resembled Germany's in August 1914,¹⁰⁷ while the *Vorwärts* saw Japan after the Manchurian Incident in the unenviable position of Austria-Hungary in 1914—both advance and retreat carried enormous risks.¹⁰⁸ One may find it significant though unsurprising that the newspapers interpreted current events using their ideologies to derive so-called lessons. Thus the anti-war *Rote Fahne* and *Vorwärts* saw the specters of Ludendorff, Austria-Hungary, and World War I in East Asia between 1931 and 1932.

Conversely, journalists used juxtaposition to derive lessons from Asia for contemporary Europe. As border disputes broke out between Lithuania and Germany in 1932, the *Völkischer Beobachter* wondered if East Prussia, already cut off from mainland Germany, would suffer the fate of a “German Manchuria.”¹⁰⁹ The reporter fully recognized the illegality of Japan's severance of Manchuria from China, and that was exactly his point—any infringement of the integrity of East Prussia would violate international law. In 1933, the *Beobachter* conferred upon Austria the distinct dishonor of “Europe's Manchuria”—defenseless, impotent, and reduced to a pawn of great powers.¹¹⁰ The lesson this time seemed obvious—a nation could either be strongly armed or be strong-armed—fully in agreement with the Nazi Social Darwinist weltanschauung. Also deploring Germany's forcibly small

¹⁰⁶ Wilhelm Schulze, “Bürokratie in Fernost” VZ, 30 April 1933.

¹⁰⁷ “Kriegsraserei in Tokio,” RF, 9 February 1932.

¹⁰⁸ “Japan in der Rolle Oesterreich-Ungarns 1914,” V, 13 October 1931.

¹⁰⁹ “Litauens Spiel mit dem Feuer: Soll Ostpreußen die deutsche Mandschurei werden?” VB, 3 March 1932.

¹¹⁰ “Opfer der Wehrlosigkeit: Oesterreich und die Mandschurei,” VB, 20 January 1933.

arsenal, an officer contributing to the *Kreuz-Zeitung* detected a lesson for Germany from the poorly armed Chinese troops and their spirited defense against the Japanese: “a poorly equipped people can still defend its battlefield honor if they possess strong will.”¹¹¹ Again, we should note that these purported lessons from Asia for Germany remained consistent with the papers’ existing ideology; no doubt the *Beobachter* would denounce any foreign designs on East Prussia with or without the Manchurian precedent.

This ideological interpretation of news and filtering of information occurred even when no obvious lessons needed to be gleaned. The *Völkischer Beobachter* demonstrated a remarkable ideological consistency in its observations about Japan. In 1923, the Great Kanto Earthquake struck Tokyo and flattened much of the capital city. A reporter for the *Beobachter* applied unflinching Social Darwinist logic to the disaster to make the case that other powers should use this chance ruthlessly to take advantage of Japan’s weakened state.¹¹² When hostility broke out in Manchuria in 1931, the *Beobachter* saw the war as a struggle between two races, reasoning that Japan’s overpopulation led it to expansion, an oft-repeated Nazi rationale for *Lebensraum* (living space).¹¹³ The newspaper reasoned that the League’s weakness demonstrated that no country should ever rely on the hot air from “diplomats” for protection, but instead depend on tanks and warplanes.¹¹⁴ Finally, the paper

¹¹¹ „Wir Deutsche können aber aus den Vorgängen um Schanghai lernen, daß auch ein militärisch schwach gerüstetes Volk seine Waffenehre wahren kann, wenn es nur den festen Willen dazu hat,“ in Oberstleutnant a. D. Benary, “Die Streitkräfte Japans und Chinas,” KZ, 29 February 1932.

¹¹² “Japans Not,” VB, 15 September 1923.

¹¹³ “Der Völkerkampf im Osten,” VB, 9 February 1932; and “Japan in China,” VB, 23 September 1931.

¹¹⁴ “Japanische Neujahroffensive,” VB, 31 December 1931.

warned that Germany would certainly suffer China's fate as a plaything of foreign interests if it would not be led by Adolf Hitler.¹¹⁵ Alas, if only the Chinese had their own *Führer*!

This dictator did exist in the form of Chiang Kai-shek, alleged the other two ideological interpreters, the *Rote Fahne* and *Vorwärts*, but in a sense different from the *Beobachter*'s charismatic savior. Whereas the Nazis saw a dictator as solution, the two newspapers reviled Chiang as the cause of Chinese suffering. To this effect the *Vorwärts* carried a cartoon, labeled "In China," in which a starving and naked Chinese peasant explains to a threatening Japanese soldier, "You are too late. My own generals have already cleaned me out!" (Fig. 1.14). Not to be outdone, the *Rote Fahne* published a poem by the cabaret composer Erich Weinert to mock Chiang.¹¹⁶ In order to wish its readers a merry Christmas in 1931, the communist paper printed a cartoon sardonically titled "...and Peace on Earth!" (Fig. 1.15). In the illustration depressing scenes adorn a Christmas tree. The top left image showed canons thundering and people dying in Manchuria, while the top right featured a man about to be executed by Chiang's Nationalist regime in Nanking. Overall the Marxist papers downplayed nationalities and grouped the Japanese imperialists together with the Chinese generalissimos as oppressors of peasants and workers.

¹¹⁵ "Der Konflikt China-Japan," VB, 19–21 March 1932.

¹¹⁶ Erich Weinert, "Tschang Kai Schek," RF, 30 October 1931. A stanza runs as follows:

Nein, du erinnerst dich auch nicht mehr
An den kleinen, verhungerten Sekretär,
Der einst über seines Volks Revolte
Die reine Fahne des Sun Yat Sen entrollte
Und warf das Händlergeschmeiß in den Dreck!
Der trug deinen Namen—Tschang Kai Schek!



Fig. 1.14 Cartoon in the *Vorwärts* on 24 September 1931. It portrays the poor Chinese as victims of both the Japanese imperialists and the Chinese plutocrats.



Fig. 1.15 Cartoon in the *Rote Fahne* on 25 December 1931. The top images depict the battlefield in Manchuria and a poor Chinese being executed. The middle ones show workers being laid off by the Borsig firm and political prisoners. The bottom ones lament state subsidies for the churches and the despair of the unemployed.

The more moderate papers too did not refrain from filtering news and information using their own ideological lenses. The pro-military *Kreuz-Zeitung* saw the Chinese arrest and execution of a Japanese staff officer accused of spying as the fundamental, legitimate cause for Japan to retaliate by launching an offensive.¹¹⁷ In the months afterwards it excitedly devoted pages to analyze the various equipment the Japanese army deployed. The pro-business *Vossische Zeitung* understandably stressed the economic impact of the conflict in East Asia while trying its best not to offend either side to maintain business as usual. Immediately after the first shots in Manchuria the paper urged readers not to jump to partisan conclusions and declared that Germany only wished to trade with both sides.¹¹⁸ The newspaper stated that it understood Japan's wish to protect its substantial investment in Manchuria, yet it also agreed with China that Manchuria belonged to China.¹¹⁹

Most intriguing of all, the *Germania* uttered pro-Japanese sentiments whenever a chance arose. In 1931, the paper printed a flattering eulogy for the ex-premier Hamaguchi Osachi 濱口雄幸, lamenting that in his death the world lost a great statesman in the Far East.¹²⁰ Even after the outbreak of full hostilities in Manchuria, the *Germania* still managed to put a positive spin to Japanese actions, citing the need for Japan to protect lives and properties from Chinese bandits.¹²¹ This Nipponophilia seemed mysterious, as Japan made no special accommodations to its native Catholics or the Vatican, so the *Germania* should

¹¹⁷ "Kriegerischer Konflikt Japan-China," KZ, 19 September 1931.

¹¹⁸ "Japan besetzt Mukden," VZ, 20 September 1931.

¹¹⁹ Dr. Sven von Müller, "Mandschurischer Film," VZ, 23 October 1931.

¹²⁰ "Hamaguchi-Osachi. Leben eines japanischen Staatsmannes," G, 6 September 1931.

¹²¹ "China boykottiert Japan. Japanische Maßnahmen zum Schutze von Leben und Eigentum," G, 9 October 1931.

feel no special urge to please Japan. How should one explain the paper's apparently inexplicable friendliness to Japan?

Some telltale clues did shed light on the paper's pro-Japan rhetoric. In September 1931 the paper reported that Japanese police raided an atheist group and apprehended some communists.¹²² Communists everywhere, of course, advocated the abolishment of all organized religions like Roman Catholicism. Then, during the Manchurian conflict the *Germania* mentioned that a French mission came under attack by "Chinese bandits" and profusely thanked the Japanese troops in the area for exercising a stabilizing influence.¹²³ Even more telling, in 1933 the paper related an account on the condition of a Christian mission in Manchuria, detailing how the Japanese military entrusted a Swiss Father with running the Red Cross there and how important a role the mission played in stemming Bolshevism in China.¹²⁴ It also praised Japan's "expanding campaign against attempts at social unrest" at home.¹²⁵ These signs point to a religiously conservative newspaper that, paranoiac about the rise of communism and socialism in morally freewheeling Weimar Germany, deeply appreciated the energetic actions taken by a regime—in this case the Japanese—to defend religion and combat the spread of Bolshevism, and it interpreted news from that country through its own set of ideological filters.¹²⁶

¹²² "Japan löst Gottlosenverbände auf," G, 8 September 1931.

¹²³ "Kriegsstimmung in Nanking. Banditen überfallen französische Mission in Mukden," G, 7 October 1931.

¹²⁴ Prof. Dr. Aufhauser, "Die christliche Mission in der Mandschurei," G, 2 February 1933.

¹²⁵ "Der Kommunismus in Japan. Wachsender Kampf gegen die sozialen Umsturzversuche," G, 26 March 1933.

¹²⁶ In addition, German Catholics played a special role in Japan. The Jesuit order assigned Japan to German Jesuits as their area of missionary activities. I especially appreciate Hans Martin Krämer for pointing out this special relationship and sharing his research results with me. For more on the Catholic Church in Japan, see Hans Martin Krämer, *Unterdrückung oder Integration? Die staatliche Behandlung der katholischen Kirche in Japan, 1932 bis 1945* (Marburg: Förderverein Marburger Japan-Reihe, 2002).

As we have seen, the German newspapers also portrayed Japan through visual means, though the more businesslike and formal *Germania* and *Vossische Zeitung* mostly refrained from commenting on news with cartoons. As a result, the illustrations available to readers and to us stemmed mostly from the more politically extreme papers. This observation makes sense since political cartoons are often drawn to mock a situation, and as shown in this chapter the German press found much to deride in Japan in the early 1930s. Most frequently Japan appeared in the drawings as an armed and uniformed soldier (Figs. 1.1, 1.5, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.11, 1.12, 1.13, and 1.14). This phenomenon certainly resulted partly from the fact that a military conflict catapulted Japan from the sports, culture or business sections to the front page. Inevitably Japan would have to appear martial in such a context. In drawings in which Japan appeared next to the West, the character often stood head and shoulders below the Europeans (Figs. 1.5 and 1.6). In two cartoons Japan was personified by a man squinting through horn-rimmed glasses (Figs. 1.6 and 1.10). Certainly Germany did not have a monopoly of these images of the militarist, diminutive, and nearsighted Japanese; American media relied heavily on such stereotypes in anti-Japanese propaganda before and during World War II.¹²⁷ This pattern indicates that the German press did not invent any visual depictions of Japan and instead tapped into existent Western constructs.

In the Eye of the Beholder

The cacophony of voices in the press that thrived under the liberal atmosphere of the Weimar Republic expressed varied opinions about Japan. The newspapers agreed that the Japanese excelled in athletic performance and found many intriguing aspects within Japanese

¹²⁷ See Akira Iriye, *Across the Pacific: An Inner History of American-East Asian Relations* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967); and, John W. Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987).

civilization. Although the portrayals of Japan were plagued by stereotypes and superficiality, the interest in Japan was also undeniable. Yet if German journalists found traditional, oriental Japan mysterious and charming, then modern, Westernizing Japan came across as inscrutable and threatening. Especially in the realms of international commerce, the expansion of Japanese shipping and export capacities caused some anxiety among competitors in Germany. In the early 1930s, as Japan began to make news in Germany for its military incursions into Manchuria and China, all the newspapers examined used the event to demonstrate and reinforce their ideological outlooks. The leftist papers criticized Japan most vociferously as an imperialist power seeking to subjugate poor Chinese workers and peasants. The moderate papers worried that the war would further damage the world economy but could also see victorious Japan as a stabilizing force in chaotic China. The rightist papers meanwhile used the inability of the League of Nations to halt Japanese aggression as proof of its hypocritical stance toward Germany. Especially in political discussions involving Japan, there were as many opinions as there were newspapers.

With the ascendance of the Nazis into the inner sanctum of government in early 1933, such differences in expressed opinion quickly disappeared. The leftwing papers were shut down in short order, following by the centrist papers in a few years. Even the conservative *Kreuz-Zeitung* was eventually snuffed out by the Nazi regime. The only official voice remaining was that of the Nazi Party organ, the *Völkischer Beobachter*. Unlike the other newspapers, the Nazi paper did not launch any criticism against Japan based on principles such as international law or multilateral agreements. Instead, it saw the Japanese military undertaking as a natural, understandable part of Japan's struggle for survival in a Darwinist world. Moreover, the main threat that German moderates saw in Japan, namely its economic

encroachment on Asia, would mean less to the Nazis, focused on achieving autarky and conquering Lebensraum in continental Europe. Therefore, as early as September 1931, less than a week after the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident, the Nazi paper was prepared to accept Japanese aggression as a logical expression of its will to survive and to fault the Chinese victims for their inability to defend themselves. It also found much to admire in Japan's willingness to act in its own interest in the face of international condemnation:

In any case, from the chaos of the news reports one thing might be established: **It is war in the East.** Not just the eternal commotion of the Chinese civil war already familiar to us, but rather open war as the means to resolve by force the struggle for living space. Japan has seized the opportunity of the particularly helpless situation in which China finds itself—thanks to the disunity among its political and military leaders—to establish a firm foothold in China. The “Far East” has taught old Europe once again how wars are waged. In such matters Japan is held back by as little scruple today as in 1904, when it opened hostilities against Russia by sinking three Russian warships in Port Arthur without a prior declaration of war. Needless to say, nowadays Japan cares little for the pretty statutes of the League of Nations, though as a League member it will certainly not neglect to justify its military actions for the sake of appearance.¹²⁸

In the years after 1933 this sort of opinions about Japan was the only type to be expressed in German newspapers. As we shall see in the next chapters, the commentators on other layers of the mass media in Germany would pronounce even more arguments between 1933 and 1936 to develop the idea of German-Japanese rapprochement.

¹²⁸ „Aus dem Chaos der Meldungen dürfte jedenfalls das eine festzuhalten sein: **E s i s t K r i e g i m O s t e n .** Nicht nur der ewige, beinahe schon zur Gewohnheit gewordene Bürgerkrieg des chinesischen Durcheinanders, sondern offener Krieg als Mittel zur Machtlösung im Kampf um Lebensräume. Japan hat die günstige Gelegenheit benützt, um festen Fuß in China zu fassen, das gerade zur – dank der Uneinigkeit seiner politischen und militärischen Führer – sich in besonders hilfloser Lage befindet. Der „ferne Osten“ hat dem alten Europa wieder einmal gezeigt, wie Kriege gemacht werden. Skrupel kennt Japan in solchen Dingen heute so wenig wie 1904, als die Feindseligkeiten gegen Rußland ohne vorherige Ankündigung durch die Versenkung dreier Kriegsschiffe im Hafen von Port Arthur eröffnet wurden. Selbstverständlich kümmert sich Japan auch heute nicht um die schönen Satzungen des Völkerbundes, trotzdem es als Mitglied natürlich nicht verfehlen wird, seine militärische Unternehmung als begründet zu erklären, damit der Form Genüge getan ist,“ in “Neue Kämpfe in der Mandschurei. Der Völkerbund soll helfen?” VB, 23 September 1931.

CHAPTER TWO

JAPAN AS MOTION PICTURES: JAPAN ON THE SILVER SCREEN

Wir Berliner sind leidenschaftliche Kinobesucher. Die Wochenschau ersetzt uns alle nicht erlebte Weltgeschichte. Die schönsten Frauen beider Kontinente gehören uns alltäglich mit ihrem Lachen und Weinen im wandernden Bilde. Wir haben unsre großen Filmpaläste rund um die Gedächtniskirche, am Kurfürstendamm, in der Nähe des Potsdamerplatzes, in den Vorstädten, und daneben die tausend kleinen Kinos, helle, lockende Lichter in halbdunkeln Straßen aller Stadtteile.

—Franz Hessel, *Strolling in Berlin* (*Spazieren in Berlin*, 1929)¹

„Ein geheimnisvoller Kriminalfilm aus dem nächtlichen Paris.“
„Serum-Diebstahl von weltgeschichtlicher Tragweite wird von der Pariser Polizei aufgedeckt.“

„Kampf mit Asiaten um ein Geheimnis, von dem das Wohl und Wehe der Menschheit abhängt.“

„In bewegter Gerichtsverhandlung findet eine sensationelle Mordsache Aufklärung und Sühne.“

—Taglines for *Police Dossier 909* (*Polizeiakte 909*, 1934)²

Film making and especially film watching in a cinema are habitually compared to dreaming or magic, and rightly so. Current technology can alter actors' appearance, display several movies in a multiplex, surround an audience with sound, and project three-dimensional images on a flat screen. Of course, films in interwar Germany—unaccompanied by audio in

¹ “We Berliners are avid moviegoers. We make up in the weekly newsreel for all the world history we did not get to live through. We see in motion pictures on a daily basis the smiles and tears of the most beautiful women of both continents. Around the Memorial Church, on Kurfürstendamm, near Potsdam Square, and in the suburbs we have our great movie palaces, and on dim streets in all over the city the thousand smaller cinemas with their bright, alluring lights,” in Franz Hessel, *Spazieren in Berlin*, in *Sämtliche Werke in fünf Bänden 3: Städte und Porträts*, ed. Bernhard Echte (Oldenburg: Igel Verlag, 1999), 131. An alternative translation can be found in Weitz, 236–7.

² “A mysterious crime film from night-time Paris. Theft of a serum of world-historical consequences uncovered by the Parisian police. Struggle with Asians for a secret on which the weal and woe of humanity depends. In an eventful court trial a sensational murder case finds explanation and expiation,” in *Illustrierter Film-Kurier* 16, no. 2134 (1934).

the 1920s and almost all in black and white throughout—lacked such wonders, but they would have enchanted viewers no less.³ Sequestered in a *Kino* away from the hubbub outside, seated in the dark beside strangers from various walks of life, and immersed in the director's vision, cinemagoers would have experienced film more than as mere entertainment but also a chance to expand their imagination and gain insights about the world beyond their environs.

Indeed, after newspapers, magazines and gradually radio, cinema functioned as one of the more accessible conduits of information disbursement in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s.⁴ For those Germans interested in learning more about Japan than what they could glean from the printed word and occasional photograph in the press, the silver screen with its graphics, animation, and sound would recommend itself as an alluring alternative. After all, if a picture is worth a thousand words, then a motion picture with its thousands of frames can say a million. Yet since films were screened only at specific times and venues that required perhaps a reservation and almost always an entrance fee, fewer Germans could vicariously explore Japan in cinema than through newspapers, which as aforementioned could be read for free in public. Also, film watching often took hours and demanded more commitment in time than the seconds or minutes that a cartoon or article would need. Moreover, the absence of a home-video mechanism rendered film an ephemeral source because spectators had little chance to revisit a movie at their own leisure once its theatrical run had ended. Due to the higher thresholds in dedication, cost, time, and technology in discovering Japan on the silver

³ For more on the use of innovations in filmmaking in the Weimar era, see Frances Guerin, *A Culture of Light: Cinema and Technology in 1920s Germany* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

⁴ For film studies scholars meaningful differences separate the terms “film,” “cinema” and “movie.” Broadly speaking, “film” is the most general description, “cinema” refers to the art form, and “movie” alludes to popular consumption. This chapter, however, treats these terms as interchangeable because it concerns itself less with the history of film than writing history through film, and spectators likely did not make the nuanced distinction either. See James Monaco, *How to Read a Film: Movies, Media and Beyond: Art, Technology, Language, History, Theory*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 252.

screen, motion pictures constituted the next level on the step pyramid of knowledge acquisition.

Accordingly this chapter investigates the presence of Japan in interwar German film and analyzes its implications for bilateral relations. How and why did Japan appear in motion pictures? What motivated filmmakers to choose Japan as a subject? What kind of films featured Japan, and what assumptions about Japan did directors and viewers share in order for the content to make sense? How did changing politics from the 1920s to 1930s color depictions of Japan? This chapter intends to answer these questions by mimicking German moviegoers' experience through an examination of the portrayals of Japan in newsreels, documentaries, and feature films.⁵ It presents the case that interwar German films across the board depicted a Japan mired in irrational tradition, superstition, and emotion. Particularly in the 1920s, Japan appeared almost exclusively in the role of a land forgotten by progress and modernity. In the mid-1930s, with the changes brought on by Japanese expansionism, however, this beautiful and mysterious Japan became displaced by one that exuded danger and unpredictability. Yet by then Nazism had radicalized German policy and outlook to such an extent that Germany saw mostly the prowess of this new Japan but little of the risk associated with making it an ally. Our quest to unveil Japan's role in cinema shall begin with an overview of what the silver screen as a source of information meant in interwar Germany.⁶

⁵ Methodologically this chapter's approach is similar to those in studies that examine German films' depictions of a certain people or place, see for example, Réka Gulyás, *Von der Puszta will ich träumen...: Das Ungarn-Bild im deutschen Spielfilm 1929–1939* (Innsbruck: Inst. für Sprachwiss., 2000); Thomas F. Schneider and Hans Wagener, eds., *Huns vs. Corned Beef: Representations of the Other in American and German Literature and Film on World War I*, Schriften des Erich Maria Remarque-Archivs 21 (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2007); and Siegbert Salomon Prawer, *Between Two Worlds: The Jewish Presence in German and Austrian Film, 1910–1933* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005).

⁶ For general works on the history of German film, see Stephen Brockmann, *A Critical History of German Film* (Rochester: Camden House, 2010); Sabine Hake, *German National Cinema*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008); Maggie Hoffgen, *Studying German Cinema* (Leighton Buzzard: Auteur, 2009); Uli Jung, ed., *Der*

Film in Interwar Germany

Whatever attributes film as a mass medium conjured in the minds of Germans after World War I, novelty likely did not rank among the top. By 1919, commercial motion pictures had developed for a quarter century in Germany, so that even those who had never set foot inside a movie theater would know of its existence and purpose.⁷ The conflict also spurred the growth of domestic production by severing foreign imports and by necessitating mass mobilization through film propaganda. Consequently, in 1917 the War Ministry, in conjunction with some corporations, founded the production company Universum Film-AG (Ufa), which would become in the interwar era the most storied and dominant film studio.⁸

The “peace dividend”—if the Great War ever bequeathed one to Germany—took shape not as political stability, social harmony, or economic growth but cultural frenzy. Just as with newspaper and other printed matter, defeat, revolution, and the founding of a republic with a liberal constitution lifted most censorship on film and unleashed pent-up energy and

deutsche Film: Aspekte seiner Geschichte von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1993); Tim Bergfelder, Erica Carter, and Deniz Göktürk, eds., *The German Cinema Book* (London: British Film Institute, 2002); Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, and Hans Helmut Prinzler, *Geschichte des deutschen Films* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1993); Marc Silberman, *German Cinema: Texts in Context* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995); Randall Halle and Margaret McCarthy, eds., *Light Motives: German Popular Film in Perspective* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2003); Roger Manvell and Heinrich Fraenkel, *The German Cinema* (New York: Praeger Publisher, 1971); Bruce A. Murray and Christopher J. Wickham, eds., *Framing the Past: The Historiography of German Cinema and Television* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1992); and Frederick W. Ott, *The Great German Films* (Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1986).

⁷ For more on the history of film in Germany up to the end of World War I, see Thomas Elsaesser, ed., *A Second Life: German Cinema's First Decades* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996); Thomas Elsaesser, *Filmgeschichte und frühes Kino: Archäologie eines Medienwandels* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2002); Annemone Ligensa and Klaus Kreimeier, eds., *Film 1900: Technology, Perception, Culture* (New Barnet, Herts: John Libbey, 2009); and Douglas B. Thomas, *The Early History of German Motion Pictures 1895–1935* (Bethesda: Thomas International, 1999).

⁸ For more on Ufa, see Klaus Kreimeier, *The Ufa Story: A History of Germany's Greatest Film Company 1918–1945*, trans. Robert and Rita Kimber (New York: Hill and Wang, 1996); Hans Borgelt, *Die Ufa—ein Traum: Hundert Jahre deutscher Film Ereignisse und Erlebnisse* (Berlin: edition q, 1993); and Hans-Michael Bock and Michael Töteberg, eds., *Das Ufa-Buch: Kunst und Krisen, Stars und Regisseure, Wirtschaft und Politik* (Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1992).

activity in the industry.⁹ Trends in visual and performance arts, literature, music, architecture, design, and other creative endeavors predating WWI blossomed in the “Golden Twenties.”

Among films, expressionism left its imprint on avant-garde works like Robert Wiene’s *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (*Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari*, 1920),¹⁰ and Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis* (1927)—modern day classics and bookends to the age of expressionist silent films.¹¹

As it turned out, *Metropolis* also spelled the end of Ufa as an independent entity, for although *Caligari* made both art and money, the visually stunning—and stunningly costly—*Metropolis* only ruined the studio’s finances. In fact, Germans encountered motion pictures far more frequently as mass entertainment than highbrow art, and studios produced films mostly in hopes of turning a profit at the box office rather than revolutionizing the medium. Similarly, distributors and cinema owners alike catered to spectators’ taste by focusing on

⁹ For more on Weimar cinema, see Christian Rogowski, ed., *The Many Faces of Weimar Cinema: Rediscovering Germany’s Filmic Legacy* (Rochester: Camden House, 2010); Noah Isenberg, ed., *Weimar Cinema: An Essential Guide to Classic Films of the Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); Gero Gandert, *Der Film der Weimarer Republik 1929: Ein Handbuch der zeitgenössischen Kritik* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1993); Kenneth S. Calhoun, ed., *Peripheral Visions: The Hidden Stages of Weimar Cinema* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001); Uli Jung and Walter Schatzberg, eds., *Filmkultur zur Zeit der Weimarer Republik: Beiträge zu einer internationalen Konferenz vom 15. bis 18. Juni 1989 in Luxemburg* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1992); Thomas Elsaesser, *Weimar Cinema and After: Germany’s Historical Imaginary* (New York: Routledge, 2000); Günther Dahlke and Günter Karl, *Deutsche Spielfilme von den Anfängen bis 1933: Ein Filmführer* (Berlin: Henschelverlag Kunst und Gesellschaft, 1988); Paul Monaco, *Cinema & Society: France and Germany during the Twenties* (New York: Elsevier, 1976); Ilona Brennicke and Joe Hembus, *Klassiker des deutschen Stummfilms 1910–1930* (Munich: Goldmann Verlag, 1983); and Christa Bandmann and Joe Hembus, *Klassiker des deutschen Tonfilm 1930–1960* (Munich: Goldmann Verlag, 1980).

¹⁰ For more on expressionist films, see the two classic works, Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film*, revised ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); and Lotte H. Eisner, *The Haunted Screen: Expressionism in the German Cinema and the Influence of Max Reinhardt* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1969). For more recent interpretations, see Dietrich Scheunemann, ed., *Expressionist Film: New Perspectives* (Rochester: Camden House, 2003); Ian Roberts, *German Expressionist Cinema: The World of Light and Shadow* (London: Wallflower Press, 2008); Paul Coates, *The Gorgon’s Gaze: German Cinema, Expressionism, and the Image of Horror* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); and John D. Barlow, *German Expressionist Film* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982).

¹¹ Other expressionist films include *Von morgens bis mitternachts* (*From Morn to Midnight*, 1920) by Karl Heinz Martin and *Das Wachsfigurenkabinett* (*Waxworks*, 1924) by Paul Leni. Depending on how one defines expressionism, there were anywhere between half a dozen expressionist films to dozens of films exhibiting expressionist traits. The complication stemmed from the fluidity of expressionism and its origins in painting and theater, which led to different applications of its elements in film. See Barry Salt, “From *Caligari* to Who?” *Sight and Sound*, 48:2 (Spring 1979), 119–123.

popular staples like crime thrillers, musical comedies, Karl May westerns, erotic flicks, and above all, Hollywood imports.

As a matter of fact, Ufa had already in 1925 received assistance from its American competitors-cum-partners in shoring up its balance sheet. Yet after *Metropolis* the company again found itself drowning in red ink and had to strike a Faustian bargain with the ultraconservative mogul Alfred Hugenberg; in return for joining his media empire, Ufa rid itself of money trouble for good. This newfound backing not only enabled the studio to expand its distribution network overseas and embark on a spree of cinema construction across Germany,¹² but also to adopt the technology for making and playing sound films,¹³ and to weather the world economic crisis.

In spite, or perhaps because, of ongoing economic, political, and social turmoil, ever more Germans flocked to the cinema for entertainment, enlightenment, or escape. Between 1925 and 1939 the population grew by about one tenth, but the headcount of moviegoers more than doubled from 276 to 624 million.¹⁴ Meanwhile the increase in movie houses, from

¹² The earliest motion pictures were shown in large tents or flimsy, temporary structures. From the 1910s onward purpose-built cinemas were constructed in major cities. The self-standing cinemas, such as Universum and Titania-Palast in Berlin, and Capitol in Cologne, were architectural monuments in their own right; one did not need to see a film inside to be impressed by their scale and elegance. See Rolf-Peter Baacke, *Lichtspielhausarchitektur in Deutschland: Von der Schaubude bis zum Kinopalast* (Berlin: Frölich & Kaufmann, 1982).

¹³ The company Tobis-Klangfilm (Tonbild-Syndikat AG), established in 1928, was most associated with the coming of sound to German cinema. For more, see Hans-Michael Bock, Wiebke Annkatrin Mosel, and Ingrid Spazier, eds., *Die Tobis 1928–1945: Eine kommentierte Filmografie* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2003); and Jan Distelmeyer, ed., *Tonfilmfrieden/Tonfilmkrieg: Die Geschichte der Tobis vom Technik-Syndikat zum Staatskonzern* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2003).

¹⁴ To be precise, between 1925 and 1939 the population of Germany grew from 62.4 million to 68.5 million. In order to account only for organic growth, the statistics for 1939 exclude the increase in population due to the acquisition of Saarland, Austria and the Sudetenland. See Dietmar Petzina, Werner Abelshauser, and Anselm Faust, eds., *Sozialgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch Band III: Materialien zur Statistik des Deutschen Reiches 1914–1945* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1978); and Wladimir S. Woytinsky, *Zehn Jahre neues Deutschland: Ein Gesamtüberblick in Zahlen* (Berlin: Rudolf Mosse Buchverlag, 1929). The statistics on films, cinemas and moviegoers are drawn from Hans Helmut Prinzler, *Chronik des deutschen Films 1895–1994* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1995).

roughly 2,800 in 1919 to around 6,900 in 1939, provided more outlets for motion pictures to convert the populace into regular moviegoers; one did not have to live in a metropolis like Berlin or Hamburg to catch a film like *Metropolis*. In addition, for much of the interwar period a ticket cost on average less than a *Reichsmark*, well within even the budget of unskilled laborers, who earned just over one Reichsmark per hour in the late 1920s.

For such an affordable price cinemagoers received a full dose of audiovisual stimulation. A typical visit to the movies consisted of three components: a newsreel, a short documentary, and the feature film, usually in that order.¹⁵ Prior to the incorporation of sound many cinemas also employed an orchestra to fill the auditory void before, between, and during the motion pictures. Altogether the process of “film watching” involved much more than just watching a film and could consume the better part of an evening. Since other forms of amusement like stage theater, concert, or opera cost decidedly more than movies, more and more Germans opted to spend what leisure time and money they could spare on film.

If the number of moviegoers and cinemas multiplied, the same did not hold true for the output of feature films, which peaked at 510 in 1920 and declined steadily thereafter, so that by 1938 only 100 appeared on screen. Ufa’s resources limited its capacity, and Hugenberg’s managers stemmed losses by cutting production and grew revenue by betting on the reliably profitable musicals, escapist comedies, and nationalistic melodramas.¹⁶ As a result, Ufa, a creature of the War Ministry and never a force for liberalism to begin with,

¹⁵ For examples of German film programs and pamphlets from the interwar years, see Eberhard Mertens, ed., *Die großen deutschen Filme: Ausgewählte Filmprogramme 1930–1945* (Hildesheim: Olms Presse, 1995); Eberhard Mertens, ed., *Filmprogramme: Ein Querschnitt durch das deutsche Filmschaffen Band 1 1930–1939* (Hildesheim: Olms Presse, 1977); Eberhard Mertens, ed., *Filmprogramme: Ein Querschnitt durch das deutsche Filmschaffen Band 2 1940–1945* (Hildesheim: Olms Presse, 1977). For screen shots of German silent films, see John Kobal, ed., *Great Film Stills of the German Silent Era: 125 Stills from the Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1981).

¹⁶ Hake, *German National Cinema*, 53.

became less innovative and more conservative. Other studios did produce movies with leftist messages or import films from the Soviet Union, yet even under the Weimar Republic, motion pictures seen as sympathetic to the left faced a far greater chance of censorship or outright suppression.¹⁷

The rise of Nazism led to even stricter control on motion picture and wholesale purges of Jews and political suspects from the industry.¹⁸ Nazi leaders recognized the propagandistic potential of film, and in order to harness its power the government bought out Hugenberg's share in Ufa in 1937.¹⁹ On the one hand the regime commissioned full-length documentaries like *Triumph of the Will* (*Triumph des Willens*, 1935) to burnish its reputation, and on the other it vilified its victims with the likes of *The Eternal Jew* (*Der ewige Jude*,

¹⁷ An example of a leftist film would be *Kuhle Wampe oder Wem gehört die Welt?* (*Kuhle Wampe or Who Owns the World?*, 1932), and *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) was imported from the Soviet Union. Both films were censored before making their way to the cinema. For the interaction of film and politics, especially leftist politics, in the Weimar years, see Helmut Korte, *Der Spielfilm und das Ende der Weimarer Republik: Ein rezeptionshistorischer Versuch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998); Bruce Murray, *Film and the German Left in the Weimar Republic: From Caligari to Kuhle Wampe* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990); Helmut Korte, ed., *Film und Realität in der Weimarer Republik: Mit Analysen von Kuhle Wampe und Mutter Krausens Fahrt ins Glück* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1978); Thomas G. Plummer, et al, eds., *Film and Politics in the Weimar Republic* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1982); Sean McMeekin, *The Red Millionaire: A Political Biography of Willi Münzenberg, Moscow's Secret Propaganda Tsar in the West, 1917–1940* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); and Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst (NGBK) and Freunde der Deutschen Kinemathek, *Erobert den Film! Proletariat und Film in der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin: NGBK, 1977).

¹⁸ Even the Nazis appreciated Fritz Lang's phenomenal talent, so much so that Goebbels personally asked him to oversee Germany's film industry, despite Lang's Jewish ancestry. Lang declined the offer and left for the United States.

¹⁹ For more on Nazism and its impact on film, see Susan Tegel, *Nazis and the Cinema* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007); David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2001); Sabine Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001); Mary-Elizabeth O'Brien, *Nazi Cinema as Enchantment: The Politics of Entertainment in the Third Reich* (New York: Camden House, 2004); Robert C. Reimer, ed., *Cultural History through a National Socialist Lens: Essays on the Cinema of the Third Reich* (Rochester: Camden House, 2000); Hilmar Hoffmann, *The Triumph of Propaganda: Film and National Socialism, 1933–1945*, trans. John A. Broadwin and V. R. Berghahn (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1996); Ernst Offermanns, *Internationalität und europäischer Hegemonialanspruch des Spielfilms der NS-Zeit* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2001); Rolf Giesen, *Nazi Propaganda Films: A History and Filmography* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2003); Hans-Jürgen Brandt, *NS-Filmtheorie und dokumentarische Praxis: Hippler, Noldan, Junghans* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1987); Julian Petley, *Capital and Culture: German Cinema 1933–45* (London: British Film Institute, 1979); and Gerd Albrecht, *Der Film im Dritten Reich* (Karlsruhe: Doku Verlag, 1979).

1940). Indeed, motion pictures were deemed to exercise such sway in society and the management of public mood that both Hitler and Goebbels took a keen interest in the production of newsreels, often previewing the reels before approving their distribution countrywide.²⁰

Japan in Newsreels

Certainly, well before Hitler obtained the power to dictate what and how much the population was entitled to know, newsreels had already been informing the public of events around the nation and the world. Shortly after the outbreak of World War I, the pioneering cinematographer Oskar Messter introduced newsreel to the populace, so that by 1920 it made up an integral part of most cinematic experiences. In fact, since newsreels usually headed a film program, they also initiated most first-time moviegoers into the class of motion picture viewers. Likewise, when films came equipped with audio beginning in the early 1930s, the first sound to greet an audience was frequently the announcement, “Achtung! Achtung! Sie sehen und hören die Deulig-Tonwoche” (Attention! Attention! You are watching and hearing the Deulig Audio Newsreel).

In the 1920s and 1930s the studios of Deulig, Ufa, and Emelka/Bavaria produced most of the newsreels, each typically lasting ten to twenty minutes.²¹ Known literally as “weekly show” (Wochenschau), a fresh newsreel was released every week, almost invariably on Thursdays, to relay tidings of the previous seven days. Normally no overarching theme

²⁰ During the war Goebbels received a draft edition of the newsreel on Saturdays before forwarding it to Hitler, who reviewed and critiqued it on Monday, so that the final version would be released later in the week. See Jeremy Noakes, ed., *Nazism 1919–1945 Volume 4: The German Home Front in World War II* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1998), 504.

²¹ Deulig was an abbreviation of Deutsche Lichtbild Gesellschaft. Emelka was derived from the initials MLK of Münchener Lichtspielkunst.

governed a show's program; instead it consisted of vignettes a couple minutes in length on some curious tales or trivialities. The tardiness of the weekly show as a medium—days could pass before footages of an incident made their way onto a screen—meant that newsreels actually harbingered little news because breaking stories would long since have been announced in newspaper extras or on radio. Rather, newsreels animated recent events that spectators had already read or heard about in words. Partly as a result, and particularly in the comparatively calm mid-1920s, newsreels mostly concentrated on happenings from the lighter side of politics, sports, arts, science, celebrities, and foreign affairs.

Japan debuted in interwar German newsreels in this atmosphere of relative stability and relaxation. Among extant newsreels from the 1920s,²² Japan and the Far East together appeared as a subject only sporadically.²³ In keeping with the peaceful time and playful tone of the medium, newsreels frequently painted East Asia as an exotic environment of enigma and excitement. For instance, viewers saw in a 1925 segment called “Blue Jackets Visiting Famous Chinese Temples” German sailors traveling in China.²⁴ The sightseers were shown watching kung-fu and posing for photographs in front of a pagoda. Of course, in and of itself

²² Unless otherwise noted, all films investigated in this chapter were accessed in the Federal Film Archives (Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv) in Berlin-Wilmersdorf.

²³ It is certainly possible that Japan appeared in shows that are now irretrievably lost. Broadly speaking, quite an impressive number of interwar newsreels have been preserved and are available for use in the archives, though far fewer films from the 1920s than the 1930s survive to this day. Many remaining ones from the 1920s are fragmentary and the events depicted are so out of context that precise dating is all but impossible. The collection of newsreels from the 1930s, in particular the Ufa and Deulig shows with sound, is much fuller but still nowhere near complete, and even the existing reels sometimes suffer from missing audio. For more on research using newsreels and documentaries in the Federal Archives, see the guidebook, Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv, *Wochenschauen und Dokumentarfilme 1895–1950*, ed. Peter Bucher, Findbücher zu Beständen des Bundesarchivs 8 (Koblenz: Bundesarchiv, 2000).

²⁴ “Blaujacken beim Besuch berühmter chinesischer Tempelbauten,” *Emelka-Deulig-Wochenschau-Sujets*, 1925, Findbuch-Signatur 538. Unfortunately the state of preservation and organization of early or fragmentary newsreels does not render them convenient for research or documentation. Therefore to aid other researchers I try to provide as much information as possible on any film cited, including the original or archival title, release date and call number in the guidebook of the Federal Archives (Findbuch-Signatur).

the excursion hardly amounted to a newsworthy item, but the sheer alien quality of the scenery and the adventurous nature of the activity sufficed to catapult it onto the big screen.

Along the same vein, a number of shows from the late 1920s depicted scenes of ordinary Japanese religious ceremonies. In early 1927, an Emelka newsreel introduced moviegoers to the visual spectacle of a Shinto festival.²⁵ It featured participants dressed for the occasion—women in kimonos, men with straw hats—chanting and parading a portable shrine through town. The revelers also pushed a gigantic drum (taiko 太鼓), though the silent reel could do justice neither to the singing nor the instrument. Then in mid-1928, a Deulig newsreel brought to screens what it labeled a “Japanese Parish Fair.”²⁶ In fact the film captured a Bon festival, a Buddhist celebration recalling the spirits of ancestors. Again spectators saw Japanese in festive costumes, stepping and flailing rhythmically to perform the Bon dance. Later in the year, a newsreel reported that the city of Beppu had erected a twenty-five-meter tall statue of Buddha.²⁷ Footages highlighting the size of the structure would not only have awed spectators but also elicited laughs by juxtaposing a few diminutive monks cleaning the statue with the cupped palms in which they all comfortably fitted.

Although the opening of the Beppu Buddha qualified for news, Japan was already so peppered with statues of deities that the completion of another one should not raise many eyebrows. Also, observance of some sort of Shinto or Buddhist holiday somewhere took place so frequently that it usually would not warrant special attention. Yet portrayals of these mundane occurrences in Japan somehow found their way as current affairs to cinemas across Germany, so much so that Japan made news simply for being Japan and doing what Japan

²⁵ *Emelka-Wochenschau-Aufnahmen*, 1927, Findbuch-Signatur 1375.

²⁶ “Japanische Kirchweih,” *Deulig-Wochenschausujets* Nr. 17, 1928.

²⁷ “Zu Ehren Buddhas,” *Ufa-Deulig-Opel-Wochenschau Sujets* Nr. 2, 1928.

did normally. Or rather, Japan made news simply for being what Japan was *thought* to be and doing what Japan was *thought* to do normally. Certainly, far more happened in Japan than the construction of sacred idols or celebration of festivals, but these activities conformed to the widespread, preexisting German imagination of Japan as a land of ageless traditions and arcane beliefs. The consumers of these newsreels expected to see a certain version of Japan, and the producers furnished corresponding scenes to fulfill the vision, thereby mutually reinforcing and perpetuating their shared stereotypes of Japan. Even when in 1929 an *Emelka* newsreel supposedly revealed an unfamiliar side of Japan by playing a segment on “Modern Woman in Japan,”²⁸ it still could not help but choose images of Japanese women attempting awkwardly in their kimonos to master the imported game of billiards. Similarly, a *Deulig* program in 1934 showed Japanese women belatedly leaving their kimonos behind to try on revealing Western bathing suits. The narrator commented that “different times bring different customs. What was impossible twenty years ago is now a common sight—demonstrations of swimwear modeled on European fashion on a Japanese beach.”²⁹ For German spectators these reels would help reaffirm their dismissal of Japan merely as a clumsy imitator trying to ape or catch up with the civilized West—a stereotype prevalent in Europe since the late nineteenth century.³⁰

Where Japan managed to match or even supersede Western accomplishments, newsreels greeted such instances not with encouragement or even self-congratulation but unease. For example, in 1925 a *Deulig* show reported Japanese warships on a tour arriving in

²⁸ “Die moderne Frau in Japan,” *Emelka-Woche* Nr. 48, 19 November 1929, Findbuch-Signatur 502.

²⁹ „Andere Zeiten, andere Sitten. Was vor 20 Jahren noch unmöglich war heute ist es ein gewohntes Bild. Vorführungen von Bademoden nach europäischem Vorbild in einem japanischen Seebad,” in *Deulig-Tonwoche* Nr. 137, 15 August 1934, Findbuch-Signatur DTW137/1934.

³⁰ Call to mind cartoons from the late 1800s, especially those by the French caricaturist Georges Bigot, depicting Japanese in western clothes as ill-fitting monkeys.

San Francisco Bay.³¹ The visiting and home vessels saluted each other, and the Japanese ships fired shots in honor of the host. An admiral representing the U.S. Navy boarded the flagship *Asama*, where he was welcomed by smartly uniformed Japanese seamen. This particular segment lasted longer than usual, and the camera lingered over the sleek Japanese ship and its still-smoking guns. The film's pairing of the Japanese and the American ships created the impression that the fleets shared a parity of sorts and that Japan had achieved the status of a powerhouse alongside Western nations. Yet for the Germans who remembered the glory of the High Seas Fleet as well as the shame of its post–World War I liquidation from which Japan benefited by acquiring a few vessels and U-boats, Japan's brandishing the very sea power that helped it conquer ex-German colonies would arouse far less admiration than resentment.

In another newsreel, released by Ufa in 1936, the narrator declared “Cannon Thunder in New York” to lead a story on a Japanese squadron visiting New York.³² The sequence of events paralleled that in the 1925 show: guest and host hailed each other, Japanese sailors saluted the boarding party, and the shore battery and Japanese warships exchanged honorary shots. The inclusion of audio, however, drastically enhanced the overall impact of the footages. Thus cinemagoers no longer had to wonder what sounds the scene made but could hear for themselves—as much as equipment permitted—the Japanese command given the shipmen to stand at attention and the cannons roaring deafeningly in anger. If film projectors displayed before spectators only moving frames silently demonstrating Japanese military

³¹ “Japanische und amerikanische Kriegsschiffe begrüßen einander in der Bai von San Francisco,” *Deulig-Woche*, 1925, Findbuch-Signatur 513.

³² “Kanonen-Donner in New York,” *Ufa-Tonwoche Nr. 314*, 9 September 1936, Findbuch-Signatur UTW 314/1936.

might and threat, then loudspeakers made that danger tangible by ringing audiences' ears with blasts of naval gunfire.

As a matter of fact, as newsreels entered the overlapping era of sound and the turbulent 1930s, their depiction of a Japan enticing for its oriental intrigues gave way to one that raised alarm for its inscrutability armed with modern firepower. To be sure, special occasions such as a Shinto festival reenacting a whale hunt,³³ the passing of notable individuals, or the commemoration of Commodore Perry's "opening" of Japan, still occupied screen time. Even in some of these seemingly innocuous events, however, the specter of a relentlessly rising Japan still reared its head. For example, an Ufa newsreel in 1934 chose as its subject the funeral of Admiral Tōgō Heihachirō 東 平八郎, the hero in the Russo-Japanese War who almost single-handedly propelled Japan into the ranks of great powers by trouncing a Western state.³⁴ Also in 1934, in explaining Perry's legacy, a Deulig narrator pointedly commented that "eighty years ago Japan was still an island country cut off from the world and untouched by European and American civilization. In 1854 American ships led by Admiral [*sic*] Perry arrived in Shimoda. Japan became acquainted with modern civilization and from this point onward the Japanese nation developed in an anomalously rash pace into today's world power."³⁵ Japan's contemporary encroachments on China likely tainted the coverage so that Japan appeared militaristic and expansionistic even in reports on unrelated

³³ *Ufa-Tonwoche* Nr. 277, 25 December 1935. Audio missing.

³⁴ *Ufa-Tonwoche* Nr. 200, 4 July 1934, Findbuch-Signatur UTW 200/1934.

³⁵ „Vor 80 Jahren war Japan noch ein weltabgeschiedenes Inselreich, unberührt von der Zivilisation Europas und Amerikas. Im Jahre 1854 landeten amerikanische Schiffe unter dem Kommando Admiral Perrys in Schimoda. Japan lernte die moderne Zivilisation kennen und von diesem Zeitpunkt an entwickelte sich die japanische Nation in ungewöhnlich raschem Tempo zur jetzigen Weltmacht,“ in *Deulig-Tonwoche* Nr. 125, 23 May 1934, Findbuch-Signatur DTW125/1934.

events. Indeed, Japan became increasingly a byword for violence and bloodshed in newsreels in the 1930s.

Already in the relatively tranquil mid-1920s, newsreels frequently carried stories on various nations' armed forces, though mostly peacetime maneuvers involving awesome pieces of military hardware.³⁶ East Asia, however, stood out as the only region that threatened to turn rumors of war into reality. For a few weeks in 1927 viewers saw scenes of skirmishes in China as part of its ongoing civil war,³⁷ and in 1929, in a segment titled "Danger of War in the East," they watched footages of Chinese troops preparing for an imminent clash with their Russian counterpart.³⁸ Thus, the possibility of a confrontation on the continent seemed to simmer just beneath the veneer of peaceful coexistence.

Ultimately, Japan, not the Soviet Union, brought war to Asia, and newsreels carried visions of the war to Germany. By the time fighting between Japan and China broke out on 28 January 1932 in what became known as the Shanghai Incident,³⁹ all three studios stood

³⁶ For examples, an American naval exercise appeared in *Emelka-Woche Nr. 44*, 26 October 1927, Findbuch-Signatur 490; a Reichswehr autumn drill in *Emelka-Woche Nr. 38*, 14 September 1927, Findbuch-Signatur 487; and a Royal Air Force maneuver in the mid 1920s in *Emelka-Wochenschau-Sujets*, ca. 1924–1926, Findbuch-Signatur 1296. Incidentally, naval exercises seemed an especially popular subject for newsreels.

³⁷ See *Emelka-Woche Nr. 32*, 3 August 1927, Findbuch-Signatur 483; and *Emelka-Woche Nr. 35*, 24 August 1927, Findbuch-Signatur 484.

³⁸ "Kriegsgefahr im Osten! China rüstet sich auf den Krieg mit Rußland," *Emelka-Woche Nr. 28*, 3 July 1929, Findbuch-Signatur 500.

³⁹ The Shanghai Incident refers to the war in and around Shanghai from January to March in 1932. The Manchurian Incident in September 1931 had reignited anti-Japanese passion among the Chinese, eventually leading to confrontations between Chinese and Japanese civilians in Shanghai. Japan used the pretext of protecting its interests from disturbance to amass a force outside the city, and proceeded to attack the city and Chinese units nearby from land, sea and air. Both sides poured men and resources into the battle; Chiang Kai-shek sent some of the German trained and equipped troops to help resist the Japanese. By 3 March Japan had gained the upper hand and the defenders withdrew from their positions. The western powers used the lull to broker a ceasefire to end the military action. For more, see Donald A. Jordan, *China's Trial by Fire: The Shanghai War of 1932* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001).

ready and equipped to relay the spectacular images and sounds of the conflict.⁴⁰ For most viewers the battle not only meant their first experience with witnessing real combat on screen,⁴¹ it would also come to define Japan's presentation in newsreels for the rest of the decade.⁴²

For the duration of the battle between 28 January and 3 March, sights and sounds of war came to monopolize the portrayals of Japan. On 10 February, just two weeks after the outbreak of fighting, *Deulig Audio Newsreel No. 6* was already playing footages of combat in cinemas across Germany. The narrator launched the segment by announcing, "Shanghai stands in the center of the world's interest today: Japan marching on East Asia's great commerce city of 2.7 million inhabitants."⁴³ As viewers gawked at footages of the city shot from the air,⁴⁴ the narrator explained that the dense Chinese district of Chapei was set ablaze by Japanese aerial bombs and artillery shells. That is, years before Riefenstahl exploited the same camera technique for propaganda and years before the Luftwaffe experimented with the same tactic in *Guernica*, German cinemagoers had already experienced in Shanghai through

⁴⁰ Ufa inaugurated its newsreel program with sound on 10 September 1930; Fox, on 11 September. Emelka followed suit later on 24 September. Deulig caught up by releasing its first on 6 January 1932.

⁴¹ Of course, the World War I veterans among audience members had not only seen but lived actual combat. Their exposure to war, however, remained limited to their individual perspectives, since no one person could experience simultaneously fighting on land, at sea and in the air, which all featured prominently in footages of the Sino-Japanese conflict. They also showed heavy urban fighting in densely populated areas, also not seen in the Great War. In addition, between 1918 and 1932 an entire new generation of Germans had grown up knowing war only indirectly and after the fact.

⁴² Hypothetically, the fighting during the Manchurian Incident would have provided the first footages of an actual war seen in cinema. Yet it is no longer possible to know for certain, as no newsreel between September 1931 and February 1932 seems to have survived. The earliest programs showing combat between China and Japan were filmed in Shanghai in early 1932.

⁴³ „Schanghai steht heute im Mittelpunkt des Weltinteresses. Japan in große Handelsstadt Ostasiens, welche 2.7 Millionen Einwohner, eingedrungen,“ in *Deulig-Tonwoche Nr. 6*, 10 February 1932, Findbuch-Signatur DTW 6/1932.

⁴⁴ The newsreel's footages from the air scooped by several months those in the Nazi propaganda film *Hitler über Deutschland* (*Hitler's Flight over Germany*).

newsreels the horror of modern war, one Japan initiated with an attack on civilians. In contrast to the 1920s' silent films that could not even let footages "speak" for themselves, in the 1930s audio newsreels on war came chock full of noises of exploding bombs, buzzing warplanes, thudding machine-guns, and wailing victims that shook the walls of the cinema and perhaps even spectators in their seats. In other words, the cotemporaneous advances in audio technology and outbreak of violence not only enabled the timely projection of the Far Eastern war onto German screens, they also rendered more real and immediate the menace Japan posed to world peace.⁴⁵

Moreover, sights and sounds of war—in today's media parlance—sucked the oxygen out of the room regarding coverage on Japan. Since a newsreel was made up of segments on different topics, it could not devote an entire program to a single subject, and so the Sino-Japanese war in essence displaced all other stories on Japan. Only under this circumstance could the Deulig newsreel relegate the continuing Japanese incursion into Manchuria to "other news" after the headline assault on Shanghai. This segment featured Japanese soldiers in combat as they stormed the city of Harbin after heavy fighting. Interestingly, the filmmakers exercised an editorial touch by inserting into the footages generic audio effects not captured on site but added afterwards in a studio. For example, the audience heard drumbeats (as in a celebratory parade) as Japanese troops marched past burning buildings, and in the background unintelligible human voices that presumably stood for Japanese. The artificial sounds, though incongruous in hindsight, would have helped lead cinemagoers' imaginations closer to the battlefield by enlivening the scene.

⁴⁵ The enhancement of combat scenes on film through the addition of sound is well noted. See Anton Kaes, *Shell Shock Cinema: Weimar Culture and the Wounds of War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 212; and Julia Encke, *Augenblicke der Gefahr: Der Krieg und die Sinne. 1914–1934* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2006); 111–193.

The rest of the month witnessed the daily Japanese bombardment of Shanghai and the newsreels' weekly bombardment of German moviegoers with footages of Japanese brutality. *Deulig Audio Newsreel No. 9* opened the segment on the war with sounds of gunfire and explosion, and closed it with images of Japanese armored cars zipping past urban ruins and burning buildings collapsing.⁴⁶ The following week *Deulig No. 10* exhibited sympathy for the victims by contrasting Chinese helplessness with Japanese aggression.⁴⁷ The film showed a Japanese convoy rumbling through streets lined with rubble, while soldiers ruthlessly dispersed a crowd of refugees. The next scene ratcheted up the tension further by focusing on a woman carrying her infant in a deserted street and trudging wearily before heavily armed Japanese troops who seemed on the verge of triggering unspeakable violence on the mother and child. Just as cinemagoers clutched their armrests with sweaty palms in dreadful anticipation, the camera switched to zoom in on a wounded Chinese man bemoaning his suffering. Interspersed with the man's sighs and screams and breaking from the medium's normally staid tone, the narrator lamented that "the shelling of the city has visited the inhabitants with immense misery." As the camera panned from a throng of fleeing civilians and on to children in rags nibbling on the street, he continued, "Thousands upon thousands of refugees. Everyone is starving and has to rely on the public dole."⁴⁸

That same week, *Emelka Audio Newsreel No. 77* also devoted screen time to the war and thereby guaranteed that most Germans who went to the cinema that week would have

⁴⁶ *Deulig-Tonwoche Nr. 9*, 2 March 1932, Findbuch-Signatur DTW 9/1932.

⁴⁷ *Deulig-Tonwoche Nr. 10*, 9 March 1932, Findbuch-Signatur DTW 10/1932.

⁴⁸ „Ungeheures Elend hat die Beschießung der Stadt unter den Bewohnern hervorgerufen... Tausende und aber tausende Flüchtlinge. Alle haben Hunger, und müssen öffentliche Speis werden,“ *ibid.*

seen Japanese atrocity and lawlessness.⁴⁹ To open the segment “The Conflict in the East: The Latest Images from Shanghai,” the announcer declared, “Chapei is burning.”⁵⁰ The footages showed the harbor engulfed in smoke and flame after burning for three days and nights. He added that in spite of intervention by the European powers, the aggressors pressed on deeper into the city and its environs, while the screen displayed streets littered with corpses—victims caught in the crossfire or killed by naval bombardments or air raids. In this way, the newsreel watching and hearing public bore witness to the dawn of total war and the first application of terror bombing in densely populated areas.⁵¹

Moral condemnations aside, utilitarian spectators could well rationalize that Germany had more to gain by cozying up to powerful Japan than hapless China. As the Emelka announcer pointed out, “Although the Chinese regiments are resisting frantically, they must still retreat steadily before the incomparably modern war machines of the Japanese.”⁵² Yet viewers who entertained a favorable impression of Japan’s military prowess would have been disabused of that notion even before the intermission. Later in the same program a segment showcased a special maneuver of the combined U.S. Pacific and Atlantic Fleets near Hawai’i.⁵³ The armada of ships and aircraft dwarfed anything shown on screen hitherto, and was meant to remind Japan of America’s ability to project its power overseas and protect its

⁴⁹ No Ufa show from this period appears to have survived, but it seems highly likely that the program of that week would have mentioned the war in some fashion.

⁵⁰ „Chapei brennt,“ in “Der Konflikt im Osten. Die letzten Bilder aus Shanghai,” *Emelka-Tonwoche* Nr. 77, 10 March 1932, Findbuch-Signatur 1266.

⁵¹ Technically, footages of the French destruction of parts of Damascus in 1925 should qualify as the first video of a deliberate aerial attack on a city. Yet unlike the coverage of the bombing of Shanghai, viewers only saw the aftermath of the raid and not the air raid itself. See Emelka-Deulig-Wochenschau-Sujets, 1925.

⁵² „Zwar wehren sich die chinesischen Regimente verzweifelt, doch müssen sie vor den ungleich moderneren Kriegsmitteln der Japaner Schritt für Schritt zurückweichen,“ *ibid.*

⁵³ The same naval exercise was also shown in *Deulig-Tonwoche* Nr. 8, 24 February 1932, Findbuch-Signatur DTW 8/1932.

interests in East Asia. China itself too seemed determined not to fall easy prey to Japanese expansionism. *Deulig No. 10* concluded its coverage with the observation, “But China is hanging in there,” and footages of a great demonstration in Nanking venting popular anger.⁵⁴ The last newsreel story on the conflict also boded ill for further Japanese adventurism. In a rare feat for the newsreel as a medium for capturing breaking news, *Deulig Audio Newsreel No. 23* played original footages of the attempted assassination of Japanese dignitaries celebrating their victory in China.⁵⁵ The commander in Shanghai, General Shirakawa Yoshinori 白川義則, died from his wounds, and Admiral Nomura Kichisaburō 野村吉三郎 and Ambassador Shigemitsu Mamoru 重光葵 were grievously injured.⁵⁶ Though some cinemagoers might somehow come to admire Japanese strength, they could also not miss the damaging ramifications such exploits incurred for Japan.

Seen from the newsreels’ presentation of Japan after Shanghai, successes in China not only pushed Japan into a looming showdown with America, within the home country they also fed militarism and undermined civilian rule. Moreover, the war’s intermittent but never-ending nature also hinted at its becoming a quagmire; newsreel after newsreel depicted Japan winning battle after battle but never the war. For example, in early 1933, not yet a year after the Shanghai Incident, Japanese forces reprised their role of weary victors in *Deulig Audio*

⁵⁴ „Aber China läßt sich nicht unterkriegen,“ in *Deulig-Tonwoche Nr. 10*.

⁵⁵ *Deulig-Tonwoche Nr. 23*, 9 June 1932, Findbuch-Signatur DTW 23/1932. The assassination took place on 29 April but the newsreel did not show footages of it until 9 June. Thus, though the camera managed to record the event as it unfolded, the time needed for transporting and editing the actual reels delayed its appearance on screen by more than a month.

⁵⁶ Despite their serious injuries—Nomura lost the use of his right eye, Shigemitsu had to have his right leg amputated—both men went on to play critical roles in Japanese foreign policy in the coming years. Nomura worked as ambassador to the U.S. and tried to come to an understanding with Washington until the attack on Pearl Harbor. Shigemitsu, often seen as a moderate, served as foreign minister during the war once the tide turned against Japan. Ultimately he would sign for Japan the Instrument of Surrender in 1945.

*Newsreel No. 60.*⁵⁷ The announcer explained that viewers were watching the first footages of the Japanese occupied city of Shan Hai Kuan on the Great Wall, and that conquering the city, “the invasion gateway into the province of Jehol, is for Japan worth the withdrawal from the League of Nations.”⁵⁸ As the segment ended dramatically with the demolition of the ancient fortress and city, cinemagoers would have wondered why Japan would foolishly risk international condemnation and American disapproval in return for minor gains against a vast enemy.

Appropriately, newsreels answered this question by shifting the camera’s focus to domestic changes in Japan. The Great Wall, however fragile a barrier before modern arms, did provide a boundary marker between Japanese-dominated Manchukuo and China proper, resulting in a de facto ceasefire between 1933 and 1937. Rather than returning to the more innocent themes prior to Shanghai, newsreels zoomed in instead on Japan’s descent into militaristic irrational exuberance, if not downright collective madness. “War Fever in Japan,” proclaimed the narrator in *Deulig Audio Newsreel No. 57*, as footages showed enthusiastic children, youngsters, and women in traditional clothes seeing off a division headed for Manchuria.⁵⁹ Overflowing throngs of flag-waving well-wishers congested streets and lined the marching route of the soldiers and even the railroad for the troop transports. The scene repeated at the harbor, where the crowd nearly pushed itself into the water in its excessive enthusiasm to bid the warriors farewell. Conspicuously missing was the normal expression of sadness and grief when loved ones departed for foreign battlefields; the people appeared

⁵⁷ *Deulig-Tonwoche Nr. 60*, 22 February 1933, Findbuch-Signatur DTW 60/1933.

⁵⁸ „Shan Hai Kuan ist das Einfallstor in die Provinz Jehol, deren Besitz Japan den Austritt aus dem Völkerbund wert ist,“ *ibid.*

⁵⁹ “Kriegsbegeisterung in Japan,” *Deulig-Tonwoche Nr. 57*, 1 February 1933, Findbuch-Signatur DTW 57/1933.

jubilant to see the soldiers go. In fact, viewers saw more tear-soaked handkerchiefs in a 1934 segment on Berliner children leaving for a fieldtrip to the Baltic coast than the Japanese sending their sons, brothers, and fathers to a possible death.⁶⁰ Even though no major military action took place at the time, the newsreel still depicted a martial Japan—one with symptoms of victory disease.

For the next few years, until the outbreak of full scale confrontation between Japan and China in 1937, the newsreels' diagnoses of Japan's condition deteriorated. All Japan seemed obsessed with war, or at least German viewers could gather as much since newsreels depicted little else of Japan. For example, *Fox Audio Newsreel Nr. 38* from September 1933 showcased air-raid drills in Tokyo. Footages showed thick clouds of smoke rising from the city, warplanes buzzing buildings and civilians, and flaks firing into the air. Playacting dead and wounded victims and a real burning tram completed the pandemonium. The narrator commented that, "The whole world is guarding against attack from the air. Even a country so amply armed with aircraft like Japan runs air-raid drills."⁶¹ Then in October 1934, *Deulig Audio Newsreel No. 148* asked, "What does a Japanese schoolgirl do in her free time?" As cinemagoers, amused or alarmed, watched Japanese teenage girls marching on order with rifles to a firing range and shooting at targets, the film continued, "They learn to shoot, not just a Tesching [handgun] or pistol... Maybe one day she will stand by her man for real."⁶² To complete this portrayal of a Japan crazed with regimentation and indoctrination, *Deulig*

⁶⁰ In *Deulig-Tonwoche Nr. 137* in 1934 there was a very touching scene in Berlin of mothers reluctantly parting with their children on an excursion to the Baltic. Cries of "Auf Wiedersehen" could be heard throughout the segment, and some mothers and children were weeping before the prospect of a brief separation.

⁶¹ „Die ganze Welt schützt sich gegen Luftangriffe. Selbst ein mit Flugzeugen reichlich versehenes Land wie Japan organisiert Luftschutzübungen,“ in *Fox Tönende Wochenschau Jahrg. VII Nr. 38*, ca. September 1933.

⁶² „Was tut die japanische Studentin in ihrer Freizeit? Sie lernt Schießen. Nicht mit Tesching oder Pistole... Und vielleicht wird sie einmal im Ernst bei ihrem Mann stehen,“ in *Deulig-Tonwoche Nr. 148*, 31 October 1934, Findbuch-Signatur DTW 148/1934.

Audio Newsreel No. 157 showed a clip of Japanese boys mimicking soldiers and engaging as units in mock combat against each other. Some manned wooden sticks standing in for machine guns, others crawled under and cut imaginary barbed wires, while a few wriggled in painted boxes to simulate tanks moving. The narrator observed, not with a little irony, “These tiny Japanese do not mess around with tin soldiers any more. Only the war-game battlefield with machine guns and ‘Jump up, march, march!’ make the eight-year old heart pound harder.”⁶³ Seen from the newsreels, Japan appeared drunk with militarism and expansionism, so much so that even its youngest members knew not the gravity of violence and treated combat as a diversion.

Alarming, the children’s older brothers and fathers also played war, but with real weapons. In *Ufa Audio Newsreel No. 277* in 1935 cinemagoers saw footages of a maneuver in Manchukuo attended by the Japanese-backed emperor Pu-Yi.⁶⁴ Although the soldiers supposedly sported Manchurian colors, their uniforms looked indistinguishable from those of the Japanese troops in previous shows; not to mention that most Germans who read newspapers would know that Manchukuo amounted to little more than a puppet state. Later in the year, *Deulig Audio Newsreel No. 174* reported Pu-Yi traveling to Japan to pay homage to his patron Hirohito.⁶⁵ The monarchs, in costumes splattered with medals they never earned, were surrounded by other uniformed dignitaries as they saluted soldiers and sailors lining the street. Again Japan emerged as a land dominated by men specialized in waging war. Finally, in late 1935 *Deulig Audio Newsreel No. 207* depicted Hirohito, “on the white steed of the

⁶³ „Diese kleinen Japaner geben sich nicht mehr mit Zinnsoldaten ab. Nur das Kriegspielgelände mit Maschinengewehr und ‚Sprung auf, marsch, marsch!‘ läßt das achtjährige Herz höher schlagen,“ in *Deulig-Tonwoche Nr. 157*, 2 January 1935, Findbuch-Signatur DTW 157/1935.

⁶⁴ *Ufa-Tonwoche Nr. 277*, 9 January 1935, Findbuch-Signatur UTW 227/1935.

⁶⁵ *Deulig-Tonwoche Nr. 174*, 1 May 1935. Audio missing.

Mikado” and in full military garb, presiding over an exercise of his armed forces involving masses of men, tanks, and warplanes.⁶⁶ Thus, since 1932 newsreels had been chronicling before audiences Japan’s degeneration into a mobilization society in which everyone from eight-year olds all the way up to the emperor—precisely those with no imminent prospect of actually dying in combat—indulged in hallucinations of battlefield heroics and glory.

It should surprise no attentive spectators, then, when Japan at last unleashed a full scale war against China. In fact, in 1936 an Ufa program had already revealed a Japanese troop build-up in “Turbulent Asia;” a lone old lady’s sobbing as she saw the soldiers off was drowned out by the crowd waving flags.⁶⁷ By July 1937, however, German-Japanese relations had undergone a fundamental realignment with the Anti-Comintern Pact, and the newsreels’ portrayal of Japan reflected the new diplomatic reality. Beginning in August, newsreel after newsreel relayed stories of the war, but with a perspective different from that in 1932. An Ufa narrator declared that “the situation in the Far East is again tense” and excused Japanese overreaction by faulting the Chinese for shooting a Japanese soldier.⁶⁸ As footages of Japanese troops entering Peking (Beijing) rolled, a Bavaria announcer proclaimed, “The Japanese in Peking, to the rejoicing of their countrymen,”⁶⁹ yet in fact viewers saw poor, resigned Chinese sitting on the dirt indifferently eyeing their conquerors. In case anyone still doubted where the regime’s sympathy lay, *Ufa Audio Newsreel No. 368* coupled a story on

⁶⁶ „Auf dem Schimmel des Mikado,“ in *Deulig-Tonwoche Nr. 207*, 18 December 1935, Findbuch-Signatur DTW 207/1935.

⁶⁷ “Unruhiges Asien,” *Ufa-Tonwoche Nr. 302*, 17 June 1936, Findbuch-Signatur UTW 302/1936.

⁶⁸ „Die Lage im Fernen Osten ist wieder gespannt,“ in “Kampf um Peiping,” *Ufa-Tonwoche Nr. 362*, 11 August 1937, Findbuch-Signatur UTW 362/1937. The Marco Polo Bridge Incident, which triggered the wider war, took place on 7 July. This Ufa program is the earliest still-extant newsreel covering the outbreak of war. The missing Japanese soldier in question was probably not attacked by Chinese troops.

⁶⁹ „Die Japaner in Peking, umjubelt von ihren Landsleuten,“ in *Bavaria-Tonwoche Nr. 37*, 8 September 1937, Findbuch-Signatur 389.

Japanese troops puncturing a Chinese defense line in Shanghai with a segment on Japanese officers in Berlin observing an air-raid drill.⁷⁰ In addition, while in 1932 the newsreels highlighted Chinese suffering, in 1937 they switched to trumpet Japanese success. Not only did Japan conquer more territories, it also gained more exposure on screen at China's expense. Thus an Ufa story titled "War Theater North China" focused only on Japanese soldiers in armored trains rolling into Beijing and not their impact on the Chinese populace.⁷¹ Likewise, in November *Ufa Audio Newsreel No. 374* displayed under the segment "China" mostly footages of Japanese offensive actions. Spectators saw the Japanese headquarters, Japanese soldiers using dogs as messengers, and Japanese firing on camouflaged enemy positions—in short, anything but "China."⁷² Even the camera angle betrayed a bias for Japan. In contrast to the newsreels in 1932 that zoomed in on individual suffering wrought by aerial bombing, in 1937 the camera literally sided with the attacker by shooting from the bomber's point of view as it dropped bombs on faceless masses below.⁷³

From early 1938 onward, just when the last German military advisers to China were recalled home, the newsreels also unambiguously conveyed the Nazi regime's preference for militaristic Japan over helpless China. For example, in February, *Ufa Audio Newsreel No. 388* showed footage of Japanese units in their "unstoppable advance" in China across the Yellow River.⁷⁴ The narrator added admiringly that although Chinese troops had detonated a

⁷⁰ *Ufa-Tonwoche Nr. 368*, 22–26 September 1937, Findbuch-Signatur UTW 368/1937.

⁷¹ "Kriegsschauplatz Nordchina," *Ufa-Tonwoche Nr. 364*, 25 August 1937, Findbuch-Signatur UTW 364/1937.

⁷² "China," *Ufa-Tonwoche Nr. 374*, 5 November 1937, Findbuch-Signatur UTW 374/1937.

⁷³ "China," *Ufa-Tonwoche Nr. 372*, 10 October 1937, Findbuch-Signatur UTW 372/1937.

⁷⁴ „In unaufhaltsamem Vormarsch setzten japanische Abteilung bei China über den Gelben Fluss... Auch Frauen an die Front, mit Stahlhelm und Gewehr, nach bolschewistischem Vorbild,“ in *Ufa-Tonwoche Nr. 388*, 9 February 1938, Findbuch-Signatur UTW 388/1938.

bridge in an attempt to hinder the invaders, the Japanese overcame the obstacle by quickly erecting a pontoon bridge. The newsreel also stigmatized the Chinese government's training of female volunteer fighters as "following the Bolshevik model," but, as we have seen, no such accusation was raised when cinemagoers watched Japanese girls being taught how to shoot. Most poignantly in demonstrating the filmic fusion of power and aesthetics, the sequence of Japanese cavalry charging toward the camera and thus on the silver screen toward the audience would have left spectators with a deep impression of Japan's martial prowess. In all likelihood the scene was not captured impromptu as part of actual combat but carefully staged and choreographed, with the camera strategically placed and angled on the ground to dramatize the cavalymen's speed and size. To wit, the artistic treatment of Japanese violence on film achieved a veritable union of force and beauty.

Although Japanese aggression in Shanghai in 1937 mirrored that in 1932 (if anything Japan far outdid itself the second time around), newsreels handled the two instances differently. In 1932, they channeled to cinemas images of destruction of Chinese properties and lives, but five years later they captured only a triumphant Japan with little regard for the concomitant human costs. Indeed, as far as can be established no German cinema audience saw any clip of the orgy of rapine and killing that came to be known as the Nanking Massacre.⁷⁵ It can no longer be ascertained whether such footages, if any existed, were

⁷⁵ The sole surviving filmic evidence of the massacre appears to be the reels shot by the American Episcopalian missionary John Magee. Magee had copies of the film made and sent to the U.S. and German governments. Georg Rosen of the German embassy in Nanking recommended that Hitler himself watch the footage. Rosen advised his superiors in the Foreign Ministry, „Während der—übrigens noch immer bis zu einem nicht unerheblichen Grade andauernden—Schreckensherrschaft der Japaner in Nanking hat der Reverend John Magee, Mitglied der amerikanischen *Episcopal Church Mission*, der seit etwa einem Vierteljahrhundert hier ansässig ist, Filmaufnahmen gemacht, die ein beredtes Zeugnis über die von den Japanern verübten Greuelthaten ablegen... Charakteristisch für seine selbstlose Absicht und sein reines Wollen ist die Tatsache, daß ihm eine handelsmäßige Verwertung seiner Filmaufnahmen fernliegt, und daß er der Botschaft von sich aus eine Kopie zu den an die Shanghaier Kodak-Vertretung zu zahlenden Kopierkosten, die dem Auswärtigen Amt auf sicherem Wege vorgelegt werden wird, angeboten hat. Eine Beschreibung der den einzelnen Bildschnitten

censored,⁷⁶ but it strains credulity for one to believe that external interference did not play a role in keeping a single scene from the six-week long atrocities from reaching the silver screen.⁷⁷ The changes in the filmic portrayals of Japan lay not with its actions, for both in 1932 and 1937 Japan used a pretext to invade China by besieging Shanghai, but with domestic German politics. During those years Germany transformed from an internationally oriented republic to a unilaterally acting dictatorship. What the Weimar Republic found inhumane and dangerous in Japan in turn became decisive and admirable under the Nazi regime. Had Germany maintained its democracy or even been taken over by traditional conservatives (as evidenced by the Reichswehr's and Foreign Office's siding with China), Germany would likely have continued to disapprove Japan's plunge into militarism, and cooperation between Berlin and Tokyo would have remained the fantasy of a few enthusiasts for geopolitics.

In other words, as seen in the newsreels, fundamental transformations took place in the 1930s concurrently in both countries that allowed the increasingly authoritarian Germany to perceive aggressive Japan under a positive light. As Japan escalated its campaign against China, reports on the war also hijacked the overall presentation of Japan on screens, displacing the previous portrayal of a quaint land of superstition and tradition. That is, the prevailing perception in the 1920s of Japan as a beauty, mysterious and dainty, became

zugrunde liegenden Vorgänge in englischer Sprache liegt bei. Sie stellt, ebenso wie der Film selbst, ein darart erschütterndes Zeitdokument dar, daß der Film mit einer wörtlichen Übersetzung dieser Beschreibung dem Führer und Reichskanzler vorgeführt werden möge," in a document reproduced in John Rabe, *John Rabe: Der gute Deutsche von Nanking*, ed. Erwin Wickert (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1997), 256–7.

⁷⁶ Another account of the massacre, namely the presentations and lectures by John Rabe in Berlin upon his return to Germany, was censored by the Nazi authorities. Remarkably, Rabe was not only a respected German merchant in Shanghai, but also a member of the Nazi party.

⁷⁷ Whereas the censorship of feature films, which allowed a long period for editing and re-filming, usually left a paper trail for historians, the government's meddling in the production of time-sensitive newsreels was far less well documented.

replaced in the 1930s by one of Japan as a beast, unpredictable and violent. Or, to be precise, Japan was never beauty *and* the beast; rather it was beauty *and then* the beast. The crowd of religious revelers in the 1920s morphed in the 1930s into the warmongering mob wishing troops good hunting. The traditional garment villagers wore in the 1920s became the military uniforms in the 1930s. The energy that went into honoring the peaceful Buddha in the 1920s was rechanneled in the 1930s to churning out war machines. Under normal circumstances, Japanese aggression would have evoked opprobrium, as it did in much of the West, but circumstances in Germany were anything but normal. Japan's descent into militarism coincided with Nazism's rise in Germany, and the two rogue regimes worked hand in hand to forge a new world order. What struck others as bestial in fact would appear quite beautiful to the Nazis, so much so that newsreels' depictions of Japan throughout the Nazi period remained remarkably free of racism. Beauty, it seemed, was indeed in the eye of the beholder.

Japan in Documentaries

After the newsreel, moviegoers usually watched an educational film or documentary known as *Kulturfilm* as a component of a cinematic program.⁷⁸ Since the invention of the film camera, German viewers had been watching ethnographic motion pictures captured by anthropologists and other scientists working in colonies.⁷⁹ In 1918, Ufa founded a culture section (*Kulturabteilung*) devoted to producing nonfictional short subjects, which quickly gained the status of a mainstay category of film alongside newsreels and feature movies. Like newsreels, most documentaries lasted no more than thirty minutes, though some spanned

⁷⁸ For a general history of newsreels in Germany up to 1945, see Peter Zimmermann, ed., *Geschichte des dokumentarischen Films in Deutschland*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun., 2005).

⁷⁹ For more on early anthropological film, see Assenka Oksiloff, *Picturing the Primitive: Visual Culture, Ethnography, and Early German Cinema* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

enough reels to be billed full-length films in their own right, but unlike newsreels, documentaries delved into one theme rather than glossing over many. Like newsreels, documentaries aimed or claimed to convey facts, but unlike newsreels their information did not always come across as timely or relevant. If newsreels only managed to relay current events halfheartedly and tardily (bear in mind the less-than-newsworthy items that appeared on screen as news), then documentaries, due to the time they spent in the editing room and censorship board, could not even cling to any veneer of immediacy. Moreover, breaking stories, such as the Sino-Japanese conflict, could force their way, however belatedly, into newsreels, but documentarians usually had a specific topic in mind before setting out to shoot the first frame. Consequently, Kulturfilm featured topics deemed more timeless, constant, and likelier to remain applicable even after the lengthy production and censorship processes. Lastly, owing to their exploratory nature and pedagogic mission, documentaries often chose subject matters from Germany and the world considered beyond the reach of ordinary viewers, such as the flight of the airship *Graf Zeppelin* to the Arctic or a Catholic pilgrimage in the Philippines.⁸⁰

Unsurprisingly, given these peculiarities and limitations, interwar German documentaries, like contemporary newsreels, relied on familiar stereotypes and clichés in depicting Japan. Of the extant Kulturfilm on Japan from the 1920s and 1930s, many opted to emphasize the unfamiliar and foreign aspects of the country and its inhabitants. Therefore, in 1928, moviegoers watched footages of Japanese rice farmers and pearl divers plying their trades—neither a common sight in Germany. *Rice Cultivation in Japan* (*Der Reisbau in*

⁸⁰ For more on film as a medium for vicarious journeys, see Jeffrey Ruoff, ed., *Virtual Voyages: Cinema and Travel* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

Japan) took place in a rural village.⁸¹ The storyline revolved around a farmhouse, where peasants gathered around a low table to talk about the growing season. They wore outfits suited for agricultural work that Japanese urbanites too would find strange, let alone Germans sitting comfortably in a cinema. The film time-warped the planting process by displaying in succession the peasants selecting the right seeds, then sowing them in rows, and finally applying pesticide to the seedlings. Even the islands' climate—hot and humid enough to allow flooding the fields—would have intrigued viewers used to only continental meteorological patterns.

Pearl Culture in Japan (Perlenzucht in Japan) revealed a different but equally fascinating side of the country.⁸² Directed by the adventurous photojournalist Martin Rikli, the documentary portrayed fishermen harvesting pearls in shellfish grown from kernels inserted earlier.⁸³ The film began in a setting on the coast, with several oarsmen rowing a boat away from a gate of a Shinto shrine (torii 鳥居) on the sea. The scene, idyllic to a fault, might in fact depict a place other than that identified by the narrator, probably because the filmmaker thought his audience expected a certain iconic look of Japan exuding oriental spirituality and tranquility. He elaborated that natural pearls occur rarely but the Japanese found a fantastic formula to farm them. Interestingly, women undertook all pearl-diving and could stay underwater for a superhuman three minutes! Once again, to German cinemagoers,

⁸¹ *Der Reissbau in Japan (Rice Cultivation in Japan)*, 35mm, 910m, Deutsches Kali-Syndikat, Berlin, 1928.

⁸² *Perlenzucht in Japan (Pearl Culture in Japan)*, dir. Martin Rikli, 35mm, 232m, Ufa-Kulturabteilung, Berlin, 1928.

⁸³ Rikli was born in Switzerland but made his career in Germany. He made films, penned books, shot photos, and undertook explorations. In particular his documentaries on Africa were widely acclaimed. He also made a few films on China, *Filmtagebuch vom Krieg in China (Film Diary of the War in China)*, 1932) and *So ist China (So is China)*, 1932). In the 1930s and early 1940s, he devoted his professional energy to producing propaganda for Nazi Germany.

many of whom might not even have seen the sea with their own eyes, Japan emerged as a magical place whose people performed miraculous deeds.

This habit of romanticizing and exoticizing Japan continued in the 1930s. In 1934, moviegoers got a more intimate look of Japan in *In Spring: A Film of Japanese Spring Festivals* (*Im Frühling: Ein Film von japanischen Frühlingsfesten*).⁸⁴ The film opened with a Japanese woman in a kimono in a traditionally furnished room, switched to show close-up shots of cherry blossoms, and then moved to capture a woman playing a *shamisen* 三味線 while the soprano Yuasa Hatsue 湯浅初枝 sang in the background. For the rest of the documentary the scenes jumped from the doll festival to the pleasure quarters in Kyoto, and from a costumed procession in Nara to a bizarre declaration that Japanese went barefoot because they took pride in the beauty of their feet. Of course, such a film had to mention the exotic and alluring geisha, “whom the European knows only from operetta,” but who in fact also practiced—surprise—tea ceremony and flower arrangement.⁸⁵ In short, the film, though purportedly educational by taking the shape of a documentary, in reality consisted entirely of tired and predictable snapshots of a Japan already known to those spectators familiar with stories and operas dating from the late nineteenth century.

Similarly, *Japan's Holy Volcano* (*Japans heiliger Vulkan*, 1936/1941), directed by Arnold Fanck and filmed during his cinematographic expedition to East Asia, also played on

⁸⁴ *Im Frühling: Ein Film von japanischen Frühlingsfesten* (*In Spring: A Film of Japanese Spring Festivals*), dir. Kishi Kōichi 貴志康一 and Wilhelm Prager, 35mm, Ufa, Berlin 1934. The film was also known by its Japanese title, *Haruni*. Kishi and Prager had earlier worked together to make *Spiegel* (*Mirror*), dir. Kishi Kōichi and Wilhelm Prager, 35mm, Ufa, Berlin, 1933. Kishi was a talented musician, composer, and conductor, and was active in Germany in 1932–5, even working with the famous Wilhelm Furtwängler.

⁸⁵ „... Geisha, die der Europäer nur aus Operetta kennt,” *ibid.*

the common stereotype of a tradition-bound and mystery-filled Japan.⁸⁶ The narrator explained that the Fujiyama that everyone knew was actually called Fujisan, and that even though it was located further south than Mt. Etna in Sicily, the holy volcano amazingly could keep snow on its peak. For good measure the documentary also indulged in showing the standard retinue of Japan-related subjects: toiling peasants, women weaving, cherry blossoms, and children in kimono.

Beyond starring in nonfictional shorts lasting no more than half an hour, Japan also made important cameo appearances in two of the most influential full-length documentaries in the 1920s. *Ways to Strength and Beauty* (*Wege zu Kraft und Schönheit*, 1925), a proper Kulturfilm with the stated ambition of enlightening the public, promoted old Japanese customs as an antidote for the ills of modern living.⁸⁷ The film began by waxing nostalgic over the recognition for aesthetics and health by the ancient Greeks as seen in their religious beliefs and reflected in their sculptures. In a segment surveying indigenous dancing around the world as an expression of the body's instinct to move, the film featured the dancer Ishii Bac [Baku] 石井漠 performing a pantomime and together with Ishii Konami 石井小浪 demonstrating a "dance of the seagulls." Then, the next segment on sports crowned jiu-jitsu as Japan's most popular sport, which "needs no strength and is all cleverness." It improved one's wellbeing by not only serving as exercise but also as a means of self-defense, as footages showed a jiu-jitsu master subdue his opponent with no force but only finesse. If anyone still needed to ask "What is jiu-jitsu good for?" (*Wozu Jiu-jitsu gut ist?*), the film answered with clips of staged combat in which a lone lady and a short gentleman

⁸⁶ *Japans heiliger Vulkan* (*Japan's Holy Volcano*), dir. Arnold Fanck, 35mm, 297m, Ufa, Berlin, 1936/1941. The film was shot in 1936 but not released until 1941.

⁸⁷ *Wege zu Kraft und Schönheit* (*Ways to Strength and Beauty*), dir. Wilhelm Prager, 2567m, Ufa-Kulturabteilung, Berlin, 1925.

respectively taught their male and armed would-be assailants a bodily lesson with jiu-jitsu. For individuals terrified by the violent early 1920s, the Japanese martial art might seem to provide just the solution needed for navigating chaotic German cities (which may explain the sport's popularity as reported in the newspapers). By elevating ordinary but allegedly quintessential Japanese activities to a secret path for Germans to acquire strength and beauty or at least a skill for surviving the present, the film idealized spatially distant Japan just as it idealized temporally distant antiquity. The Kulturfilm's very pedagogic intention, which supposedly projected an aura of trustworthiness, in fact distorted Japan's presentation by overstating or even mythicizing the power of its culture and ability of its people.

The less preachy but equally expansive *Melody of the World* (*Melodie der Welt*, 1929), which held the distinction as the first feature-length German "talkie," also discussed Japan as part of its symphony of global sounds.⁸⁸ A "world travel film" (Weltreisefilm) jointly produced by the Hamburg-Amerika Line and Tobis studio, the documentary patched together medley clips of sights and sounds in the context of a grand tour of the world. Setting out from Hamburg, the narrative began with a mosaic of images and cacophony of sounds commonly encountered in a harbor, such as cranes, heavy equipment, and an ocean liner's whistle. When the virtual globetrotter reached East Asia, he encountered artisans painting paper umbrellas. In order to underscore the foreignness of the orient, the film juxtaposed Japanese women in traditional garb on a richly decorated barge with European ladies in Western clothes (the Chinese actress Grace Chiang was credited for playing "a Japanese woman"—not that many in the audience could tell the difference). Cinemagoers also saw an exciting sumo bout and a judo master toss around his opponent, as well as some Asians eating their exotic food with even more exotic chopsticks. As the stay in Japan came to a

⁸⁸ *Melodie der Welt* (*Melody of the World*), dir. Walther Ruttmann, 35mm, 1115m, Tobis, Berlin, 1929.

close, some by-now indispensable geishas saw the filmic tourist off with a parting dance. Even when a longer documentary like *Melody of the World* could afford to devote time and frames to reveal facets of Japan beyond geishas and sumo wrestlers, it still picked the path most traveled by sticking with old clichés. In fact, the truly novel and dynamic developments in Japan, namely the modernization of its economy, society, and politics, hardly received any air time, probably because Germany too was undergoing great changes and so those in Japan seemed trivial. Although the makers of Kulturfilm supposedly shouldered the responsibility of educating the public, they instead catered to the masses' expectation of an olden-day Japan by filming only a stagnant, unchanging Japan right out of the previous century.

When domestic politics in Germany lurched to the radical right in the early 1930s, the documentary portrayal of Japan also took a turn. Certainly, films hawking the clichés did not disappear but only faded into the background, but a new batch of works emerged to comment on current events in Asia. In his *Attention Australia! Attention Asia! The Two Faces of the East* (*Achtung Australien! Achtung Asien! Das Doppelgesicht des Ostens*, 1930), the explorer-cum-correspondent Colin Ross tried to raise his countrymen's awareness of affairs in the Far East.⁸⁹ A student of geopolitics under Karl Haushofer and a trusted "expert" on world affairs in Hitler's eyes,⁹⁰ Ross diagnosed what plagued Australia and Asia respectively

⁸⁹ *Achtung Australien! Achtung Asien! Das Doppelgesicht des Ostens* (*Attention Australia! Attention Asia! The Two Faces of the East*), dir. Colin Ross, 35mm, 2503m, Ufa-Kulturabteilung, Berlin, 1930.

⁹⁰ Colin Ross is a captivating individual who, despite having been a prominent, if not household, figure in his days, somehow slipped through the cracks in history. Right after fighting in WWI, Ross participated briefly but actively in the revolutionary left. In 1919 he left for South America and penned a popular book on his experience there upon his return to Germany. During the interwar years Ross traveled to South America, North America and much of Asia. In 1933 Ross had an audience with Hitler that left both men highly impressed with each other. Although Ross became an unambiguous supporter of Nazism, it appears that he joined that Nazi Party, though it is unclear when. In any case, Ross joined the ranks of amateurs posing as experts on foreign lands like Rosenberg, Ribbentrop, and Hanfstaengl who gained their knowledge from life experience rather than formal studies or professional training, though to be fair Ross had the broadest perspective among the bunch and he did not shamelessly crowd around the Führer like the others did. Ross's son Ralph was killed in an accident on the Eastern Front in 1941. Colin's brother Fritz had married into the Jewish Ullstein family of the

and oppositely as “space without people” and “people without space”—lingo pregnant with the Nazi weltanschauung.⁹¹ “Australia found a purely materialist solution, Asia, a spiritual one. Both solutions have great historical significance.”⁹² Before moving on to lament Germany’s “lost South Sea,” the narrator warned cryptically that once overcrowded China “manages to free itself from its past, then it can certainly become a danger not only for Australia, but perhaps also for us.”⁹³ Thereby Ross prognosticated that the momentous changes in Asia would eventually touch Germany.

Ross did not specify what issue confronted Germany in Asia, but the next year, the documentary *Struggle for Manchuria: The World of the Yellow Race* (*Kampf um die Mandschurei: Die Welt der gelben Rasse*) spelled out the conundrum—Germany would have to choose between Japan and China, both so-called peoples without space.⁹⁴ Almost unique among its contemporaries, the film began by highlighting a new Japan, an “adaptable modern

publisher’s fame. Ross and his wife Lisel agreed not to outlive the Third Reich, so that just before U.S. forces captured Munich, Ross killed Lisel and then himself. For more on Colin Ross, see George Bailey, *Germans: The Biography of an Obsession* (New York: The Free Press, 1972). Bailey, an American journalist who lived in Germany for decades, married Fritz’s daughter Beate and was thus Colin’s nephew-in-law.

⁹¹ Hitler’s high esteem for Ross and his knowledge of the world manifested itself on several occasions. One was a monologue delivered to his close circle on 2 February 1942 in which he lambasted his diplomats in the Far East as useless and praised the value of well-traveled individuals, especially Ross (see next chapter). Another took place on 12 March 1940 in a conversation between Hitler and Ross, in which the Führer lamented the cluelessness of his diplomats with regard to America and asked Ross for his expertise. Ross opined that Roosevelt hated Germany because he resented Hitler’s success in building a dictatorship and his own lack thereof in the United States, in addition of course to the machinations of international Jewry. “The Führer invited Herr Colin Ross to lunch for Thursday. After Herr Colin Ross had taken his leave, the Führer remarked that Ross was a very intelligent man who certainly had many good ideas,” in *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918–45*, series D, vol. 8 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 1949), 910–913; and William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (New York: Touchstone, 1990), 683fn.

⁹² „Australien: Raum ohne Volk. Asien: Volk ohne Raum. Australien hat eine rein materialische Lösung gefunden, Asien, eine geistliche Lösung. Beide Lösungen haben große historische Bedeutung,“ in *Achtung Australien!*

⁹³ „Überquellendes China. Und fangen vor allen die Chinesen an, die alten Windungen abzustreifen. Dann allerdings kann China eine Gefahr werden, nicht nur für Australien, sondern vielleicht auch für uns,“ *ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Kampf um die Mandschurei: Die Welt der gelben Rasse* (*Struggle for Manchuria: The World of the Yellow Race*), dir. Gustav von Estorff and Johannes Häussler, 35mm, 1502m, Herold-Filmgesellschaft, Berlin, 1931.

civilization,” and its similarity to the West: “Tokyo, the capital of the Japanese Empire, has about two million inhabitants and is indistinguishable from a European or American metropolis.”⁹⁵ Soon enough, however, footages of ageless and alien Japan seeped into and quickly inundated the screen. As spectators saw rickshaws, coolies, shrines, temples, gardens, and bonsai plants, the narrator explained, “The old Japanese culture maintains its presence in the arts and in religion... Sitting on the floor, the Japanese eats with chopsticks, which he manipulates with only one hand.”⁹⁶ Indeed, the film devoted almost four out of its seven reels on showcasing mythical and historical Japan and their everlasting legacies.

Yet slowly but surely the documentary built up its case. The narrator explained that Japanese religiousness and geography made food shortage a problem, for “despite the [fishermen’s] meager catch the priest takes a tenth part in exchange for his intercession with the gods,” and that “every speck of land that can be irrigated is planted with rice, Japan’s most important staple crop.”⁹⁷ Thus, controlling Manchuria, “an enormous grain basket” (enorme Getreidespeicher), meant a matter of national survival. At the same time, however, “Manchuria is populated almost exclusively by Chinese, who particularly in the last ten years flowed into the country and turned the steppes into productive fields with their frugality and hard work.”⁹⁸ The film thus set the stage for the two nations to duke it out over the region,

⁹⁵ „Anpassende moderne Zivilization... Tokio, die Hauptstadt des japanischen Kaiserreiches, zählt ca. zwei Millionen Einwohner und ist von einer europäischen oder amerikanischen Großstadt nicht zu unterscheiden,“ *ibid.*

⁹⁶ „Die alte japanische Kultur hat sich in der Kunst und in der Religion erhalten... Auf dem Boden sitzend, isst der Japaner mit Stäbchen, die er nur mit einer Hand bedient,“ *ibid.*

⁹⁷ „Trotz des mageren Fanges wartet schon der Priester auf den zehnten Teil, den er für seine Fürsprache bei der Gottheit zu empfangen hat... Jedes Fleckchen Land, das sich bewässern lässt, wird mit Reis, dem wichtigsten Nahrungsmittel Japans, bepflanzt,“ *ibid.*

⁹⁸ „Die Mandschurei wird fast ausschliesslich von Chinesen bewohnt, die besonders in den letzten zehn Jahren zu Millionen in das Land strömten und infolge ihrer Bedürfnislosigkeit und ihres Fleisses aus seiner Steppenlandschaft fruchtbaren Acker gemacht haben,“ *ibid.*

and as it turned out, the documentary, released in January 1931, proved eerily prophetic since the Manchurian Incident broke out just eight months later. Of course, the filmmakers could not predict that a conflict would break out, however tense the situation, but they left no doubt regarding where their sympathy lay. As footages of destitute and toiling Chinese rolled across the screen, the narrator thundered, “Right next to the irresponsible indulgence of the foreigners, the Chinese are barely scraping by. The Chinese laborers, the cheapest in the world, are being ruthlessly exploited by the foreigners. Where is the morality of the so-called culture nations that allows hundreds of thousands of Chinese in their most tender ages to waste away at the machines?”⁹⁹ It certainly helped that Germany, having lost its colonies, could claim the moral high ground and side with the Chinese to blast their imperial overlords, in particular the British and the Japanese. The documentary concluded that while Japan took on the Western spirit with wonder, China was still struggling to build something new and powerful, but it amounted to only a question of time before the “yellow race” would succeed.

A lacuna separated *Struggle for Manchuria* from the next documentary on current affairs, released in 1938 as *Winter Journey through South Manchuria* (*Winterreise durch Südmandschurien*),¹⁰⁰ and *Imperial Buildings in the Far East* (*Kaiserbauten in Fernost*), both shot during Fanck’s expedition in 1936.¹⁰¹ In some ways Fanck, whose legacy rests with his contribution to the genre of mountain film, stumbled into the role of a major shaper of

⁹⁹ „Unmittelbar neben einem unverantwortlichen Luxus der Fremden fristen die Chinesen ein Kümmerliches Dasein. Rücksichtslos wird die Arbeitskraft des Chinesen, die billigste der Welt, von den Fremden ausgenutzt. Wo bleibt die Moral der sogenannten Kulturvölker, die zulässt, dass hundertausende Chinesen im zartesten Kindesalter an menschenvernichtende Maschinen gestellt werden?“, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Winterreise durch Südmandschurien: Aufnahmen der japanischen Fanck-Expedition* (*Winter Journey through South Manchuria: Footages of Fanck’s Japanese Expedition*), dir. Arnold Fanck, 35mm, 376m, Ufa, Berlin, 1936/1938.

¹⁰¹ *Kaiserbauten in Fernost: Aufnahmen der japanischen Fanck-Expedition* (*Imperial Buildings in the Far East: Footages of Fanck’s Japanese Expedition*), dir. Arnold Fanck, 35mm, 347m, Terra-Filmkunst, Berlin, 1938, Findbuch-Signatur 2755.

Japan's presentation in German film.¹⁰² For financial rather than ideological reasons Fanck, whose money trouble stemmed in part from his refusal to join the Nazi Party, undertook an expedition to East Asia at the invitation of the Japanese Ministry of Education, but his trip coincided with the diplomatic rapprochement between the two countries. If the aforementioned *Japan's Holy Volcano* refrained from overt commentary, *Winter Journey* and *Imperial Buildings*, ostensibly travelogue Kulturfilm, did not. Both documentaries painted a satisfied, prosperous Manchukuo in its lot as a "Japanese protectorate" (japanischer Schutzstaat). They emphasized Japan's role in pacifying the countryside, improving public health by outlawing opium, and preserving the former Manchu imperial residences in Jehol (compared to Austria's Schönbrunn or Germany's Potsdam) that the Chinese themselves had abandoned. Obfuscated was the truth that Japan conquered Jehol rather than rescued it from Chinese neglect, omitted was the fact that the battle for the city damaged some buildings there, and outcast was the righteous anger of the early 1930s toward Japanese injustice. By 1938, of course, political reality in Germany had much altered; even the non-Nazi Fanck had to succumb by making film propaganda. Just as in the newsreels, the filmic profiles in documentaries of a fabulous Japan in the 1920s became replaced by a more muscular one in the 1930s, while in the same timeframe Germany itself experienced a regime change so that it came to value strength above all else. These two separate strands, namely the militarization of Japan and the Nazification of Germany, would change how the two countries viewed each other and eventually bind them together.

The rest of the decade and early 1940s saw a retreat by most Kulturfilm from explicit politicking regarding Japan. As a sign of the times, Johannes Häussler, a co-director of the pro-Chinese *Struggle for Manchuria*, now took part in filming *Great Power Japan*

¹⁰² See Arnold Fanck, *Der Kampf mit dem Berge* (Berlin: Reimar Hobbing, 1931).

(*Großmacht Japan*, 1938), which, albeit no longer extant, likely sang praises to the aggressive Japan he previously denounced.¹⁰³ If so, it stood as an exception, however, since many documentaries refrained from current events altogether and reverted back to playing up a traditional, beautiful Japan. Fanck, for example, managed to extract three more films from the materials he captured during his expedition, all nature flicks: *Rice and Timber in the Land of the Mikado* (*Reis und Holz im Lande des Mikado*, 1940), *Springtime in Japan* (*Frühling in Japan*, 1941), and *Images from Japan's Seashores* (*Bilder von Japans Küsten*, 1944).¹⁰⁴ The last feature-length documentary on Japan, *Nippon, the Land of the Rising Sun* (*Nippon, das Land der aufgehenden Sonne*, 1942), still paraded tired (and tiring) footages of shrines and temples, kimono, rice paddies, and cherry blossoms, even though by that time the government had every reason to convince the population of a modern and mighty Japan.¹⁰⁵

Indeed, for most of the interwar years documentaries, rather than documenting Japan as it appeared, specialized in a quixotic mission to discover and romanticize a bygone, traditional Japan, the very Japan that many Japanese themselves were determined to abandon by adopting wholesale Western styles and mores. Instead of highlighting the dynamic, vibrant, and modern Japan by, say, mentioning how much Ginza looked like Kurfürstendamm or how Shibuya resembled Potsdam Square, the Kulturfilm, with their ethnographic if not downright voyeuristic perspective, trained their lenses on the primitive,

¹⁰³ *Großmacht Japan* (*Great Power Japan*), dir. Johannes Häussler and Ernst R. Müller, 35mm, 1956m, Rex-Film Bloemer & Co., Berlin, 1938.

¹⁰⁴ *Reis und Holz im Lande des Mikado* (*Rice and Timber in the Land of the Mikado*), dir. Arnold Fanck, 35mm, 365m, Ufa, Berlin, 1936/1940; *Frühling in Japan* (*Springtime in Japan*), dir. Arnold Fanck, 35mm, 340m, Ufa, Berlin, 1936/1941; and *Bilder von Japans Küsten* (*Images from Japan's Seashores*), dir. Arnold Fanck, 35mm, 290m, Ufa, Berlin, 1936/1944.

¹⁰⁵ *Nippon, das Land der aufgehenden Sonne* (*Nippon, the Land of the Rising Sun*), dir. Gerhard Niederstraß, 35mm, 1835m, Dr. Edgar Beyfuß-Film Nachf., Berlin, 1942. The end of the film did make a brief acknowledgement of Japan's industrialization and westernization.

bizarre, and inexplicable in Japan. Of course, some scenes of old Japan appeared in films because they played a notable, though not prevalent, role in society. Yet Germany itself had not managed to outrun its shadows from the past. Well into the twentieth century and even in Berlin or Leipzig, pedestrians walked on cobblestone streets and shared the roads with horse-drawn carriages. As a matter of fact, outside the Friedrichstrasse train station in posh central Berlin there existed a parking lot for horse-drawn “taxis.” That is, if one looked hard enough, or even not very hard, one could find an old Germany even though Germany arguably defined modernity in the 1920s. The filmmakers set out to look for an old Japan, and fulfilled their own prophecies by not looking at anything else, so much so that some documentaries functioned more as animated slideshows of postcards depicting a scenic Japan than as films with an educational mandate.

Therefore, filmmakers ventured to volcanoes, forests, the countryside and the seashores—anywhere except where Japanese actually congregated, the cities. It constituted no surprise, then, that none of the documentaries properly treated Tokyo as a subject matter, even though the metropolis had dominated the country’s politics, much of the economy and increasingly the culture well before becoming the official capital in 1869. Nevertheless, the documentarians turned a blind eye to the obvious and sought out “Japan” in the old imperial capital of Kyoto or even Nara, the capital in the eighth century. If Japan symbolically left the “feudal” for the modern age by moving from Kyoto to Tokyo, then the German filmmakers seemed stubbornly stuck in the past with fantasies of an ageless, unchanging Japan.

Japan in Feature Films

At last, after sitting quietly through the newsreel and documentary, spectators could lay eyes on the marquee event of the cinematic program.¹⁰⁶ As mentioned, interwar Germans developed an insatiable demand for motion pictures, and the industry responded by supplying more and different movies, so much so that the studio in Babelsberg outside Berlin played the same hefty role in Europe as Hollywood did in America.¹⁰⁷ Early movies often amounted to little more than a stage play frozen on celluloid, but by the 1920s film had matured as a form of art, entertainment and mass medium. As an historical source feature films bring with them particular baggage, since unlike newsreels and documentaries they (even those “based on a true story”) do not pretend to convey facts, so historians have to decide whether or how much of a film was meant to be taken as potentially plausible or purely fanciful.¹⁰⁸ Also, since movies claimed no urgency or relevance to current events, they tended to spend even more time in the cutting room and with the censorship board than documentaries or newsreels. Nonetheless, even the most fantastic of films must still share certain assumptions with cinemagoers in order for the plot to resonate and to maintain an inherent logic within the storyline. In some sense, then, newsreels inform, documentaries investigate, and movies imagine. Accordingly, this segment does not hold feature films accountable for inaccuracies

¹⁰⁶ At some point during World War II, the politicization of newsreels and documentaries became so tiresome to the population that the regime ordered cinemas to lock their doors after the newsreel began so that no one could enter afterward to watch the feature film without ingesting the propaganda. See Hake, *German National Cinema*, 64.

¹⁰⁷ For more on the history of Babelsberg, see Axel Geiss, ed., *Filmstadt Babelsberg: Zur Geschichte des Studios und seiner Filme* (Berlin: Nicolai, 1994); and Wolfgang Jacobsen, ed., *Babelsberg: Ein Filmstudio 1912–1992* (Berlin: Argon Verlag, 1992).

¹⁰⁸ Regrettably only about one out of ten Weimar films remains to this date, and among those that survive, many do so as fragments, in foreign archives only, as export versions and so no longer in German, or without audio. Even among the small sample of feature films surveyed in this segment, many suffer from these ills. See Hake, *German National Cinema*, 28.

in their portrayals of Japan, but examines instead the role Japan played in German filmic imagination. That is, it explores the *representation* rather than the *presentation* of Japan.

Early in the interwar era feature films on Japan largely toed the storylines used and reused in art forms like literature, opera, or musical from the nineteenth century, thereby carrying over preexisting prejudices. As a result, the romantic comedy *The Girl from Japan* (*Das Mädel aus Japan*, 1919) relied on such stereotypes familiar with spectators as shorthand to unfold the plot, which revolved around the stratagem of the female lead Liesl to maneuver the male protagonist Ernst to give up his obsession with Japan and fall in love with her.¹⁰⁹ Ernst, in rejecting Liesl, made a gesture indicating a short person and said, “I will not marry any of the boring European ladies! Only a Japanese girl will be my wife.”¹¹⁰ Thus, just a sleight of the hand and a spatter of words could neatly pigeonhole all Japanese women as short, strange, and different from their European counterparts, because viewers were expected to have already internalized caricatures of Japan and its people. Liesl then concocted a scheme to masquerade herself as a Japanese maid to catch the eyes of her love interest. Dressed in kimono, wearing heavy make-up, and her hair in knots, Liesl reemerged posing as the daughter of a Japanese man named “Naga Hari,” which of course alluded to the mystery and enchantment of Mata Hari. Never mind that Mata Hari had nary to do with Japan (and little even with the East Indies), for in the view of spectators, or at least that as the filmmakers understood it, all oriental exoticness was equally oriental and exotic. Indeed, in order to differentiate Asia’s civilizations one must have some common knowledge of the continent—knowledge not necessarily common in the early 1920s.

¹⁰⁹ *Das Mädel aus Japan (The Girl from Japan)*, dir. Toni Attenberger, Bayerische Filmindustrie, Munich, 1919.

¹¹⁰ „Ich nehme keine von den langweiligen Europäerinnen! Nur eine Japanerin wird meine Frau,“ *ibid.*

Lifting but tweaking a scene straight from the musical *The Geisha*,¹¹¹ the plot then had Liesl entreat Ernst to teach her kissing, “In Japan I heard much about a peculiar German custom. It is called ‘kissing.’ Please show it and learn [*sic*] it to me!”¹¹² As Ernst fell head over heels for Liesl’s alter ego, Liesl giddily confided to cinemagoers, “What one cannot in German achieve, one can with Japanese deceive.”¹¹³ Now firmly in charge, Liesl as the Japanese demanded that Ernst become Japanese by shaving his beard and hair to resemble a samurai. She also had him put on a robe and pull her in a rickshaw, all stereotypically Japanese chores meant to tire Ernst of Japan. Ultimately Liesl asked some itinerant Japanese acrobats (played by white actors in make-up and costumes) to help her cure him of his “Japanese infection.”¹¹⁴ They obliged by claiming to Ernst that they belonged to the secret “Green Dragon Society”—likely a reference to the real and ruthless Black Dragon Society—and threatened to kidnap Liesl back to Japan. Ernst fought off the pseudo-assailants and declared, “I tell you all, not another word from Japan. I do not want to know anything more from it.” On that cue Liesl revealed her true identity and said, “It is very good then that I cannot speak Japanese.”¹¹⁵ The couple kissed, this time genuinely, as the curtains closed.

Though not harboring any ambition to represent works of its era, *The Girl from Japan* in fact embodied the accepted conventional wisdom of Japan as alien, impenetrable and thus mildly threatening. The movie, albeit silent, made the point of fabricating textual dialogues in

¹¹¹ See Chapter One.

¹¹² „Ich habe in Japan viel von einer eigenartigen deutschen Sitte gehört. Sie heisst ‚Küssen.‘ Bitte, zeig und lern’ es mir!“, *ibid.*

¹¹³ „Was man auf deutsche nicht konnt’ erreichen, kann man japanisch sich erschleichen“, *ibid.*

¹¹⁴ „Ihr sollt mir helfen, einen von der japanischen Drehkrankheit zu heilen“, *ibid.*

¹¹⁵ „Ich sage Euch, nie mehr ein Wort von Japan, ich will nichts mehr wissen davon“, and „Dann ist es ja sehr gut, dass ich nicht japanisch kann“, *ibid.*

gibberish and zooming in on the ransom note with illegible scribbles, all to underscore to spectators ignorant of Japanese the strangeness of the language. Likewise the appearance and action of “the Japanese” also invoked images of a uniform, robotic, and even inhuman mass. All Japanese looked alike: hair in a knot, ghostly pale, and in flowing robes. Their stiff corporal movement, especially with the arbitrary bowing, came across as unnatural and otherworldly. Lastly, they exhibited little individuality or originality by acting in unison and by following Liesl’s order, even when she told them to rid Ernst of his Japanese *disease*. This obsequiousness, needless to say, was also taken for granted by many Europeans as a quintessential Japanese trait.

Up till the mid-1920s other feature films too included some or all of these prejudicial representations. Predictably, Fritz Lang’s tellingly titled *Harakiri* (1919) exploited many of the same tried and true images, since the plot closely followed that of *Madama Butterfly*.¹¹⁶ Yet, Lang also injected his own vision and current artistic trends, notably elements of expressionism, into the film, as demonstrated by the slow, deliberate, and exaggerated movement of the Japanese characters (again played by non-Asians), but ordinary viewers unfamiliar with avant-garde cinema might mistake it for typically Japanese behavior.¹¹⁷ Indeed, a newspaper film critic praised the film by saying that “it is strange how close the Japanese subject seems to come to the essential nature of film... the silent mime.”¹¹⁸ Again viewers saw plenty of rickshaws, prostrations on all fours, heavy make-up, hair in top knots,

¹¹⁶ *Harakiri*, dir. Fritz Lang, 35mm, Decla-Film-Ges. Holz & Co., Berlin, 1919. Only the Dutch version seems to be still extant.

¹¹⁷ For more on Fritz Lang, see Patrick McGilligan, *Fritz Lang: The Nature of the Beast* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997); Fritz Lang, *Fritz Lang: Interviews*, ed. Barry Keith Grant (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2003); Dieter Dürrenmatt, *Fritz Lang: Leben und Werk* (Basel: Museum des Films, 1982); and Frederick W. Ott, *The Films of Fritz Lang* (Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1979).

¹¹⁸ Review of *Harakiri* in *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, 21 December 1919, quoted and translated in Lotte H. Eisner, *Fritz Lang* (London: Da Capo Press, 1976), 28.

and sundry other supposedly Asiatic sceneries like temples and teahouses.¹¹⁹ In addition, Lang introduced a visually appealing but nonexistent “festival of the falling leaves.” The movie’s only major divergence from the opera took place when a Japanese prince— incongruously named Matahari—attempted to woo O Take San (Butterfly), who rejected him in order to wait for the unfaithful European philanderer. Thus, just as *The Girl from Japan*, *Harakiri* drew from a common pool of props and symbols to portray Japan.

Although several other movies from the early 1920s chose Japan as a theme or backdrop, this curiosity by filmmakers and presumably cinemagoers at large did not indicate profound knowledge. The titles of lost movies like *The Geisha and the Samurai* (*Die Geisha und der Samurai*, 1919), *The Kwannon of Oka Temple* (*Die Kwannon von Okadera*, 1920) and *The Japanese Mask* (*Die japanische Maske*, 1921) hinted at depictions of a Japan that dwelled on the traditional and static rather than exploring the new and dynamic.¹²⁰ In 1926, two more films set in Japan were released: *Bushido, the Iron Code* (*Bushido, das eiserne Gesetz*) and *The White Geisha* (*Die weiße Geisha*). *Bushido*, co-directed by Heinz Karl Heiland and Kako Zanmu 賀古殘夢, enjoyed the distinction as the first movie made jointly by Germans and Japanese.¹²¹ The participation of Japanese in the production team,

¹¹⁹ Many props in different scenes were definitely of Chinese and not Japanese origin, though of course spectators were not expected to notice the inaccuracy. The “Japanese” scenery seen in the movie was actually set in Carl Hagenbeck’s zoo in Hamburg, which featured some buildings in “Asian” architectural styles (not unlike the zoo in western Berlin). On the other hand, J. F. G. Umlauff’s ethnographic museum in Hamburg helped with the costumes, which were surprisingly consistent and free from anachronism. See Eisner, *Lang*, 25.

¹²⁰ *Die Geisha und der Samurai* (*The Geisha and the Samurai*), dir. Carl Boese, 1439m, Firmament-Film, Berlin, 1919; *Die Kwannon von Okadera* (*The Kwannon of Oka Temple*), dir. Carl Froelich, 35mm, Decla-Bioscop and Uco-Film, Berlin, 1920; and *Die japanische Maske I: Das Banditennest auf dem Adlerstein* (*The Japanese Mask I: The Bandit Nest on the Eagle Rock*), dir. Heinz Carl Heiland, Eiko-Film, Berlin, 1921.

¹²¹ *Bushido, das eiserne Gesetz* (*Bushido, the Iron Code*), dir. Heinz Karl Heiland and Kako Zanmu, 35mm, Deutsch-Nordische Film-Union, Berlin, 1926. The film was released in Japan as *Bushidō* 武士道. No copy of the movie seems to exist in Germany; the only surviving reels are stored in the Gosfilmofond film archives in Moscow. The plot mentioned in this chapter is derived from the account of an individual who attended a

specifically a Japanese screenwriter, however, did not guarantee a sophisticated plot or render the movie any less tiresome or predictable. Instead, the film indulged in old, exotic Japan with a vengeance by setting the story in the sixteenth century, so that viewers saw the fulfillment of the “must-see” checklist of hara-kiri, geisha, samurai, and daimyo. Likewise, much of *The White Geisha*, also co-directed by Heiland, unfolded in Kyoto and its atmosphere of mystery and intrigue.¹²² Few Japanese, real or represented, actually starred in the movie, but the deficit was made good by the Caucasian female and male leads each going undercover unsurprisingly as a geisha and a rickshaw puller. Together the two pseudo-Japanese foiled the plot of a European, then resumed their true identities and lived happily ever after.

Up to this point in the annals of German cinema, Japan and its people appeared specifically as Japanese, so that, however anachronistically or quixotically, spectators could expect to see a routine of symbols and roles including geisha, rickshaws, temples, and the like. Rather than being *persons* with *personalities*, Japanese on screen were but *characters* with *characteristics*. Their appearances hardly changed, their traits remained constant, and their outlook lacked room for development. In the movies discussed thus far the “Japanese” were condemned to fulfill, not act, certain roles with a way of thought and behavior defined and preprogrammed by their ethnicity. Japanese in German movies, always in a group, interchangeable and without distinguishing identities, were inserted into plots so they could “be Japanese.” Europeans like Liesl and Ernst had the capacity for external or internal

screening of the film in the National Film Center in Tokyo in 2005, see *Eiga no kansō 2005* 映画の感想 2005 年, http://www.ceres.dti.ne.jp/~kwcgch/kanso_2005.html, accessed 30 October 2010.

¹²² *Die weiße Geisha* (*The White Geisha*), dir. Heinz Karl Heiland and Valdemar Andersen, Deutsch-Nordische Film-Union, Berlin, 1926. Andersen was a Danish director. For more on German-Danish cinematic relations, see Manfred Behn, ed., *Schwarzer Traum und weiße Sklavin: Deutsch-dänische Filmbeziehungen 1910–1930* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 1994).

transformations, but Japanese more or less stayed the same not only throughout the plot, indeed in some way or another throughout the almost two decades of cinema under study.

Beginning in the late 1920s, however, a few movies departed from the explicit stereotypes and incorporated an implied imagination of Japan shared by both the films' producers and consumers to weave a logical storyline. In 1928, Ufa released the ancestor of all espionage thrillers, *Spies (Spione)*,¹²³ directed by Lang and written by his wife, Thea von Harbou.¹²⁴ The plot, as it turned out, included most elements in subsequent spy films: a conspiratorial organization, an evil mastermind, a femme fatale, a dashing agent, and plenty of action and plot twists. In *Spies*, Haghi, intent on plunging the world into war, built a shadowy empire with tentacles everywhere. In one part of the movie, he learned that Japan had signed a secret treaty, the most consequential in a century, and wanted to snatch it before it reached Japan. The Japanese diplomat, Masimoto, wearing the black framed eyeglasses stereotypically associated with the Japanese' alleged poor eyesight, took extra caution by assigning three couriers to travel by separate means. He ordered, "Whoever fails to deliver his letter with the seal intact does not deserve to be called a Japanese!"¹²⁵ Haghi had the carriers intercepted and killed, only to discover that they held decoy copies—Masimoto kept the original. Yet Haghi was not to be outwitted, for he had already placed a seductress near Masimoto, who in a moment of weakness gave in to her charms, especially as she had put on Japanese clothing, and she duly made off with the document. The ghosts of the three agents then appeared before Masimoto to return the diplomatic pouches and remind him of his own

¹²³ *Spione (Spies)*, dir. Fritz Lang, 35mm, 4358m, Ufa, Berlin, 1928. A detailed plot summary can be found in *Illustrierter Film-Kurier* 10, no. 871 (1928).

¹²⁴ Thea von Harbou collaborated with Lang on several projects. For more on her, see Reinhold Keiner, *Thea von Harbou und der deutsche Film bis 1933* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1984).

¹²⁵ „Wer seinen Brief nicht mit unverletzten Siegeln dort abliefert, ist nicht wert, ein Japaner zu heißen!“, *Spione*.

words. Masimoto, deeply ashamed, knelt down in front of a statue of Buddha and committed hara-kiri.

The episode, albeit entertaining, made up but a sideshow within the larger plot, which could moreover advance without mentioning Japan. Ultimately Haghi was destroyed, his schemes thwarted, all without participation by the Japanese. Why then did Lang and Harbou bother to add the subplot? Certainly, Lang's work in *Harakiri* must have interested him in Japan. Indeed, *Harakiri* never did show O Take San taking her own life, but *Spies* devoted minutes to demonstrate the ritualistic sequence of Masimoto's suicide; between the two movies Lang must have become more knowledgeable about Japanese culture. In addition, Japan fitted well into a storyline with conspiracy. If traditional Japan's aura of mystery and irrationality seemed quaint in earlier films, then for a modern Japan these qualities mutated into secrecy and unpredictability, its threat stemming precisely from the combination of oriental emotions with occidental technology, a theme also evident in the newsreels. Japan had achieved the status as the only non-Western nation to match and even beat Westerners in industry and war, and this achievement fundamentally unsettled many in Europe, so much so that it *made sense* to mention Japan, even tangentially, in a movie on world domination.

This notion of a Japan dangerous for its ambition and success in imitating the West found even clearer expression in the 1934 feature film *Police Dossier 909* (*Polizeiakte 909*).¹²⁶ The movie began with the theft of an unfinished serum meant to combat plagues. In

¹²⁶ *Polizeiakte 909* (*Police Dossier 909*), dir. Robert Wiene, Camera-Film-Produktion, Berlin, 1934. The film that came to be called *Polizeiakte 909* was originally titled *Taifun* (*Typhoon*) and slated to be released in 1933. The rise of Nazism to power, however, almost derailed the project altogether, for the censorship board, now consisting of a member from the new Ministry of Propaganda, had issue with what it called the relatively negative portrayal of Germans in comparison with that of Asians, not to mention the unforgivable taboo of a love affair between a European woman and an Asian man. The film was given a new title and significantly edited, with the offensive segments altered or removed, before it was approved for release in 1934. Apparently no copy of the remade *Polizeiakte 909* exists, though one of the original *Taifun* (audio missing) is available in the Bundesarchiv. Other titles of the film included *Der Fall Tokeramo* (*The Tokeramo Case*) and *Sturm über*

its present form, however, the serum posed a grave danger to those in contact with it. The able Detective Bninski suspected that some Asians had committed the crime but needed more time to perfect the potion. He solicited the help of a club singer, Helene, to infiltrate the secretive coterie. With her charm she bewitched its ringleader Dr. Tokeramo, learned of the Asians' plan, and passed on the information to Bninski, who was killed in a struggle with Tokeramo. The cunning Asians attempted to shift the blame to another member so that Tokeramo could finish working on the serum. Nonetheless, a clever judge was not fooled, exposed the truth, and apprehended the whole clique. The serum was recovered and humanity rendered safe.

Curiously, the film never specified that the "Asians" were Japanese, but it did not need to. Beyond obvious clues like the costume and bowing, cinemagoers could deduce that only Japan had the capacity and motive to pose a threat to the world. Substitute the Japanese with other Asians such as Indians or Chinese, and the plot would lose credibility. Like *Spies*, *Police Dossier 909* assigned Japan a role because no other non-Western nation seemed nearly as threatening. As a matter of fact, these filmic visions of a dangerous Japan paralleled the literary imaginations in some works. For example, Ludwig Anton's 1922 science fiction *The Japanese Plague* (*Die japanische Pest*) described Japan readying itself for germ warfare against the United States,¹²⁷ and Arnold Mehl's 1935 novel *Shadows of the Rising Sun* (*Schatten der aufgehenden Sonne*) had Japan stealing chemicals from Europe in order to attack the continent with poison gas, only to be defeated by a Euro-American air armada,

Asien (*Storm over Asia*). For more on *Taifun/Polizeiakte 909*, see Uli Jung and Walter Schatzberg, *Beyond Caligari: The Films of Robert Wiene* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1999), 171–6. The plot summary described here is drawn from *Illustrierter Film-Kurier* 16, no. 2134 (1934). The original play *Taifun* was penned by the Hungarian Melchior Lengyel in 1911.

¹²⁷ Ludwig Anton, *Die japanische Pest* (Bad Rothenfelde: J. G. Holzwarth, 1922).

ending with the destruction of its poison gas facilities in Manchuria (!).¹²⁸ Moreover, the Nazi censorship board approved of the added scenes in *Police Dossier 909* implicating Japan in a scheme for global conquest through distorting European inventiveness—proof that even after the sea change in 1933, the German government did not automatically perceive Japan positively.

In fact, since feature films lacked the message nimbleness of the weekly newsreels, the rehabilitation of Japan's villainous role would come only after the Anti-Comintern Pact. *The Daughter of the Samurai* (*Die Tochter des Samurai*), directed by Fanck during his expedition and co-produced by Germany and Japan, was released in both countries in early 1937.¹²⁹ In some ways, however, the movie represented a regression of Japan's representation on screen. Although Fanck made an effort to sprinkle footages of urban, modern Japan throughout the movie, the overall plot took place before a backdrop of stereotypes and clichés, so that cinemagoers saw a volcanic eruption, an earthquake, the coast, and straw-roofed huts all within the opening minutes. The potentially iconoclastic spark in the story, namely the flicker of interracial romance between the Japanese Teruo and the German Gerda, was decisively smothered by the weight of filial piety and loyalty to a prearranged, "in-house" marriage, to the likely satisfaction of Fanck's propaganda bosses in Berlin and paymasters in Tokyo, and perhaps also serving as a repudiation of the German-

¹²⁸ Arnold Mehl, *Schatten der aufgehenden Sonne* (Leipzig: Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, 1935).

¹²⁹ *Die Tochter des Samurai* (*The Daughter of the Samurai*), dir. Arnold Fanck, 35mm, 3292m, Dr. Arnold Fanck-Film, Berlin, 1937. In Japan the film appeared as *Atarashiki tsuchi* 新しき土 (*New Earth*). The movie is often cited incorrectly as the first German-Japanese coproduction. As noted earlier, that distinction belonged to *Bushido*. For more on the film, see Janine Hansen, *Arnold Fanck's Die Tochter des Samurai: Nationalsozialistische Propaganda und japanische Filmpolitik* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997); and Janine Hansen, "Celluloid Competition: German-Japanese Film Relations, 1929–45," *Cinema and the Swastika: The International Expansion of Third Reich Cinema*, eds. Roel Vande Winkel and David Welch (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 187–97.

Japanese romantic liaisons in the abovementioned feature films.¹³⁰ Moreover, unlike movies of the 1920s, whose preoccupation with traditional Japan seemed out of touch with contemporary Japan, *The Daughter of the Samurai* coincided with the Japanese government's own effort to reshape and glorify the past for present use. In other words, the motion picture depicted current Japan not much more faithfully than its predecessors in the 1920s, but in 1937 official Japan joined the movie makers in advocating an idealized but distorted vision of the country.

With the invocation of nature, traditional values, and history, then, *The Daughter of the Samurai* returned the focus of the camera lenses onto a version of the bygone, outdated Japan seen often in the 1920s. Germany and Japan would collaborate on one other movie, *The Holy Goal* (*Das heilige Ziel*, 1938), set on the snow-covered slopes of Hokkaido, but *The Daughter of the Samurai* in effect marked the peak of German-Japanese cinematic cooperation.¹³¹ The onset of the world war would greatly reduce international travel and shipment of equipment. Little wonder then that in the 1940s Fanck had to squeeze more documentaries from the materials he captured on film strips in 1936. *The Daughter of the Samurai* itself was recycled, re-censored, and re-released in 1943 as *The Love of Mitsu* (*Die Liebe der Mitsu*) to reinforce the mirage of German-Japanese solidarity. Since the much vaunted Tokyo-Berlin Axis had little concrete result to show for, words—or at most reused images—would just have to do.

¹³⁰ Fanck, the pioneer of mountain films, did exercise some artistic license by situating the turning point of the film on top of a smoke-belching volcano.

¹³¹ *Das heilige Ziel* (*The Holy Goal*), dir. Nomura Kōshō 野村浩將, 35mm, Cocco-Film, Tokyo, 1939. The film was released in Japan under the title *Kokumin no chikau* 國民の誓 (*The People's Vow*). Nomura is usually credited in other films as Nomura Hiromasa.

Japan in German Cinema

In late 1941, around the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor, German moviegoers saw the Ufa Kulturfilm *Salt Harvesting in Japan* (*Salzgewinnung in Japan*).¹³² The narrator explained that Japan, unlike Europe, had no salt mines and so had to make salt from seawater. The process required hard, intensive labor, since workers had to haul containers of seawater to fields and spray it manually over shallow pools. Machinery was used only toward the end to evaporate the last bit of water. Salt, he continued, had many uses, such as in the production of soap, glass, fireworks, and magnesium. The documentary closed with panoramic footages of a gleaming, twin-engine aircraft, while the narrator gloated that light metals extracted from the salt went into the construction of the machine. That is, Japan could even magically turn seawater into weapons.

Thus—in a documentary no less—spectators were again exposed to the mixture of facts and fantasies that characterized the imagination of Japan in German films. Japan did draw chemicals from the sea for its industries, but not in quantities nearly enough to sustain its war effort. In contrast, the United States mined tons of magnesium from the same oceans to churn out warplanes and incendiary bombs, the very bombers and bombs that would turn Germany's, not to mention Japan's, expansionistic daydream into its worst nightmare and in the process incinerate countless reels of flammable celluloid, many showcasing Japan.

From the extant sources examined in this chapter, we have seen that Germany's presentation and representation of Japan in all categories of film in fact resembled a sentimental romance flick writ large. Particularly in the 1920s filmmakers were infatuated with a vision of Japan that corresponded with reality only marginally. Across newsreels,

¹³² *Salzgewinnung in Japan* (*Salt Harvesting in Japan*), 35mm, 273m, Ufa, Berlin, 1941. The film appeared to have been shot in Japan by a Japanese crew, but produced, edited and narrated by Germans.

documentaries, and feature movies, Japan appeared in German cinema as a faraway, fabled land, with its people living by inexplicable rituals, traditions, and superstitions. Germans' interest in Japan, as reflected on their silver screens, differed little from that of Olaf Anderson's in *O Take San in Harakiri*—itself an adaptation of a storyline from the previous century—intense at times but fundamentally superficial and cursory. On that note we should remember that all the interethnic pairings in the movies ended in tragedy: suicide in *Harakiri*, seduction for ulterior motives in *Spies* and *Police Dossier 909*, and breakup in *The Daughter of the Samurai*, though age-old cultural biases had more to do with the failure than the nasty, biological racism espoused by the Nazis. Indeed, German films exhibited a certain orientalism by tapping into the existing Chinoiserie and Japonism prevalent since the seventeenth century. They also showed a measure of European arrogance in pigeonholing and even objectifying an entire people as stock characters like monks, geishas, samurais, and rickshaw drivers. After all, it is probably no coincidence that in English “china” and “japan” can refer to both peoples and products—porcelain and lacquer ware.

German directors shot, and spectators watched, numerous footages on geisha, Shinto festivals, Buddha statues, shrines and temples, kimono, cherry blossoms, and Mt. Fuji, but not many other topics. To wit, Germans could glean from films much knowledge on Japan, just too much knowledge in too confined an aspect, and more crucially, a version of Japan that the Japanese themselves had resolved to consign to the dustbin of history. Not only did the directors choose too narrow a lens to capture Japan, they even had the cameras pointing in the wrong direction—backward. Most tellingly, just as the Japanese felt comfortable in reducing Kyoto to increasing irrelevance as little more than an open-air museum, German filmmakers flocked to the former imperial capital and the countryside in search of “real

Japan.” Figuratively, as the Japanese collectively departed idyllic villages for urban factories and ancient Kyoto for gleaming Tokyo, somewhere along the road they ran into camera-toting Germans traveling in the opposite direction and taking snapshots. That encounter, capturing a mostly traditional Japan with glimpses of the modern, branded the filmic image of Japan throughout the interwar era.

Rather than revealing what might truly strike cinemagoers as novel, namely how modern Japan in the 1920s and 1930s resembled modern Germany and other countries of the industrialized world, the filmmakers decided to emphasize what may be called the familiar of the unfamiliar. That is, the films relied on tried and true but outdated stereotypes that stressed the foreign, alien, inexplicable, and mysterious qualities of Japan and its people. Certainly, the spectators might be excused for not expecting more since they had little chance to visit Japan, but the filmmakers, in their role as opinion-makers, aided and abetted this enterprise of ignorance by feeding viewers with scenes exoticizing Japan. In other words, the experts abdicated or at least shirked their responsibility of enlightening the populace by merely perpetuating well-known clichés. Instead of leading the public, the experts followed it.

The transformations in the early 1930s, in Japan’s stance in world affairs as well as in cinematographic technology, triggered some changes in the portrayals of Japan. Specifically, the introduction of audio turned motion pictures, especially newsreels and documentaries, from silent witnesses into active commentators. Thus moviegoers experienced their audiovisual baptism of fire in the weekly shows on the war in Shanghai in 1932—*real* combat versus *realistic* reenactment of war in films like *The Western Front, 1918* (*Westfront 1918*, 1930) or *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930). Confronted by Japanese militarism and unrestrained by domestic politics, newsreels and even the less agile documentaries

reacted at first with condemnation of the aggressor and sympathy for the aggrieved. Crucially, the rise of Nazism in and of itself did not immediately improve the filmic imagination of Japan. If anything, as in *Police Dossier 909*, Nazi ideology raised the touchy topic of race that lay largely dormant during Weimar. In fact, it took Nazi Germany a couple of years, after its own revisionist diplomacy backed itself into a corner, to train rose-colored lenses toward Japan. Therefore, in 1937, when Japan again attacked China over an alleged provocation, German newsreels and documentaries either sided with Japan or refrained from commentary altogether. In both 1932 and 1937 the same type of events happened but the films covered them differently, for in the meanwhile the variable of Nazism was introduced to the political calculation. That is, new realities in international relations dictated a new angle and purpose for films. Although by the late 1930s motion pictures' depictions of Japan could only follow Germany's diplomacy, cinema also contributed to and extended bilateral relations by creating space for joint productions.

For the ordinary German audiences, these changes meant that they knew only two faces of Japan, as the dainty one of geisha and frail cherry blossoms was displaced by the martial one of soldiers and grenades. In both cases Japanese played only stock characters, with predictably "Japanese" traits and little individuality, to help advance the plot. It constitutes no great exaggeration to observe that in all forms of interwar German films Japanese characters wore either kimonos or uniforms. Or, seen from the transformation from the 1920s to the 1930s, they donned kimonos and then uniforms. Even when they did wear suits on rare occasions, as in *Spies* or *Police Dossier 909*, they were still engaged in nefarious plots so that modern, civil, and peaceful Japan never received proper screen time. Of course, the very mystery and inscrutability of Japan lent credibility to such schemes, for the

unknown always inspired fear or at least suspicion. In any case, Japan, portrayed on films as exotic, bizarre, irrational, or inexplicable, amounted at most to *an* other, since viewers never did get acquainted enough with Japan to consider it anything like *the* other.

CHAPTER THREE

JAPAN BETWEEN COVERS: JAPAN IN BOOKS

Was haben unsere Diplomaten vor dem Weltkrieg gemeldet? Nichts! Im Weltkrieg? Nichts! Nach dem Weltkrieg? Nichts! Bei den anderen ist das genauso. Die Ämter müssen von Grund auf erneuert werden. Bessere Einsichten habe ich von Leuten wie Colin Ross bekommen. Und solchen, die da herumgereist sind. Ein Mann wie Kriebel, der doch zu uns gehörte, hat mir geschrieben, den Chinesen sind die Japaner nicht gewachsen. Ich habe ihn dann dort weggenommen. Er sagte mir, jeder in Shanghai spricht so. Ja es fragt sich, mit wem er zusammengekommen war. Colin Ross kannte die beiden Seiten, er meinte, die Japaner werden den Krieg gewinnen, nur, auf die Dauer gesehen, werden die Chinesen die Japaner wieder aufsaugen.
—Adolf Hitler, table talk on 2 February 1942¹

Worin liegt das Geheimnis des japanischen Erfolgs? Der Erfolg ist da, selbst die Gegner des Inselreiches können ihn nicht mehr leugnen. Dabei ist er auf allen Gebieten da, militärisch, politisch, wirtschaftlich, geistig. Es geht wirklich nicht mehr an, in den Japanern lediglich geschickte Nachahmer zu sehen, ohne eigene schöpferische Kraft. Sie haben mindesten die Gabe, eine fremde Kultur, eine fremde Zivilisation für ihre Zwecke zu übernehmen, umzuformen und zu etwas Neuem und Eigenem zu gestalten. Es gelang ihnen dies seinerzeit mit der Kultur und Zivilisation Chinas, und es sieht ganz so aus, als sollte es ihnen heute mit denen des Westens gelingen.
—Colin Ross, *Das Neue Asien (The New Asia, 1940)*²

¹ “What did our diplomats report before the [First] World War? Nothing! During the World War? Nothing! After the World War? Nothing! The ones now are just like that too. The Foreign Office must be radically reformed. I received better insights from Colin Ross and others who traveled all over. Even [Hermann] Kriebel, one of us old Nazis, wrote me that the Japanese are no match for the Chinese. So I had him removed, but he had the nerve to tell me that it was because everyone in Shanghai said the same thing. One must wonder with whom he socialized. Colin Ross knew both sides, and he believed that the Japanese would win the war, only to be swarmed by the Chinese in the long run,” in Adolf Hitler, *Monologe im Führerhauptquartier 1941–1944*, ed. Werner Jochmann (Munich: Orbis Verlag, 2000), 254. Kriebel took part in the Hitler Putsch, and was the German General Consul in Shanghai from 1934 to late 1937. An alternative translation can be found in *Hitler’s Table Talk 1941–1944*, trans. Norman Cameron and R. H. Stevens (New York: Enigma Books, 2008), 211.

² “Wherein lies the secret to the Japanese success? The success is there—even the detractors of the island nation can no longer deny it—in all areas: military, political, economic, and spiritual. One can no longer think of Japan

Pride and Prejudice

For someone who had never set foot in Japan and who likely did not meet a Japanese until the forty-first year of his life, in 1930, Hitler did not lack fixed ideas about the land or the people.³ Even as a schoolboy in 1904, the Führer later reminisced, he had already formed his anti-Slavic worldview so that he resolved to root for Japan in its war against Russia.⁴ In *Mein Kampf*, written two decades later, he on the one hand denigrated the Japanese as a “culture-carrying” folk suited only for aping the “culture-generating” Aryans, but on the other he envied Japanese racial purity since Jewry could not infiltrate the “yellow Asiatics” like it had the white races. Instead, the Jews would have to destroy Japan from without by manipulating Britain and America.⁵ In his unpublished “second book,” dictated in 1928, he

as merely a clever copycat without its own creative power. It has at least the knack to adopt and reshape a foreign culture and civilization for its own purpose and turn them into something new that it can call its own. In the past it did so with Chinese culture and civilization, and it appears as if Japan might succeed with those of the West today,” in Colin Ross, *Das Neue Asien* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1940), 76–7.

³ The earliest documented reception by Hitler of a Japanese visitor took place in September 1930, just after the Nazi electoral breakthrough. For more, see Chapters Six and Seven.

⁴ In both *Mein Kampf* and in a table talk in 1941 he mentioned that he wanted Japan to beat Russia in 1904, though the ways he phrased his reaction at the time indicated that he relished Russia’s defeat far more than Japan’s victory. See, „Der russisch-japanische Krieg sah mich schon wesentlich reifer, allein aufmerksamer. Ich hatte dort bereits aus mehr nationalen Gründen Partei ergriffen und mich damals beim Austrag unserer Meinungen sofort auf Seite der Japaner gestellt,“ in Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Munich: Franz Eher Nachf., 1927), 173; and, „Wie seinerzeit im russisch-japanischen Krieg die Nachrichten vom Erliegen Rußlands eintrafen, haben die tschechischen Knaben in meiner Klasse geweint, während wir anderen gejubelt haben. Aus dieser Zeit rührt mein Empfinden für Japan,“ in Hitler, *Monologe*, 64.

⁵ „Würde ab heute jede weitere arische Einwirkung auf Japan unterbleiben, angenommen Europa und Amerika zugrunde gehen, so könnte eine kurze Zeit noch der heutige Aufstieg Japans in Wissenschaft und Technik anhalten; allein schon in wenigen Jahren würde der Brunnen versiegen, die japanische Eigenart gewinnen, aber die heutige Kultur erstarren und wieder in den Schlaf zurücksinken, aus dem sie vor sieben Jahrzehnten durch die arische Kulturwelle aufgeschreckt wurde... Steht aber fest, daß ein Volk seine Kultur in den wesentlichsten Grundstoffen von fremden Rassen erhält, aufnimmt und verarbeitet, um dann nach dem Ausbleiben weiteren äußeren Einflusses immer wieder zu erstarren, kann man solch eine Rasse wohl als eine ‚kulturtrende‘, aber niemals als eine ‚kulturschöpferische‘ bezeichnen,“ in Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 318–9; and, „Nun weiß der Jude zu genau, daß er in seiner tausendjährigen Anpassung wohl europäische Völker zu unterhöhlen und zu geschlechtslosen Bastarden zu erziehen vermag, allein einem asiatischen Nationalstaat von der Art Japans dieses Schicksal kaum zuzufügen in der Lage wäre. Er mag heute den Deutschen und den Engländer, Amerikaner und Franzosen mimen, zum gelben Asiaten fehlen ihm die Brücken. So sucht er den japanischen Nationalstaat noch mit der Kraft ähnlicher Gebilde von heute zu brechen, um sich des gefährlichen Widersachers zu entledigen, ehe in seiner Faust die letzte staatliche Macht zu einer

lambasted the Kaiserreich for competing with the British Empire and thereby compelling it to form the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, when in fact landlubbing Germany could have “played the role of Japan” to seafaring Britain.⁶ After coming to power in 1933, the Führer did pursue Anglo-German rapprochement, but in an irony that he would not have found amusing, he, having failed to woo Britannia, was the one who had to settle for Japan as a substitute partner.

As the head of a member state of the Anti-Comintern and Tripartite Pacts, by the 1940s Hitler had received more Japanese visitors and heard briefings about the country. He esteemed some of the Japanese he met, especially Ambassador Ōshima Hiroshi, whom he praised in his monologues.⁷ He also spoke of Japan as a “first-rank military power” and of the Berlin-Tokyo Axis as the “greatest guarantee for German security.”⁸ He even conceded that the German navy could learn from its Japanese counterpart.⁹ Still, his compliments for

Despotie über wehrlose Wesen verwandelt wird,“ in Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 723–4. In 1933, Hitler repeated, almost verbatim, his opinion on culture stagnating in Japan should Aryan influences be taken away in the introduction to a work on, of all things, photography. See *Das deutsche Lichtbild: Jahresschau 1934* (Berlin: Bruno Schultz, 1933), cited in, Philipp Gassert, and Daniel S. Mattern, *The Hitler Library: A Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001), 79–80. For an English translation of *Mein Kampf*, see, Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999).

⁶ „Mit welchem Recht vermutet solch ein Zweifler, daß Deutschland nicht dieselbe Rolle hätte spielen können, wie sie Japan gespielt hat... Tatsache ist, daß man damals von England aus an Deutschland herangetreten ist, und Tatsache weiter, daß man sich deutscherseits aus der Mentalität dieser ewig zögernden Zauderer heraus zu keiner klaren Stellungnahme entschließen konnte. Was Deutschland damals ablehnte, hat dann Japan besorgt und sich auf verhältnismäßig billige Weise dabei den Ruhm einer Weltmacht geholt,“ in Adolf Hitler, *Hitlers zweites Buch: Ein Dokument aus dem Jahr 1928* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1961), 172. For an English translation, see, Adolf Hitler, *Hitler's Second Book: The Unpublished Sequel to Mein Kampf*, ed. Gerhard L. Weinberg, trans. Krista Smith (New York: Enigma Books, 2006).

⁷ For example, in a table talk Hitler spoke of the “splendid mind” of Ōshima, „so ein prachtvoller Schädel wie der Oshima,“ in Hitler, *Monologe*, 177. For more on Hitler's interactions with Ōshima, see Carl Boyd, *The Extraordinary Envoy: General Hiroshi Ōshima and Diplomacy in the Third Reich, 1934–1939* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1980); and, Carl Boyd, *Hitler's Japanese Confidant: General Ōshima Hiroshi and MAGIC Intelligence, 1941–1945* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993).

⁸ „Zum ersten Mal haben wir in Japan eine Militärmacht ersten Ranges an der Seite. Wir dürfen auch das japanische Bündnis nie aufgeben: Japan ist eine zuverlässige Macht!... Das deutsch-japanische Bündnis ist für uns der größte Sicherheitsgarant,“ in Hitler, *Monologe*, 269–70.

⁹ „Unsere Marine hat mit der japanischen Marine immer gut zusammengearbeitet: Sie haben uns Gegenleistungen gegeben, die für uns wertvoll waren,“ in *ibid.*, 181.

Japan often merely channeled his views on conditions in Germany, as when he criticized German technicians for having laughed off the Japanese midget submarines,¹⁰ or when he used the Japanese emperor—or more precisely, what he thought he knew of the *Tennō*—to illustrate the importance of unifying state authority and ideological power in one person.¹¹ In short, for Hitler, Japan frequently served as a measuring stick for Germany.

Despite the access to secret intelligence and Japanese personnel afforded by his position as the Führer, much of Hitler's conception of Japan remained the stale mix of prejudice and condescending approval left over from his youth. Foremost, he never got over Britain's rejection of his advances. If Britain would just accommodate German domination of Europe, he ranted, he never would have resorted to allying with Japan.¹² He even stated bluntly that the Germans could share no profound relations with the Japanese because "their culture and lifestyle are too alien to us."¹³ In table talks during World War II he thundered at Britain for refusing his outstretched hand and then either indulged in Schadenfreude over the dismantling of the British Empire or regretted the white races' "loss" of the Far East to the Japanese.¹⁴ Nor did he stray far from his chauvinism toward Japanese creativity. In one

¹⁰ „Die Erklärung, die mir neulich der Japaner gemacht hat über die Taktik, mit der die jetzt vorgehen, hat mir eine tiefe Genugtuung bereitet, allerdings auch einen Grimm. Das Zweimann-U-Boot wurde bei uns unzählige Male angeboten, ist aber mit überlegenem Lächeln abgelehnt worden,“ in *ibid.*, 275.

¹¹ „Die Japaner haben ihren eigenen Begriff. Der Tenno ist der Herr auch ihrer ganzen Religion. Deshalb darf bei uns die Staatsgewalt und die Parteigewalt nie getrennt werden! Die Volksführung und die Staatsführung müssen in einer Person identifizieren sein!“ in *ibid.*, 174.

¹² „Hätten die Engländer uns nur Guinea gegeben! Sie konnten gemein sein, sie brauchten nur schlau zu sein. So aber sind sie nicht nur gemein, sondern blitzdumm gewesen. Nie wäre es dann zu einer deutsch-japanischen Verständigung gekommen!“ in *ibid.*, 240.

¹³ „Zu den Japanern haben wir keine inneren Beziehungen. Sie sind uns in Kultur und Lebensform zu fremd,“ in *ibid.*, 184.

¹⁴ For example, „Ich habe das nicht gewollt in Ostasien! Jahreslang habe ich jedem Engländer gesagt: Sie werden Ostasien verlieren, wenn Sie in Europa einen Konflikt beginnen! Da waren die Herren ganz hochnäsiger... Die Japaner werden Insel um Insel besetzen, sie werden auch Australien nehmen. Die weiße Rasse

monologue, he first dispensed backhanded praise for Japan as a more discreet imitator than Russia, and then he likened a comparison between the ancient cultures of Greece and of Japan and China to one between Beethoven's music and cats' screeching.¹⁵ He also held firm in his belief that the Japanese constituted a homogeneous race and thus an enemy for Jewry.¹⁶ Shortly after Pearl Harbor, the Führer pontificated on Japan in a table talk showcasing the hodgepodge of personal impressions, stereotypes, half-truths, and misinformation that characterized his understanding of the country and its people:

The self-contained Japanese posed a danger to the Jews, who consequently agitated Britain and America to isolate Japan. Just as there have always been two Germanies, there have been two Japans: one capitalistic and so Anglophilic, the other, the Japan of the rising sun, the realm of the samurai. In this Japan the navy has always been excellent. Those Japanese standing by us belong to the navy, but some attached to the royal court whom I met struck me as downright decadent. In two-thousand-six-hundred years the Japanese never had a war in their own country!¹⁷

Although Hitler did not need to be a specialist on Japan, it had by 1942 become Germany's most important ally, and so he should have known at least somewhat better. Most egregiously, the Japanese army, not the navy, spearheaded the drive for collaboration with Germany.

wird aus diesem Raum verschwinden. Begonnen hat diese Entwicklung, als 1914 die europäischen Mächte zugelassen haben, daß Japan Kiautschou nahm," in *ibid.*, 156.

¹⁵ „Die Japaner verstehen aus einer vorhandenen Sache noch etwas Besseres zu machen, indem sie allen Völkern das abschauen, was sie haben... Diese Völker sind früher in ihrer Kultur weit unter der unsrigen gestanden; die Kultur der Griechen ist, verglichen mit dem Zustand, in welchem Japan und China lebten, Beethovensche Musik gegen ein Katzenschrei," in *ibid.*, 180.

¹⁶ „Bei den Japanern ist das Natur- und Rassenbewußtsein derart fest, daß der Jude weiß, von innen kann er das nicht zerstören, da muß es von außen geschehen. Alle Interessen von England und Amerika würden dahingehen müssen, mit Japan zusammenzukommen, aber der Jude wird versuchen, das zu verhindern," in *ibid.*, 280.

¹⁷ „Japan war für den Juden das ganz aus sich selbst lebende Volk und deshalb eine Gefahr. Daher der Versuch des Juden, England und Amerika von Japan abzu drängen. Es hat immer zwei Deutschland gegeben; und so war es in Japan auch: ein kapitalistisches, deshalb anglophiles, und daneben das Japan der aufgehenden Sonne, das Land der Samurai. Sehr gut ist in diesem Japan immer die Marine gewesen. Die uns nächststehenden Typen fanden sich stets bei der Marine... während einige Hofkreise, die ich kennengelernt habe, einen geradezu dekadenten Eindruck machten. 2600 Jahre haben die Japaner nie einen Krieg im eigenen Land gahabt!" in *ibid.*, 177.

Moreover, Japan had of course had its share of wars, fought by the very samurais whom he exalted in the same breath, though they as a class had been abolished well before he was born.

As we can see, the availability of privy information and Japanese acquaintances hardly eroded Hitler's long-crystallized imagination of Japan and its populace. His teenage preference for any enemy of the Slavs—even the Japanese—was rehashed in *Mein Kampf*, where he pronounced dogmas on the Japanese racial make-up and cerebral limitations that resurfaced in monologues another two decades later. How did he come to espouse these preconceptions about Japan? Since Hitler the drifter had not the means to discover Japan firsthand, he must have obtained his knowledge from the mass media, including books. By all accounts Hitler read avidly and kept a collection of books that grew alongside his finances and status. When he became chancellor, he also controlled the library of the Chancellery. Yet, despite the volumes he was known to have owned, one would face a challenge today to prove which publications colored his views on Japan. For one thing, one must doubt that Hitler read all the books he had, especially since many authors sent their works to the Führer as presents. For another, only a subset of his personal library survives, while that of the Chancellery was probably destroyed. Lastly, almost all the books on Japan found in his possession were published in the 1940s, well after his weltanschauung had fossilized.¹⁸

Fortunately, this chapter is concerned with what interwar Germany collectively knew about Japan as reflected in its publications rather than what books any particular man read.

¹⁸ Most of the extant books belonging to Hitler are housed in the Library of Congress, with a smaller trove at Brown University. Among these volumes, just one—a slender work by Friedrich Max Trautz presented to Hitler in 1933—discussed Japan. The library of the Reich Chancellery does not seem to have survived, though an inventory of its holdings is available; of the more-than-a-thousand publications listed, only about a dozen dealt with Japan, almost all published in the early 1940s. Since as mentioned Hitler's views on Japan had already settled in the 1920s, it is doubtful that the works, assuming he read them, exercised much influence on him. See the interesting bibliography by Gassert and Mattern. See also Timothy W. Ryback, *Hitler's Private Library: The Books that Shaped His Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008); and Ambrus Miskolczy, *Hitler's Library*, trans. Rédey Szilvia and Michael Webb (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2003).

Still, the making of the Führer's view on Japan constituted more than an anecdote, for until 1930 Hitler exemplified those Germans who had to rely on knowledgeable writers to learn about distant places like Japan. True, Hitler mistrusted conventional experts like diplomats, academics, and high-ranking officers, but he did not distrust expertise per se, as shown by his esteem for adventurers like Colin Ross. In any case, most Germans did not have the luxury of choosing which groups of specialists to believe. After having read newspapers and watched films, they faced sparse options on their way up the step pyramid of acquiring information about Japan. A small number of them might attend the handful of universities that offered classes on Japan, and those residing in Berlin or Hamburg might join social clubs for the chance to make Japanese friends. Yet, both institutions of higher education and bi-national associations maintained barriers to entry that excluded precisely those uninitiated who could benefit the most from participation (see Chapter Four).

For the vast majority of Germans, then, the books in their local bookstores and libraries represented the last accessible, authoritative source for knowledge about Japan. Indeed, books have long played an indispensable role in the intellectual and cultural life in Germany, arguably more so than in some other nations. To begin with, book printing in Europe was invented in a German state. Moreover, the German peoples, lacking tangible monuments for their national heritage like the loot from faraway conquests that stuffed museums in Britain or the detritus from a glorious past that littered Italy, seemingly had to content themselves with a creative frenzy manifested in books. In fact, decentralized Germany nurtured a vibrant publishing industry that blossomed in multiple cities like Frankfurt and especially Leipzig, which hosted (and still do) Europe's oldest and largest book fairs. Leipzig was also chosen in 1912 as the site for safeguarding the country's

collective knowledge through the foundation of the German National Library (Deutsche Bücherei, DB).¹⁹

Accordingly, this chapter explores the portrayals of Japan in interwar German books and their impact on German-Japanese relations. At first glance, examining the more-than-six-hundred Japan-related titles published from 1919 to 1937 at the DB may seem an impossible task, but looks can be deceiving. As it turns out, the DB has been mandated not just to archive every book published in Germany but also to gather from abroad works in German, translated from German, or about Germany. Consequently, the DB preserves publications that never circulated in the country, since the sole copies in Germany could be accessed only in the reading room in Leipzig. What is more, the interwar era belonged to the dark ages before remotely searchable databases, so that, for those Germans not within commuting distance of the card catalogue at the DB, such books might as well not have existed at all.

In our current context, then, many Japan-related books, albeit collected at the DB, would have played a negligible role in shaping the depictions of Japan in Germany and are thus not analyzed in this chapter. Still, some words may be spared for those works found in the library but unlikely to be seen by the populace, for they do illuminate the interactions between Germany and Japan. For instance, a cluster of books by German prisoners of war still confined in camps in Japan appeared in 1919. One inmate authored a volume on the Japanese language for his fellow internees, while another penned a study of the Japanese police.²⁰ Both works showcased the knowledge commanded by some of the “Japan hands,”

¹⁹ Since 2006 the German National Library (Deutsche Nationalbibliothek) describes the system consisting of branches in Leipzig, Frankfurt, and Berlin, while Deutsche Bücherei refers only to the library in Leipzig, which had been the entire national library until 1945. The branch in Frankfurt was founded in 1945 to account for the division of the country.

²⁰ Respectively, Kurt Meissner, *Unterricht in der japanischen Umgangssprache* (Bandō: Kriegsgefangenenlager, 1919); and, Hans Tittel, *Die japanische Polizei* (Bandō: Kriegsgefangenenlager, 1919). Not much information

Germans living in Japan who were captured during the defense of Tsingtau (Qingdao).

Another expression of this expertise was found in the Japanese laws rendered into German by Karl Vogt, the legal attaché (Justitiar) at the German embassy. The translations, focusing on regulations on customs duties, import and export, and patent rights, were published mostly for the benefit of German merchants in Japan and thus reflected Germany's commercial stake.²¹ A third and most telling genre of publications consisted of reports by Japanese scientists. Remarkably, the contents had nary to do with Germany, but German played such a dominant role in higher learning in Japan that scholars there regularly published in the language, which explained their presence in the DB.²² Although specialists in Germany who knew what to look for might have traveled to Leipzig to access the works on Japanese laws or natural science, most lay readers would hardly have realized that they even existed.

Besides works in German published abroad, the chapter also excludes fictional material from the pool of sources. Undoubtedly, creative works about Japan were seen by the public and thus shaped its perception of the country. If one must speculate, Hitler probably learned about samurai in a story or play rather than a monograph on Japanese history. To name but the most prominent example, *Madama Butterfly*, written in the late 1800s, still

can be found about Tittel, but Meissner was an important figure in bilateral trade. He was an executive at the firm Simon, Evers & Co. and authored several works on Japan in the 1930s, including a textbook on Japanese that evolved from the one he wrote in the camp. See Kurt Meissner, *Unterricht in der japanischen Umgangssprache* (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1936).

²¹ For example, *Die japanischen Gesetze über Patente, Gebrauchsmuster, Muster und Warenzeichen in der Fassung der Gesetze vom 29. April 1921*, trans. Karl Vogt (Yokohama: Selbstverl. d. Verf., 1921); *Die Hauptsteuergesetze Japans nebst ihren Ausführungsbestimmungen*, trans. Karl Vogt (Tokyo: Selbstverl. d. Verf., 1931); and, *Handelsgesetzbuch für Japan in der Fassung des Gesetzes vom 4. April 1938*, trans. Karl Vogt (Tokyo: Selbstverl., 1940).

²² For example, Kobayashi Kiyoshi, *Über die spezifische, toxische Substanz von Bacillus dysenteriae Komagome B III* (Tokyo: Tokyo Imperial University, 1936); Kihara Hitoshi, *Genetische Studien an gestreiften Sippen von Celosia cristata L. I.* (Kyoto: Kyoto Imperial University, 1932); and, Shiraki Tokuichi, *Die Syrphiden des Japanischen Kaiserreiches, mit Berücksichtigung benachbarter Gebiete* (Formosa: Taihoku Imperial University, 1930). The university in Taihoku (Taipei) seemed particularly active in publishing scientific results in German. For more on the role of German in Japan, see Chapter Eight.

enjoyed a broad reception well into the 1920s. Around the same time, several German editions of Japanese folklore compiled by Lafcadio Hearn appeared in bookstores.²³ Some German novelists too incorporated Japan into their works.²⁴ Despite the occasional use of Japan as a literary element at the time, fictional pieces also introduce an artificiality that renders them a problematic source for understanding the past. For although imaginative works reflected the era in which they were produced, historians would struggle to separate truth from fiction or to ascertain how seriously readers treated the contents. Moreover, all the sources examined in this dissertation, excepting a few movies, claimed to convey facts, and so this chapter investigates non-fictional publications for the sake of consistency and ease of comparison. Lastly, that excellent analyses of the images of Japan in German literature already exist saves this historian from having to duplicate the effort.²⁵

Therefore, this chapter concentrates on books published in Germany or by Austrian or Swiss authors, especially ones intended for a general readership and with a claim to discuss knowledgeably the politics, economy, society, or culture of Japan. What kind of works portrayed Japan in the 1920s and 1930s, and how did they do so? Who composed these books on Japan, and why did they take the trouble to learn about such a faraway place? What purpose did discussions about Japan serve in Germany? How might German-Japanese relations and the alliance be understood in the context of these books? This chapter argues

²³ See, Lafcadio Hearn, *Kwaidan: Seltsame Geschichten und Studien aus Japan*, trans. Berta Franzos (Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1920); and, Lafcadio Hearn, *Japanische Geistergeschichten*, trans. Gustav Meyrink (Berlin: Propyläen-Verlag, 1925). Hearn, also known as Koizumi Yakumo 小泉八雲, was a global figure before globalization. Born in Greece and raised in Ireland, he eventually worked in the United States and the West Indies. He first moved to Japan for work but ultimately lived there for good, taking a Japanese wife and becoming a naturalized Japanese citizen. His writings and compilations of Japanese folklore, especially ghost stories, helped popularize Japanese culture in the West.

²⁴ For example, see the popular science fiction, Ludwig Anton, *Die japanische Pest* (Bad Rothenfelde: J. G. Holzwarth, 1922); the detective novel, Reinhold Fritz Grosser, *Die japanische Mauer* (Bremen: Burmester, 1935); and, the novella, Heinrich Eduard Jacob, *Jacqueline und die Japaner* (Berlin: E. Rowohlt, 1928).

²⁵ See for example the works by Irmela Hijiya-Kirschner and Christel Kojima-Ruh, to name but a couple.

that in interwar Germany printed knowledge about Japan in books was mainly generated by missionaries, academics, travelers, and political commentators. Although these writers were interested in different aspects of Japan, they shared a fundamental appreciation of Japan's civilization and its significance that motivated them to invest the time and effort to study the country and to share their findings with the German population. While the upheavals in interwar Germany influenced the quantity and quality of its publications on Japan, most of the books portrayed Japan as attractive but static and timeless, so that works in the 1920s often seemed indistinguishable from those a decade later. Moreover, even several of the authors who took to writing about Japan had no exposure to the place or the people, or if they did, linguistic and intercultural barriers allowed them but the most superficial encounters. Partly as a result, many books resorted to employing stereotypes of an inscrutable Japan with multiple, often conflicting personalities. Within these scattered presentations of Japan, however, there always existed a firm recognition of modern Japanese successes and exploits, so that, when some German ideologues renewed the search for an ally in the mid-1930s, Japan appeared at least good enough as a collaborator for the Third Reich—high praise from a regime that thought the world of itself.

Their Eyes Were Watching God

Given the costs incurred by intercontinental travel before the introduction of popular tourism, even in the best interwar years only those Germans of some means could afford a trip to Japan. The evaporation of much individual savings through the hyperinflation in the early 1920s further thinned the ranks of the affluent, so that German travelers to Japan were usually dispatched by organizations in order to perform specific tasks. For instance, the

previous chapters examined the correspondents and filmmakers sent by newspapers and production studios to file news stories and shoot motion pictures. This chapter has mentioned the “Japan hands” working in commerce or as civil servants. While some of the journalists, film directors, merchants, and diplomats ended up writing books on their time in Japan, publishing houses rarely underwrote distant trips because such enterprises promised definite upfront expenses but only uncertain returns. In other words, German books on Japan often resulted as byproducts by authors employed by entities that either profited from activities other than publishing, like trading firms, or were not intended to make money, like the government.

As it turned out, besides businesses and the state, churches stood out as the only institution with the wherewithal to send groups of Germans to Japan, namely missionaries, and to print books with little regard for worldly gains. Especially right after the Great War, German missions played an outsized role in creating knowledge on Japan since both private firms and the government struggled to re-establish a foothold in the country. Although the conflict was often downplayed in the historiography of the nations’ bilateral relations, it did exact a real toll on precisely those straddling the two sides. Once hostilities broke out, the Japanese government deported many resident Germans as enemy civilians and confiscated their possessions. After the war the deportees petitioned to have their losses reimbursed, usually with deeply unjust outcomes.²⁶ Enlisting the help of German diplomatic

²⁶ Consider the case of the widow of Johann Friedrich Heiderich, who passed away in 1914. Heiderich was a long-time resident in Japan and even decorated for his service in the Russo-Japanese War. Nonetheless, the Japanese government expropriated his estate during World War I, including among other items one hundred shares of the Yokohama Electricity Company. In the interwar years, after much hemming and hawing the government finally—in 1930—reimbursed his widow for just ten shares, but refused to return the other possessions. See estate of Heiderich, Bundesarchiv, R906/1699, Reichsstelle für Nachlässe und Nachforschungen, 1914–1930. Other victims fared somewhat better; Germans in Tsingtau and the Pacific Islands were perhaps compensated for at least thirty percent of their properties. See letter from Ostasiatischer Verein to Foreign Ministry, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts (hereafter PA), R31245 Ostasien

representation in Japan brought little relief, for the embassy and consulates themselves needed to be reopened after the war and revolution. As a sign of the chaotic times, in the early postwar years the embassy resorted to using old stationery bearing the title “Imperial German Embassy” (Kaiserlich Deutsche Botschaft), only with “Imperial” crossed out with a typewritten line.²⁷

In contrast to the businesses and diplomatic stations busy reconstituting themselves, the German missions in Japan suffered less during the war and were better positioned to mold mutual perceptions.²⁸ In Japan, a leading evangelist reported in 1919 that Germany’s heroic but futile war effort had made a deep impression on the Japanese, and that the mission’s German school was prepared to take advantage of the opportunity to inculcate a pro-German attitude among the population.²⁹ In Germany, during almost every interwar year

Kolonien K. 2, 17 December 1924. The loss of patents and rights to intellectual properties was an especially devastating blow to German firms in Japan, many of which were engaged in licensing German technology to Japanese industries. Such, alas, was the fate of those caught in events beyond their control through no fault of their own.

²⁷ See the report from Ambassador Wilhelm Solf to the Foreign Ministry, PA, R85902 Po.5 Jap, Innere Politik, Parlaments- und Parteiwesen, 26 February 1921. Such outdated letterhead persisted at least until July 1921.

²⁸ A report in the Foreign Ministry from mid-1920 stated that the Japanese government, as far as the ministry knew, did not impose any restrictions on German missionaries during the war. After the war they were also admitted into the country without hindrance. See PA, R85953 Po. 16 Jap, Religions- und Kirchenwesen, ca. June 1920. The report did not explain why Japan took no actions against German missionaries, even though other German civilians were deported and had their properties confiscated. The likeliest explanation was probably that little could be gained from going after the missionaries, while persecuting them would have put Japan under the suspicion of being anti-Christian, which modernizing Japan was eager to avoid. Other Western missionaries might also have interceded for their German colleagues. Lastly, since the missionaries provided some social services, expelling them would have been counterproductive from the government’s perspective.

²⁹ „Bei uns in Deutschland sind durch den unglücklichen Ausgang des Krieges viele so niedergeschlagen geworden, dass sie glauben, für Deutschland sei in der weiten Völkerwelt jetzt gar nichts mehr zu hoffen. Diese trübe Stimmung schiesst über das Ziel hinaus. Es ist gerade so: die heldenhaften Leistungen, die Deutschland in den vier Kriegsjahren vollbracht hat, haben im Auslande einen weit grösseren Eindruck gemacht, als wir denken. Dieser Eindruck wird bleiben. Wir müssen ihn benutzen, und wir dürfen stolz auf ihn sein... Dass trotz des Kriegsausgangs der deutsche Einflusse in Japan im Steigen ist, geht hervor aus einem Briefe, der von einem Missionar der einzigen evangelisch-deutschen Mission in Japan stammt. In diesem Briefe heisst es: ‚Wir sind alle froh, dass wir so viel zu tun haben. Unsere (deutsche) Abendschule hat noch mehr Schüler als letztes Jahr. So viele, wie wir noch nie gehabt haben, seit ich in Japan bin,‘“ in letter by Johannes Witte, Bundesarchiv

at least one book on Japan or East Asia was offered by one Christian publisher or another. Although both the Catholic Church (most prominently the Jesuits) and many Protestant denominations evangelized in Japan, the production of books on Japan by missionaries was dominated by the General Protestant Mission Association (Allgemeiner Evangelisch-Protestantischer Missionsverein, AEPM), an umbrella organization of Lutheran groups.³⁰ Particularly in the early 1920s, readers searching for current accounts of Japan would hardly have missed those by the association, but in later years other Christian missions also published books on their activities in Japan.³¹

Generally, the missionaries found many praiseworthy things in Japan and appreciated the accomplishments of Japanese civilization. For example, in *Japan: Country and People* (*Japan: Land und Leute*), Emil Knodt, the inspector of AEPM, described Japan as a healthy realm where the autumn sun bathes the land in light and the natural beauty charms visitors.³² He also admired Japan's development into a "culture state" (Kulturstaat) and participation in the "modern life" by acquiring excellent schools and universities, a constitution, a parliament and political parties, and mighty armed forces. In short, Japan belonged to the great powers

Koblenz, R57NEU/1045, Deutsches Ausland-Institut (DAI), 10 February 1919. The letter did not mention the addressee, but the context indicated that it was sent to leadership of the DAI. Witte will be introduced shortly.

³⁰ As mentioned in Chapter One, Japan had been assigned as an area of responsibility to German Jesuits, who played an instrumental role in founding Sophia University in 1913. For more on German Jesuits in Japan, see Harald Fuess, "Deutsche Jesuiten in Japan," in *Japanstudien 17: Deutschland in Japan*, eds. Annette Schad-Seifert and Gebriele Vogt (Munich: Iudicium Verlag, 2005), 83–108.

³¹ The AEPM was founded as an organization for different Lutheran groups in Weimar in 1884. The next year its first missionary arrived in Japan, and two years later it established in Tokyo the "Gospel spreading church" 普及福音教會, which eventually expanded to Kyoto, Osaka, and Toyohashi. In 1929 it was renamed the East Asian Mission (Ostasienmission, OAM). In Japan it ran several kindergartens and night schools. As of 1935 it claimed 3,000 parishioners and 50,000 annual visitors to its events. See, *50 Jahre Arbeit der Ostasienmission in Japan: 1885–1935* (Tokyo: Allgemeine Evangelische Kirche, 1935).

³² „Japan ist ein gesundes Land... Am schönsten ist es im Herbst; da ist die Luft mild und der Himmel monatelang rein und klar. Da lacht die Sonne. Und da zeigt sich Japan so recht als ein Sonnenland, von hellem Licht überströmt. Es ist ein schönes Land, und die Schönheit zieht die Fremden an,“ in Emil Knodt, *Japan: Land und Leute* (Berlin: Allgemeiner Evangelisch-Protestantischer Missionsverein, 1919), 4.

of the world.³³ Lastly, he found the Japanese people “brave, hard-working, frugal, obedient and dutiful, sentimental, nature-loving and religious, very clever and very sensuous. They are outwardly very amiable, always smiling, friendly, collected and peaceful in manner.”³⁴

Such glowing portrayals of Japan and its people were echoed by other missionaries. Johannes Witte, the director of the AEPM, expressed similar sentiments in *Japan Today* (*Japan heute*) by proclaiming that few countries on earth exceeded Japan in physical beauty. Specifically, the autumn in Japan, sunny and warm, impressed this Central European too.³⁵ The environment posed some challenges to Japan’s development, such as the shortage of raw material and the frequency of natural disasters, but he could see the land’s same charming, sunny, and mild temperament in the people, at least in their public life.³⁶ Another missionary, an Austrian Catholic who lived in Japan longer than in his birthplace, also wrote of the

³³ „Japan entwickelte sich zum modernen Kulturstaat. Japan nimmt teil am modernen Leben, hat gute Schulen, leistungsfähige Universitäten, es hat eine Verfassung, eine Reichstag und politische Parteien; es besitzt moderne Verkehrsmittel; es hat eine aufblühende Industrie und einen großen Welthandel. Ihm eignet ein mächtiges Heer und eine leistungsfähige Flotte... Es gehört zu den Großmächten der Erde, nachdem 1898 für Japan die neuen Verträge zustande kamen mit den modernen Staaten und zwar auf der Grundlage der Gleichberechtigung. Und in Ostasien hat Japan sich die Vorherrschaft errungen,“ in *ibid.*, 7–8.

³⁴ „Die Japaner sind **tapfer, fleißig, genügsam, gefügig im Gehorsam, empfindsam, naturliebend und religiös, sehr schlau und sehr sinnlich**. Äußerlich sind sie sehr **liebenswert**, stets lächelnd, freundlich, beherrscht und still im öffentlichen Auftreten,“ in *ibid.*, 14.

³⁵ „Es gibt wohl nur wenige Länder auf der Erde, die landschaftlich so schön sind wie Japan... Und es hat fürwahr den Namen ‚Sonnenland‘ verdient. Sieht man vom höchsten Norden, dem Hokkaido, ab, so scheint eigentlich das ganze Jahr hindurch die Sonne mit wundervoll wärmender Kraft... Im Frühling und dem besonders schönen Herbst herrscht angenehme europäische Sommerwärme,“ in Johannes Witte, *Japan heute* (Berlin: Allgemeiner Evangelisch-Protestantischer Missionsverein, 1926), 5. Witte became the director in 1915. Since 1922 he taught at the university in Berlin, reaching the rank of *ordentlicher Professor* in 1930. He was a member of the Nazi Party and perhaps even briefly of the “German Christians.” He was expelled from the party in 1935 over his previous affiliation with the Freemasons. For more on Witte, see Hannelore Braun and Gertraud Grünzinger, *Personenlexikon zum deutschen Protestantismus, 1919–1949* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 277–8; and the entry on him in, Gerald H. Anderson, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999), 746.

³⁶ „Dies Volk kann also sein Leben nur erhalten durch den Ausbau einer großen Industrie... Genau so anmutig, sonnig und mild wie das Land erscheint bei flüchtiger Berührung seines Volkes Art. Man sieht in Japan nur freundlich lächelnde und ganz ausgeglichen-leidenschaftslose Gesichter. Im persönlichen Umgang wie auch im öffentlichen Verkehr herrscht eine ungemein wohlthuende Höflichkeit. Nie sieht man zornig-erregte Menschen, nie hört man laute Scheltworte,“ in Witte, 7, 9.

attractive Japanese landscape, one that could almost rival that of his beloved Austria.³⁷ In addition, he was fascinated by what he saw as the arrangement of Japanese society as one big family, in which “everyone builds in the same manner, eats the same food, and celebrates the same festivals.” Japan’s strength, he observed, lay in this unity that provided a foundation for the state.³⁸ One cannot help but wonder how well the priest actually knew the place he called home for over twenty-five years, for even a newcomer would soon have recognized the diversity among various areas of Japan—especially the different local holidays and delicacies in which the regionalists take so much pride. Yet, the perception of the homogeneous “island nation of Japan” (Inselreich Japan) seemed so entrenched that even someone with much on-the-ground experience still used the cliché to articulate what he witnessed in the country.

More impressively, the missionaries’ generosity toward Japan extended even to the cardinal matter of religion; conspicuously missing were diatribes against Shinto or Buddhism. On the contrary, the proselytizers devoted substantial time and energy to study earnestly the local belief systems. For instance, Witte penned *The Religions of East Asia: China and Japan* (*Die Religionen Ostasiens: China und Japan*), an academic overview of Buddhism and Shinto free of derogatory remarks.³⁹ Another veteran of the AEPM, Superintendent Emil Schiller, also composed a scholarly piece, titled *Shinto, the National Religion of Japan*

³⁷ „Aber ich habe in Japan eine zweite Heimat entdeckt, o nein, nicht allein entdeckt, sondern erlebt. Was naturhafte Schönheit angeht, so gebe ich meinem lieben Österreich den Vorzug, im Großen und Ganzen. Freilich, auch Japan hat seine Naturschönheiten, hat Szenerien, welche mit dem Schönsten, was es in der Welt gibt, die Konkurrenz aushalten,“ in Anton Ceska, “Aus dem Lande des Nebeneinander,” in *Von Japan und seinem Volke* (Vienna: Katholischer Akademischer Missionsverein, 1932), 18. Ceska was born in today’s Slovenia. He was ordained in 1905, and since 1926 was the apostolic prefect of Niigata, where he died in 1941.

³⁸ „Schön ist das gesellschaftliche Leben der Japaner. Durch die geographische Lage als Insel und die von andern Völkern nicht verstandene, schwer zu erlernende Sprache mehr oder weniger auf sich selbst angewiesen, bilden die Japaner sozusagen eine einzige große Familie, mit dem Kaiser als hausherrn, bauen überall in derselben Weise, essen überall dieselbe Kost, feiern überall dieselben Feste. Japans Stärke liegt darin, daß es wie eine Familie ist und das Familienleben als solches heilig gehalten und als Grundlage des staatlichen Lebens aufgefaßt wird,“ in *ibid.*, 20.

³⁹ Johannes Witte, *Die Religionen Ostasiens: China und Japan* (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1926).

(*Shinto, die Volksreligion Japans*).⁴⁰ He discussed in erudite tones aspects of Shinto such as its relations with nature, and reverence for the emperor and ancestors. As the best example of this scientific attitude toward Japanese beliefs, yet another missionary linked to the AEPM, Wilhelm Gundert, wrote a dissertation just on the treatment of Shinto in Noh Theater.⁴¹

Of course, these men of God would go only so far in their accommodation of Japanese religions. After all, the missionaries subscribed to a monotheistic faith with a monopolistic claim to truth, and they braved the dangers of venturing afar explicitly to convert nonbelievers. Moreover, it hardly needs mentioning that the proselytizers were trained to work with their subjects without necessarily embracing or agreeing with them. A few missionaries even articulated their job in somewhat stark terms. For example, a Catholic scholar called missionary work “a struggle with the heathen world.”⁴² Another one, a Jesuit, wrote a book for young readers recalling the church’s hardships in Japan in the 1500s.⁴³ Schiller of the AEPM too composed a booklet in 1924 on the history of martyrs in the past fifty years.⁴⁴ The publication had to be slim—only eleven pages—since Japan had abolished the persecution of Christians after the Meiji Restoration.

⁴⁰ Emil Schiller, *Shinto, die Volksreligion Japans* (Berlin: Ostasien-Mission, 1935). Schiller arrived in Japan in 1895 and spent the next thirty-six years there. In 1900 he opened a branch of the mission in Kyoto, where he stayed until his departure in 1931. For more on Schiller, see his entry in *Biographical Dictionary*, 597.

⁴¹ Wilhelm Gundert, *Der Schintoismus im Japanischen Nō-Drama* (Hamburg: N.p., 1925). The dissertation was written for the university at Hamburg. Gundert grew up in a household steeped in missionary work, as his grandfather was a missionary in India. As a youth he attended religious schools and studied theology in universities. In 1906 he went to Japan as a missionary himself. During World War I he was not interned in camps. In the early 1920s he began work on a doctorate, which he earned in 1925.

⁴² Paul Schebesta, *Die Mission in Kämpfe mit der Heidenwelt* (Vienna: Katholischer Akademischer Missionsverein, 1931). Schebesta did not work in Japan, but he did include Japan in the heathen world. He was not only a missionary of the Society of the Divine Word but also a physical anthropologist and ethnologist.

⁴³ Georg Alfred Lutterbeck, *Die Jagd über die Inseln: Eine Erzählung aus den Kämpfen der japanischen Kirche* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder & Co., 1931).

⁴⁴ Emil Schiller, *Um Christi Willen! Eine Märtyrergeschichte aus Japan vor 50 Jahren* (Berlin: Allgemeiner Evangelisch-Protestantischer Missionsverein, 1924).

Notwithstanding the few books on martyrdom, works by missionaries on Japan stood out for their lack of confrontational language on Shinto and Buddhism. Why did they show such restraint? First, in order to convince the Japanese that Christianity alone could bring salvation, the evangelists had to perform “opposition research” to understand the native faiths. Vitriol would not have won many followers, and conversion by the sword stood out of the question. Additionally, insulting Shinto would not only turn off potential converts but also aggravate the Japanese state, since the emperor still held the function of chief Shinto priest. Unlike in China, where the missionaries as foreigners enjoyed extraterritoriality thanks to the unequal treaties, in Japan the proselytizers could operate only at the pleasure of the authorities. As a result, the missionaries trod carefully when dealing with the preexisting beliefs in Japan, so that, even when Schiller came closest to open criticism of Shinto, he would only proclaim, rather hopefully, that the true light, the light of Christ, would soon outshine that of the sun which the Japanese worshipped as sacred.⁴⁵

Elsewhere the missionaries employed the tactic of depicting Shinto and Buddhism as outdated superstitions, and portraying Christianity as part of the rational Western civilization that the Japanese were adopting so eagerly. For instance, in *Dawn in Japan (Morgenröte in Japan)*, Schiller first praised Japan for joining the modern world before asking, “Can the ancient religions satisfy today’s Japan?” and then answering, “Japan needs Christianity.”⁴⁶ The Liebenzell missionaries who wrote *In the Country of the Rising Sun (Im Land der*

⁴⁵ „Und wie es in das Dunkel des Gottlosen (d.h. ohne Gott!) Buddhismus das Licht des christlichen Gottesglaubens mit seinem Trost und seiner wahren Erlösungskraft hineinscheinen läßt, so wird es auch das Licht der kreatürlichen Sonne, welche Shinto als göttlich verehren lehrt, überstrahlen durch das Licht, welches Christus bringt, das wahre Licht, das bestimmt ist, alle Menschen zu erleuchten, die in diese Welt kommen,“ in Schiller, *Shinto*, 102.

⁴⁶ „Können die alten Religionen das heutige Japan befriedigen?... Japan braucht das Christentum,“ in Emil Schiller, *Morgenröte in Japan* (Berlin: Allgemeiner Evangelisch-Protestantischer Missionsverein, 1926), 11, 17. An earlier edition was published in 1913.

aufgehenden Sonne) used a similar language by first discussing “the meaning of Japan for the present” and then inquiring, “Can the ancient religions calm the hunger for God?”⁴⁷ Likewise, Inspector Knodt turned Japan’s success in modernization as an argument for accepting Christianity by presenting the religion as the essence of Western culture and the antidote for the spiritual emptiness brought by the industrial age.⁴⁸ Lastly, Director Witte urged his readers in Germany to invite, tactfully, Japanese visitors into their homes and churches. He lamented that most Japanese in Germany learned only of the factories, universities, theaters, concert halls, and even some “bad locales” with questionable company. In other words, the Japanese should not only be introduced to the physical aspects of German civilization, but more importantly the metaphysical ones found in Christianity.⁴⁹

As we shall see, this portrayal of Japan as split between its backward beliefs and expectant Christianity fell in line with an overarching theme of Japan straddling two worlds, the old and the new, the Oriental and the Occidental, and so on. In fact, the phrase “the country of juxtaposition” (*das Land des Nebeneinander*) would recur time and again in works

⁴⁷ „Die Bedeutung Japans für die Gegenwart... Können die alten Religionen den Gotteshunger stillen?“ in *Im Land der aufgehenden Sonne: Aus der Arbeit der Liebenzeller Mission in Japan* (Bad Liebenzell: Buchhandlung der Liebenzeller Mission, 1935), 3, 8.

⁴⁸ „Aus den alten sittlichen und sozialen Ordnungen werden die Japaner durch die neue Zivilisation herausgeworfen, und die im Wesen der neuen Kultur liegenden geistigen sittlichen und religiösen Kräfte haben noch keinen festen Boden in Japan gewonnen. Und diese Kräfte allein vermögen Japan vor Entartung zu schützen und ihm neue Kraft innerer Art zu geben. **J a p a n b r a u c h t d a s C h r i s t e n t u m.** Es folgt daraus: **Was Japan fehlt, wodurch es gesundet, ist der Kern und das Zentrum des Geistes der westlichen Kultur: Das Christentum,**“ in Knodt, 19.

⁴⁹ „Alle unsere Freunde sollten jede sich ihnen bietende Gelegenheit benutzen, um mit den in Europa vorübergehend lebenden Japanern Fühlung zu suchen, sie in christliche Familien einzuladen in den engen Hauskreis, nicht zu Gastereien, und sie mit unserem christlichen, kirchlichen Leben bekannt zu machen. Das muß natürlich mit Takt und Vorsicht geschehen. Jedes Drängen ist zu vermeiden... Die meisten Japaner, die bei uns leben, lernen nur die Fabriken und Universitäten, die Theater und Konzertsäle und womöglich viele schlechte Örtlichkeiten kennen und sogenannte ‚Gesellschaften‘, äußerliche Geselligkeit in großem Kreis, aber nur sehr wenige kommen mit unserem stillen guten Familienleben in Verbindung und noch weniger mit unserem kirchlichen Leben,“ in Witte, *Japan heute*, 29.

on Japan.⁵⁰ For instance, the aforementioned Austrian priest titled his essay on Japan “From the Country of Juxtaposition” (“Aus dem Lande des Nebeneinander”), “where the new into the old collides, and the West and the East rub sides.”⁵¹ Witte too wrote a tome called *Japan: Between Two Cultures* (*Japan: Zwischen zwei Kulturen*) that described Japan as a wrestling ring between the modern and ancient worlds.⁵² Even some of the missionaries friendliest to Japan endorsed the view that there existed two Japans, one for the public and the other private. For example, Knodt, after heaping compliments on the outwardly attractive attributes of the Japanese people, remarked that a shadowy side of the Japanese character lurked just behind the smiling appearance, or, “as one would call it in good German, lies.”⁵³

If the missionaries could not claim to know the “real” Japan, then why did they maintain a positive outlook on Japan? As it turned out, the official Japanese tolerance of Christianity and evangelization played an important role in influencing their positive conceptualization of the country, especially in contrast to the unrest in China that often made life and work hazardous for Western proselytizers. In *China’s Distress and Japan’s Hope* (*Chinas Not und Japans Hoffnung*), a Swiss member of the AEPM concluded that China was mired in misery because it refused even to contemplate Christianity, while Japan had a path

⁵⁰ *Nebeneinander* literally means “next to one another.” As a noun it can be translated as “juxtaposition,” “parallel,” or “coexistence.”

⁵¹ „Von Japan will ich singen und sagen, vom Land der bezaubernden Kirschblüte, aber auch dem Lande des Nebeneinander, Wo Neues in das Alte greift und Westen sich an Osten streift,“ in Ceska, 17.

⁵² „Die Ausführungen dieses Buches haben auf den verschiedensten Lebensgebieten den Nachweis erbracht, daß Japan heute zwischen den zwei Kulturen steht, und daß diese beiden Kulturen miteinander ringen,“ in Johannes Witte, *Japan: Zwischen zwei Kulturen* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung, 1928), 501.

⁵³ „**Die große Schattenseite des japanischen Charakters ist tatsächlich das Gebilde des falschen Scheins** oder auf gut Deutsch gesagt der Lüge. Der Japaner ist oft anders, als er sich gibt. Er ist meisterhaft in der Verstellungskunst, miterworben durch die in jahrhundertlanger Gewöhnung anerzogene Selbstbeherrschung,“ in Knodt, 15.

to eternal life by at least being open to accepting Jesus as the savior.⁵⁴ A Catholic writer expressed the same opinion by stating that through the “infiltration of European civilization” in the Japanese economy and commerce, traditional Asian culture might be undermined and its religion rendered unviable. He held out hopes that some day this transformation would take place in Japan, but he did not think the same would happen in China for a long, long time.⁵⁵ In two books chronicling his travels in China and Japan in 1924, Witte too wrote of his more pleasant impressions of and experiences in the latter.⁵⁶

Eventually, the favorable opinions of Japan morphed into political partialness for the country. For much of the interwar era, the missionaries mostly stayed out of commentating on events in this life, preferring instead to tend to the next. Yet, since the early 1930s, as Japan appeared more frequently in German newspapers and newsreels—often negatively—due to its invasion of China, some missionaries took to speaking out for Japan. For example, the Austrian priest wrote in 1932 during the Shanghai Incident that he was personally convinced that many of the disapproving verdicts in the public about Japan stemmed from ignorance about the facts. Moreover, continuing his theme of Japan as a big family, he stated that Japan could withstand any crisis because the Japanese people stood firmly behind the

⁵⁴ Otto Marbach, *Chinas Not und Japans Hoffnung: Erinnerungen eines Ostasienfreundes* (Bern/Leipzig: Paul Haupt, 1929). He expressed similar views in another work, *Warum wollen die Japaner und die Chinesen das Christentum?* (Berlin: Allgemeiner Evangelisch-Protestantischer Missionsverein, 1920). Marbach was the inspector of the Swiss branch of the AEPM.

⁵⁵ „Es kann wohl auch sein, daß die alte Kultur unterminiert und durch Infiltration europäischer Zivilisation derart zersetzt wird—zumal im Wirtschafts- und Gesellschaftsleben—daß auch einmal die alte Religion in diesen Kreisen lebensunfähig wird. Das könnte vielleicht eines Tages in Japan der Fall werden, in China aber noch lange nicht und auch bei den andern Kulturvölkern Asiens, wie etwa Siams und Indiens, nicht,“ in Schebesta, 5.

⁵⁶ Johannes Witte, *Auf vulkanischem Boden: Reiseerlebnisse in Japan und China* (Berlin: Allgemeiner Evangelisch-Protestantischer Missionsverein, 1925); and, Johannes Witte, *Sommer-Sonntage in Japan und China: Reise-Erlebnisse in Ostasien im Jahre 1924* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1925).

state.⁵⁷ Schiller also defended Japan in 1935 by cautioning his readers that unfamiliarity with East Asia could lead them to misjudge the events there and come to skewed conclusions.⁵⁸ Even more remarkably, he went on to dispel as “fables” speculations in the press that Japan had not only designs on China but also the Philippines, Dutch East Indies, and Australia.⁵⁹ Lastly, also in 1935, a Liebenzell evangelist excused the Japanese push overseas as an understandable response to the dearth of natural resources that cursed the homeland, so that “Japan had to explore opportunities for expansion.”⁶⁰

Why did the missionaries approve such Japanese actions? As far as can be ascertained, none of the religious authors voiced any criticism of Japanese aggression in China; if anyone had any reservation, he kept it to himself.⁶¹ Instead, these supposed men of peace voluntarily

⁵⁷ „Man spricht seit einigen Monaten viel von Japan und den ostasiatischen Geschehnissen. Ich spreche nicht darüber, wenngleich ich für mich persönlich überzeugt bin, daß viele für Japan ungünstige Urteile aus Unkenntnis der tatsächlichen Verhältnisse hervorgehen. Aber eins, das nicht direkt mit politischen Ereignissen zusammenhängt, möchte ich hervorheben: Die Geschlossenheit von Regierung und Volk in wichtigen Fragen, zumal der äußeren Politik. Das Volk steht hinter der Regierung, es vertraut seiner Regierung. Und gerade dieses Vertrauen bewirkt bei der Regierung ein hohes Gefühl der Verantwortung dem Volke gegenüber, gibt aber auch die Kraft, wenn nötig, Entscheidendes zu beschließen und durchzuführen,“ in Ceska, 24.

⁵⁸ „Japan ist in den letzten Jahren wegen seines Mandschurei-Konfliktes auch in Deutschland der Gegenstand ganz besonderer Aufmerksamkeit gewesen, wobei die Fremdheit der ostasiatischen Verhältnisse zu manchen Mißverständnissen und zu schiefer Beurteilung Anlaß gegeben hat,“ Emil Schiller, *Das Japan von heute* (Berlin: Ostasien-Mission, 1935), 5.

⁵⁹ „Wenn man in den Zeitungen liest, daß Japan die Philippinen und Holländisch-Indien und sogar Australien oder auch Südafrika zu erobern gedenke, so gehört das in das Gebiet der Fabel, wie jeder, der die Welt bereist hat, wohl weiß,“ in *ibid.*, 7.

⁶⁰ „Japan ist auf dem Weg, die Welt zu erobern. Ein Welteroberer schlummert in seiner Brust. Zielbewußt steuert es darauf zu, zunächst den Osten Asiens sich zu unterwerfen. Es ist dazu gedrängt worden, weil auf dem engen, teilweise unfruchtbaren Boden Japans die Millionenbevölkerung nicht mehr ernährt werden konnte. Es mußte zu einer Ausdehnungsmöglichkeit kommen. Auf diesem Wege ist Japan dabei, sich den Osten Asiens zu unterwerfen,“ in *Im Land der aufgehenden Sonne*, 5.

⁶¹ Appropriately, only the Quaker Mission was mentioned as a promoter of peace between Japan and the outside world. See, „Auch wurde vor einigen Jahren von einem Missionar der Quäkermision eine Friedensgesellschaft ins Leben gerufen, um den Weltfrieden zu pflegen und internationale Zwistigkeiten auf friedliche Weise zu schlichten. Diese Gesellschaft hat bereits viel getan, die Kriegswölken, die in den letzten Jahren zwischen Amerika und Japan sich von Zeit zu Zeit am Himmel zeigten, zu verscheuchen,“ in Samuel John Umbreit, *Zwanzig Jahre Missionar in Japan: Erlebnisse und Beobachtungen im Missionsdienst der Evangelischen Gemeinschaft* (Stuttgart: Christliches Verlagshaus, 1929), 302. Umbreit was a bishop of the Evangelical Church, a Methodist denomination. He was born in America to German parents or parents of German ancestry.

showed support for an act of war. How did they come to adopt this pro-Japan stance? First, the proselytizers liked Japan. They enjoyed the weather and the people, and admired Japan as a “culture state.” Short of accepting the local faiths, some missionaries even internalized the Japanese government’s rationale for its imperialism. Namely, the lack of resources in Japan necessitated and legitimated the expansion abroad. Many writers noted the natural poverty of the Japanese home islands and then described Japanese empire building, as if the former *had to* lead to the latter. One Methodist bishop went even as far as to repeat a claim he heard in Japan that “one coal mine in China contained more coal than all the mines in Japan put together.”⁶² Reading such lines, those Germans without access to better information might well begin to accept the motivations behind Japan’s actions.

Second, Japan provided seemingly fertile grounds for the missionaries. That the Japanese had been so enthusiastically adopting aspects of Western civilization must have given heart to the evangelists performing the thankless task of winning hearts and minds in an alien place. They had good reasons to believe that if they packaged Christianity as integral to the advancement of the West, then modernizing Japan might incorporate it too. Moreover, converting Japan could bring closer the prospect of saving a continent of souls. Since Japan was recognized—for better or for worse—as the premier power in Asia, if the proselytizers managed to bring Japan into the flock, then other Asians looking up to Japan might just follow suit. Even if that scheme did not materialize, since Japan was expected to dominate more of Asia, Christianized Japanese troops might still serve as crusaders for the gospel. Especially in China, where Western missionaries could be loathed as agents of imperialism, the expansion of Japanese control and the concomitant room for evangelization represented an opportunity.

⁶² „Eine Kohlenmine in China enthält mehr Steinkohlen als alle Kohlenminen in Japan zusammen,“ in *ibid.* 298.

Third, and in relation to China, Japan meant for the missionaries a bulwark against the spread of godless communism in Asia. Again, the mere opening of Japan to Christianity elevated it to a holier position in the missionaries' eyes than the closed Soviet Union and the semi-closed China—never mind that the proselytizers failed utterly to convert more than a negligible sliver of the Japanese population. The sheer chance to perform religious works made Japan a more acceptable nation in East Asia. As a result, the Liebenzell missionary stressed the importance of Christianizing heathen Japan in order to secure it as a fortress against Bolshevism.⁶³ Only under these circumstances could Schiller justify the Japanese invasion of Manchuria as a defense of its prerogatives against Chinese encroachment and as a reaction to the communist penetration in the area.⁶⁴ Thus, some of the missionaries did not see Japan as the lesser of two evils, but as a solution to a far greater evil, the same evil that the Anti-Comintern Pact would purport to combat.

The Doctor's Dilemma

As illustrated by Gundert's treatise on Shinto in Noh, new doctors of philosophy from Germany's universities and research institutions formed another fount of information about and interpretation of Japan. Unlike modern America, where a new doctor would devote some time to revising the dissertation before seeing it appear as a monograph, in traditional

⁶³ „Zwei Weltmächte ringen im Osten miteinander um die Herrschaft; die eine ist J a p a n , und die andere ist der russische B o l s c h e w i s m u s . Beide sind ausgesprochene Feinde und Nebenbuhler. Bei dieser Bedeutung Japans ist es zu verstehen, daß es von unendlicher Wichtigkeit ist, welcher Geist in diesem Volk der Welteroberung mächtig wird, ob in diesem Volk Christus die Herrschaft gewinnen kann oder ob der heidnische Nationalismus allein die Herrschaft gewinnt,“ in *Im Land der aufgehenden Sonne*, 6–7.

⁶⁴ „Aber China begann, dem Vorbilde Japans folgend, patriotisch zu erwachen und versuchte immer stärker, Japans dort erworbene Rechte zu beeinträchtigen, wobei es zugleich der neuen Gefahr der kommunistischen Durchdringung von seiten des bolschewistischen Rußlands keinen Widerstand entgegensetzte. Das führte zum mandschurischen Konflikt von 1931/32, der sogar zum Shanghai-Konflikte wurde,“ in Schiller, *Das Japan von heute*, 5.

German academia dissertations were published as booklets or paperbacks not long after the public defense as the last step in the process of *Promotion* (conferral of a doctorate). In other words, everyone with the title of doctor should already have had her/his work printed and bound in book form, with a typical length of between fifty and one-hundred-fifty pages. Although some of these works likely languished in university libraries, others attracted enough outside interest that they warranted reprinting in other formats. Gundert's, for instance, was republished by the German Society for East Asian Studies (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens) as a volume in a series.⁶⁵

Certainly, these publications captured an aspect of the creation of knowledge about Japan in Germany. In almost every interwar year since 1922, several such dissertations-turned-books about Japan were published. A few were composed by Japanese students finishing their degrees abroad, but most were written by native graduates who went on to pursue careers not only in academia but also in business, government, and politics. Then as now, many German corporate chiefs, bureaucrats, and lawmakers held doctoral degrees.

Broadly speaking, these books focused on the arts (literary, performance, and visual) and the social sciences, especially politics and economics. In other words, the researchers were particularly concerned with the fruits of human endeavor in Japan, such as culture and society, and less with the natural sciences like geology or botany.⁶⁶ Much like the missionaries studying Japanese beliefs, then, the doctoral candidates at the secular

⁶⁵ Wilhelm Gundert, *Der Schintoismus im Japanischen Nō-Drama*, Mitteilungen der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens 19 (Tokyo: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, 1925). The society, still extant, is usually known as the East Asia Society (Ostasiatische Gesellschaft, OAG).

⁶⁶ Apparently only one dissertation at the DB deals with Japan-related hard science, on the chemical composition of Japanese sardine oil. See, Willy Faust, *Über die Klupanodonsäure und eine Säure C₁₇H₃₁O₄ aus einem japanischen Sardinenöl* (Stuttgart: N.p., 1932). The dissertation was written for the technical college at Stuttgart. In contrast, the most famous German visitors to early modern Japan, Engelbert Kaempfer and Philipp Franz von Siebold, concentrated their scientific attention on the flora and fauna of the place.

universities devoted time and energy to interpret features of Japanese civilization. Unlike the evangelists, however, the students were not obliged to learn about Japan as part of a plan to transform it. Rather, they selected Japan as their research subject of their own volition.

Within the division between dissertations on the arts and the social sciences, the former made up the smaller half and was generally written in the relatively tranquil 1920s and early 1930s. Gundert's work on Shinto in Noh, for instance, was completed in 1925. Another dissertation on the arts was composed by the art connoisseur Friedrich Perzyński in 1924 on the masks used in Noh and Kyōgen Drama.⁶⁷ It was considered interesting enough that a mainstream scholarly press republished it in two hardcover volumes.⁶⁸ Other topics included reports about Russia by shipwrecked Japanese in the eighteenth century, the influence of Japanese painting on lacquer decoration, book illustrations of the seventeenth century, and a translation and analysis of one of Shinto's ancient sacred texts.⁶⁹

In contrast to the publications on the arts that highlighted facets of old Japan like traditional theater, lacquer art, woodblock prints, and myths from time immemorial, the more numerous works in the social sciences tackled subjects with contemporary relevance or even urgency. As Japan drew more attention and notoriety in international affairs in the late 1920s and 1930s, the number of these works increased. A few of them dealt with Japanese law and

⁶⁷ Friedrich Perzyński, *Die Masken der japanischen Schaubühne* (Hamburg: N.p., 1924). Perzyński was a unique example because he was already known as an expert on Japanese art and had published several books on the topic before he was awarded the doctorate. The dissertation was written for the university at Hamburg.

⁶⁸ Friedrich Perzyński, *Japanische Masken: Nō und Kyōgen* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1925).

⁶⁹ Respectively, Martin Ramming, *Rußland-Berichte schiffbrüchiger Japaner aus den Jahren 1793 und 1805 und ihre Bedeutung für die Abschließungspolitik der Tokugawa* (Berlin: Würfel-Verlag, 1930); Gisella Freiin von Wangenheim, *Der Einfluß der japanischen Malerei auf die japanische Lackkunst* (Gotha: N.p., 1928); Fritz Rumpf, *Das Ise-Monogatari von 1608 und sein Einfluß auf die Buchillustration des 17. Jahrhunderts in Japan* (Berlin: Würfel Verlag, 1931); and, Horst Hammitzsch, *Yamato-hime no Mikoto Seiki: Bericht über den Erdenwandel ihrer Hoheit der Prinzessin Yamato* (Leipzig: N.p., 1937). The dissertations were written for the universities at Berlin, Freiburg im Breisgau, Berlin, and Bonn. Rumpf's work was reprinted in book form a year after its completion.

diplomacy, such as the constitutional position of the emperor, Anglo-Japanese relations at the turn of the century, and the ramifications of Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations for its mandates in the Pacific.⁷⁰

By far the largest cluster of dissertations investigated the Japanese economy. After all, up until the Anti-Comintern Pact Japan meant for Germany much more as a counterparty in trade or a competitor in the world market than as a target for imitation or a diplomatic partner. Consequently, several projects analyzed Japanese export policies. In fact, one dissertation examined Japanese commerce and exports, with an emphasis on trade and transportation links with Germany, on each of the successive periods prior to pre-unification Germany, pre-World War I, the war, and postwar, as well as an overview of German traffic to East Asia in the modern era.⁷¹

Additionally, the topic of Japan's impact on the global economy drew the inquisitive minds of doctoral candidates even when it did not directly concern Germany. For instance, some dissertations on the one hand underscored the Japanese urge to conquer commercially by analyzing Japanese penetration into the Chinese, Manchurian, and world markets in the

⁷⁰ Respectively, Alois Tichý, *Die staatsrechtliche Stellung des Kaisers von Japan unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Kaiserlichen Hausgesetzes* (Ohlau, Silesia: N.p., 1928); Anneliese Cramer, *Die Beziehungen zwischen England und Japan von 1894–1902* (Zeulenroda: N.p., 1935); and, Jacobus Reimers, *Das japanische Kolonialmandat und der Austritt Japans aus dem Völkerbund* (Quakenbrück: N.p., 1936). The dissertations were written for the universities at Breslau, Hamburg, and Göttingen.

⁷¹ Respectively, Ottmar Fecht, *Die Wahrung wirtschaftlicher und politischer Belange in Ostasien durch die Norddeutsche Bundesmarine: Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Marinegeschichte aus der Reichsgründungszeit* (Berlin: Mittler, 1937); Kurt Koepsel, *Die Entwicklung des japanischen Außenhandels, insbesondere der deutsch-japanischen Handelsbeziehungen vor dem Weltkriege* (Kassel: N.p., 1929); Amélie Reichelt, *Japans Außenhandel und Außenhandelspolitik unter dem Einfluß des Weltkrieges* (Cöthen, Anhalt: N.p., 1931); Erich Kiel, *Die handelspolitischen Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und Japan in der Nachkriegszeit* (Münster: N.p., 1934); and, Kunibert Pauly, *Der deutsche Ueberseeverkehr mit dem Fernen Osten: Seine grundlegende Entwicklung vor dem Kriege, sein Wiederaufbau nach dem Kriege und seine Ausgestaltung in der neuesten Zeit unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Verkehrs mit Japan und China* (Jülich, N.p., 1938). The dissertations were written for the universities at Heidelberg, Cologne, Berlin, Münster, and Cologne.

first half of the twentieth century.⁷² On the other hand, another group of works dissected the Japanese drive to free itself from the vicissitudes of trade by examining Japan's attempts at autarky, internal colonization, and self-sufficiency in raw materials.⁷³ As the world economic crisis in the early 1930s plunged Germany into chaos and unemployment, a couple of dissertations discussed Japan's banking problems and industrialization.⁷⁴

How should we understand the appearance of Japan in these publications? First, that Japan was chosen as the topic of many dissertations at various universities indicated a sustained interest in Japan within learned circles in Germany. That is, the doctoral candidates and their advisers deemed Japan a place worthwhile enough to study in some depth. What is more, the overwhelming majority of these works delved into the human, rather than the natural, features of the country like the arts, literature, government, and economy. This choice of themes revealed a fundamental appreciation, respect even, for the civilization and achievements of the Japanese. The new doctors must also have anticipated that Japan would remain relevant in world affairs for some time, for no one would have launched a career by toiling over a dissertation on a place that they thought would soon sink into oblivion.

Second, the dichotomy between the arts and the social sciences reflected the overall imagination of a Japan with split personalities. On the one hand, the works on the arts almost uniformly showcased a romantic Japan of a bygone age. Although the Japan of traditional

⁷² Waldemar Hazama Ohly, *Das wirtschaftliche Vordringen Japans in China seit dem Frieden von Portsmouth 5. September 1905* (Kiel: N.p., 1922); Erich Meyn, *Die japanische Wirtschaftspolitik in der Mandschurei* (Leipzig: N.p., 1938); and, Kurt Glück, *Japans Vordringen auf dem Weltmarkt* (Würzburg: N.p., 1937). The dissertations were written for the universities at Kiel, Leipzig, and Frankfurt, respectively.

⁷³ Herbert Rosinski, *Studien zum Problem der Autarkie in Japan* (Berlin: N.p., 1930); Alfons Scheinpflug, *Die japanische Kolonisation in Hokkaido* (Leipzig: Hirt & Sohn, 1935); and, Wilhelm Mandl, *Das Streben nach Selbstversorgung und der Aussenhandel: Deutsches Reich, Grossbritannien, Frankreich, Britisch Indien, Japan* (Berlin: Limbach, 1939). The dissertations were written for the universities at Berlin and Leipzig, and the business school in Vienna, respectively.

⁷⁴ Carl Kroll, *Die bankenkrisen in Japan* (Marburg: N.p., 1930); and, Karl Hahn, *Die Industrialisierung Japans* (Bochum-Langendreer: N.p., 1932). The dissertations were written for the universities at Marburg and Giessen.

theater, lacquer ware, woodblock prints, and ancient legends could still be found in the 1920s and 1930s, interwar Japanese also flocked to cinemas and cabarets, forged steel, experimented with contemporary art, and penned modern literature. Yet a Japan becoming more like the West might not have struck many German scholars in the arts and humanities as interesting, because, after all, these curious minds were trained to look for the foreign and make sense of the unknown; the known and the familiar, especially if viewed as derived from the West, needed no dissertating.

On the other hand, the social scientists chose Japan as their subject precisely because it was behaving more like the West in commercial and imperialistic competitions. Some of the monographs highlighted a pragmatic, if not downright unscrupulous, Japan. For instance, works on Japan's participation in world trade often described its economic and political expansion as "encroachment" (Vordringen). As a typical argument went, Japan used every advantage at its disposal, like cheap labor, a devalued Yen, and export confederations to enlarge its share in the world market.⁷⁵ One doctor in economics went as far as to warn in mid-1936 that if Japan succeeded in tapping the natural and human resources in China to support its export industries, then the "Yellow Peril" would be felt in even more acute ways. Moreover, he presciently suggested that if Japan managed to overrun China, then the British, French, and Dutch colonies would soon be threatened as well.⁷⁶ Another scholar in political

⁷⁵ „Die niedrigen Löhne, die Yenabwertung, die Exportverbände, die Schifffahrtspolitik, die Besteuerung der Landwirtschaft sowie das umfangreiche Subventions- und Prämienwesen in Handel und Industrie sind bewußt gewählte Mittel, um das Vordringen des japanischen Exportes auf dem Weltmarkt zu erleichtern,“ in Glück, 107. Emphasis original.

⁷⁶ „In Asien ist die japanische Politik bereits zu Taten übergegangen, und wenn es ihr gelingen sollte, die chinesischen Rohstoffquellen zu erschließen und die billige Arbeitskraft des chinesischen Kulis in den Dienst seiner Exportindustrie zu stellen, dann könnte sich unter Umständen die ‚Gelbe Gefahr‘ stärker als heute fühlbar machen. Auch in politischer Beziehung könnte man dann von einer solchen Gefahr sprechen, wenn es Japan gelingen würde, in ganz China die Vorherrschaft zu erlangen. Dann würden auch die asiatischen Kolonien Englands, Frankreichs und der Niederlande bedroht sein,“ in *ibid.*, 102.

science expressed virtually the same opinion when she stated that Japan's imperialistic push into China would bring it into competition and confrontation with the United States.⁷⁷ In other words, when the dissertations depicted a modern Japan with trappings familiar to Western readers like imperialism and export-driven industrialization, it was perceived—ironically—as an alien power with suspicious motives. In fact, the very adroitness with which Japan adopted modern technologies and strategies made it appear all the more menacing to those Western powers with a substantial stake in Asia.

But not Germany—since it was freed of its colonial baggage during World War I, it possessed nothing concrete for Japan to threaten. As a matter of fact, in spite, or perhaps because, of the consensus that Japan would soon dominate Asia, none of the dissertators advocated that Germany should try to compete with Japan or dislodge it from the leadership position in the continent. Instead, Germany should accept the *fait accompli* and leverage its status as a non-colonial state to its advantage. Thus, a doctor in economics, quoting a German executive in the shipping industry, stated that Japan would welcome German economic involvement in Asia more than that of Britain or America because it would not aim to fulfill any political agenda.⁷⁸ Meanwhile, a scholar in political science argued that Germany and Japan had always maintained cordial relations, especially since Germany did not participate in the opening of Japan or harbor any colonial ambition against the country. Germany,

⁷⁷ „Die Möglichkeit, wirtschaftliche Selbständigkeit zu erreichen, liegt jedoch für Japan nur in der Durchsetzung seiner imperialistischen Pläne, vor allem in China. Ob Japan im Kampfe gegen seine Mitbewerber auf dem chinesischen Markte, vor allem im Kampf gegen den amerikanischen Wettbewerb siegen wird, oder ob nicht eher China, das Gebiet der Offenen Tür, zur völkerrechtlichen Unabhängigkeit und Freiheit gelangt, ist eine noch offene weltwirtschaftliche Frage,“ in Reichelt, 56.

⁷⁸ „Japan gegenüber sind die allgemeinen wirtschaftlichen sowie verkehrswirtschaftlichen Aussichten Deutschlands im Fernen Osten nach der Meinung eines Führers der deutschen Seeschifffahrt, Rudolf Firlé, auf lange Sicht insofern günstig, als Japan, das besonders für seine wirtschaftliche Erschließung auf dem asiatischen Kontinent eine europäische Hilfe braucht, eine deutsche Unterstützung ‚willkommener‘ ist als z. B. Die Englands oder Amerikas, da Deutschland ‚weitgesteckte machtpolitische Ziele dort niemals verfolgt hat‘ und da ‚auch für die weitere Zukunft in dieser Hinsicht keine Möglichkeiten von Zusammenstößen deutscher Interessen mit den Länder in diesem Raum, vorhanden sind und sein werden,‘“ in Pauly, 81.

moreover, should use its cultural capital in various fields in Japan to deepen and consolidate bilateral ties in areas such as the economy.⁷⁹ He also urged Germany to make peace with Japan's ascendancy and goal of "Asia for the Asians under Japanese hegemony" so that Germany would not be shut out of East Asia altogether.⁸⁰ He completed his dissertation in 1934. Two years later, of course, Germany would indeed through the Anti-Comintern Pact tacitly acknowledge Japanese overlordship in Asia while hoping to maintain its economic interest in a China being overrun by Japan—not bad for a prognosis in a dissertation.

Third, notwithstanding some of the insightful prognostications, one must wonder how well and how much many of these doctors actually knew Japan. Each dissertation included a short autobiography with information about the author's upbringing, education, university coursework, military service, and occupations. An examination of these records revealed that only a handful of the doctoral candidates had any experience with aspects of Japan, and fewer still had any experience in Japan. In general, the scholars in the arts and literature

⁷⁹ „Das politische Verhältnis beider Länder ist nie schlecht gewesen, wenn auch durch die Machenschaften ausländischer diplomatischer Vertreter von jeher versucht worden ist, es zu trüben. Deutschland hat sich seinerzeit an den Unternehmungen gegen das seiner gewaltsamen Erschließung mit allen Mitteln widerstrebende Japan nicht beteiligt. Die deutsche Wirtschaft war zufrieden, die Vorteile, die die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, England, Frankreich und Rußland für sich verlangten, durch friedliche Verhandlungen ebenfalls zu erreichen... Zur Belebung und Stärkung der deutsch-japanischen Beziehungen trugen die verschiedensten Momente bei. Sei es nun die im Jahre 1897 von Deutschland nach Ostasien gesandte Kommission, die die dortigen Handelsverhältnisse untersuchen sollte, um im Anschluß daran geeignete Maßnahmen zur Ausdehnung seines Handels zu ergreifen, seien es die vielen japanischen Abordnungen, die die deutsche Wirtschaft studierten, seien es deutsche Instruktoren, wie Major Meckel u. a., oder Ingenieure, die Japan ins Land zog, sei es der Besuch des Luftschiffes ‚Graf Zeppelin‘ im Jahre 1929 in Tokio oder sei es nicht zuletzt die Beibehaltung der deutschen Sprache auch nach dem Kriege in den Schulen, immer haben seit Oeffnung der japanischen Häfen sich Bestrebungen gezeigt, die einmal entstandenen Verbindungen zwischen beiden Ländern sowohl in kultureller als auch in wirtschaftlicher Hinsicht zu vertiefen und zu festigen,“ in Kiel, 96–7.

⁸⁰ „Vor 40 Jahren in den Augen der Welt noch ein unbedeutendes Volk, ist Japan heute als eine der stärksten Mächte anzusehen, die im gewissen Sinne das Schicksal Asiens in Händen hält. Zwar wird es auch in der nächsten Zukunft durch seine Pläne im fernen Osten mit China stark in Anspruch genommen sein und weniger Interesse an der deutschen Volkswirtschaft haben, da sein Ziel: ‚Ostasien den Asiaten, doch unter Japans Vorherrschaft‘, ist; Deutschland aber, daß wie wir aus der Statistik gesehen haben, ein sehr erhebliches Interesse an „Land der aufgehenden Sonne“ haben muß, wird das überaus wichtige Ostasiengeschäft nicht aus den Augen verlieren,“ in *ibid.*, 97.

possessed more firsthand knowledge of the country. Martin Ramming, who wrote about the accounts of Japanese sailors shipwrecked in Russia, and Fritz Rumpf, the artist and art historian who studied seventeenth-century book illustrations, both spent several years in Japan and East Asia.⁸¹ Gundert too lived in Japan as a missionary and language teacher. These few individuals enjoyed cultural and linguistic training matched by few of their peers. In contrast, none of the social scientists seemed to have traveled to Japan, and only a few had studied Japanese. As a result, most of them relied on sources in European languages or translated from Japanese. Moreover, since their projects were mostly concerned with contemporary events, sometimes of a sensitive nature like high diplomacy and export policies, they could not use the most relevant documents, which undoubtedly had a classified status in Japanese government ministries and businesses, even if they could read the language or conduct research in the country.

This imbalance of knowledge between dissertations on the arts and the social sciences manifested itself concretely. On average, works on politics or economics tended to be shorter, up to about a hundred pages, while those on the arts or literature could reach impressive lengths. Gundert's, for example, reached almost three hundred pages, and the one on theater masks took up two volumes. Not only did these heftier oeuvres likely reflect a more profound understanding of Japan, they also helped launch the careers of their authors. After receiving his degree, Gundert was appointed in 1927 as the manager of the Japanese-German Cultural Society (Nichidoku Bunka Kyōkai 日獨文化協會), a post he kept until 1935. On his return to Germany he assumed the professorship of Japanology in Hamburg as the successor to the

⁸¹ Ramming, in particular, spent almost a decade in Japan before leaving in 1928 for Germany, where he was actively engaged in promoting Japanese studies. In 1930, he became the German co-director of the Japan Institute. Rumpf served in the garrison of the German colony of Tsingtau. He was captured during World War I and interned in Japan for five years, where he deepened his knowledge of the place. When he returned to Germany he also became involved in German-Japanese bi-national associations (see next chapter).

great Karl Florenz. In 1938 he even rose to the chancellorship (*Rektor*) of the university.⁸²

Ramming too would attain prominence by teaching at the university at Berlin and leading the Japan Institute, and Horst Hammitzsch, who translated an ancient Shinto sacred text in his dissertation, would in 1942 become the professor of Japanese Studies in Leipzig.⁸³ While new doctors of philosophy with expertise in Japanese literature and arts often went on to enter academia, most of their counterparts in the social sciences pursued careers in other fields with little interaction with Japan. Keep in mind also that research in the arts and humanities favored topics on pre-modern Japan, so that Japanology in German universities was dominated by scholars who composed works on a Japan from a bygone age: Gundert, Ramming, and Hammitzsch would all write prolifically on traditional Japan. Ironically, then, those who most needed firsthand and up-to-date experience with Japan, the social scientists, lacked the opportunity to gain any, but those who enjoyed contact with modern Japan, the scholars in the humanities, chose to turn their gaze back to eras no longer accessible. To wit, the information on Japan flowing from the most authoritative spring of knowledge in Germany, university researchers, painted a somewhat skewed image of Japan that had limited applicability to understanding the country in the 1920s and 1930s.

Around the World in Eighty Days

Surely the social scientists would have recognized the value of researching in Japan, so why did they not do so? The answer might be found also in the autobiographies at the end

⁸² Gundert's rise had in part to do with his ties with the Nazi organization for professors. See, Michael Grüttner, *Biographisches Lexikon zur nationalsozialistischen Wissenschaftspolitik* (Heidelberg: Synchron, 2004), 67.

⁸³ Hammitzsch filled the vacant post in 1942, but was called up for service by the depleted German army in 1943. After World War II he held positions in the universities in Munich and Bochum. For more, see his personal files at Universitätsarchiv Leipzig, PA528, Personalakte Prof. Dr. Reinhold Horst Hammitzsch.

of the dissertations: almost all the authors were raised in middle-class households. Their breadwinning fathers worked in businesses, for the government, or for themselves, earning modest incomes that likely could not have financed a trip to the Far East. Indeed, those scholars blessed with the opportunity to travel to Japan usually did so not as individuals but as members of an organization. For example, Gundert went to Japan as a missionary. Rumpf the art historian served in the garrison in Tsingtau. Hammitzsch first ventured to Japan only after he had earned the doctorate and found employment as a teacher in Nagoya. In interwar Germany, then, the mere fact of having experienced faraway Japan would have set one apart from the rest of the population and endowed one with a fascinating tale to share.

Verily, travelogues constituted another source of published knowledge about Japan, one far more appealing to the populace than the stodgy dissertations or the preachy tracts by the evangelists. We have already seen a few works in this genre. For instance, AEPM Director Witte wrote about his journeys in China and Japan in two travelogues, and other missionaries too chose the format to convey their encounters in Japan.⁸⁴ Moreover, German diplomats and others with wanderlust who had visited Japan before 1914 also published memoirs that were still read after the war, though of course the information relayed within did not necessarily pertain to the latest situation in Japan. After all, although Japan was not traumatized by World War I like Europe, it too underwent significant changes in its politics, society, and economy as a result of the conflict or its aftermath.

⁸⁴ For Witte's works, see footnote 55. Other travelogues by missionaries include, Otto Marbach, *Chinas Not und Japans Hoffnung: Reiseerinnerungen eines Ostasienfreundes* (Bern/Leipzig: Paul Haupt, 1930); Theodor Devaranne, *Rund um den Juli: Streifzüge durch Japans Frömmigkeit—Reisebeobachtungen* (Berlin: Allgemeiner Evangelisch-Protestantischer Missionsverein, 1927); and, Elisabeth Oehler-Heimerdinger, *Beim roten Ahorn: Tagebuchblätter von einer Japanreise* (Stuttgart: Evangelischer Missionsverlag, 1927). Oehler-Heimerdinger belonged to the famous Basel Mission. Marbach had been previously mentioned. Devaranne would eventually become the director of the Ostasienmission (renamed from AEPM) in the 1940s.

Travelogues mentioning Japan were published in Germany almost every year in the interwar era, but they were not distributed evenly throughout the period. Few new accounts appeared in the early 1920s, so readers had to make do with those recounting journeys before the war.⁸⁵ As the German economy rebounded in the middle of the decade, many individuals and firms must have recovered financially to have afforded sojourns abroad. This period also witnessed the rise of larger-than-life globetrotters like Colin Ross, whose scars and tan from their (mis)adventures impressed Hitler far more than any diplomat's or professor's credentials. Correspondingly the number of travelogues ballooned, peaking in the late 1920s. Just then the world economic crisis struck and greatly limited the means of Germans to venture afar. Additionally, the outbreak of war in East Asia made the region more hazardous and less open as a destination for roaming sightseers. Consequently, the number of titles tapered off from the early 1930s onward and dropped markedly in the middle of the decade, so that, in the years leading up to World War II in Europe only a few appeared.

How did travelogues influence the images of Japan in Germany? Foremost, the broad reach of these first-person accounts should not be underestimated. If the missionaries' books could count on churchgoers as consumers and the dissertations could boast of an educated audience, then the travelogues could rely on the star power of some of their creators. The interwar world still abounded with deserts and mountains unexplored by anyone (at least from the West). Pioneers, like Charles Lindbergh, were often hailed as heroes; books by or about them could draw great interest. Interwar Germany saw its share of such figures, several

⁸⁵ For example, Franz Freudenberg, *Momentbilder aus dem modernen Japan* (Leipzig: Oswald Mutze, 1919); Bernhard Kellermann, *Ein Spaziergang in Japan* (Berlin: Paul Cassirer, 1920); and, Gerhard von Mutius, *Ostasiatische Pilgerfahrt: Aus dem Tagebuch einer Reise nach China und Japan 1908/09* (Berlin: Georg Stilke, 1921). Freudenberg was a physician who traveled to China and Japan. Kellermann was a best-selling novelist who toured Japan and China before the Great War. Mutius was a diplomat sent to China in 1908. One account of a journey from before the war was not published until the 1930s. See, Marie von Bunsen, *Im fernen Osten: Eindrücke und Bilder aus Japan, Korea, China, Ceylon, Java, Siam, Kambodscha, Birma und Indien* (Leipzig: Koehler & Amelang, 1934). She wrote very critically of the Meiji Emperor in the work.

of whom wrote about Japan. Ross, for instance, compiled a photo album of Asian scenery and provided commentaries in *East Asia: China, Manchuria, Korea, and Japan (Ostasien: China, Mandschurei, Korea, Japan)* in 1929.⁸⁶ By then Ross had firmly established his reputation as a premier adventurer and chronicler of alien places. In 1940, he published another book on the topic, *The New Asia*, quoted at the beginning of this chapter. Another writer-wanderer, the immensely popular Richard Katz, also penned two books on his journeys to the East: *Sparkling Far East: Scenes in China, Korea, and Japan (Funkelnder Ferner Osten: Erlebtes in China–Korea–Japan)* in 1931, and *Japan of Today: Adventures of a Globetrotter (Japan von heute: Erlebnisse eines Weltenbummlers)* in 1933.⁸⁷ Finally, the charismatic thrill-seeker Kurt Faber had his achievements published in 1930 in *The Last Journeys and Adventure of a World Traveler: The Baltic, the Balkans, South Seas, Japan, Korea, China, Siberia, Moscow, Palestine, Syria, and Canada (Weltwanderers letzte Fahrten und Abenteuer: Baltikum, Balkan, Südsee, Japan, Korea, China, Sibirien, Moskau, Palästina, Syrien, Kanada)*.⁸⁸ Most of these books warranted multiple printings, and all these travel writers published other bestselling works that augmented their voices in steering public

⁸⁶ Colin Ross, *Ostasien: China, Mandschurei, Korea, Japan* (Leipzig: E. A. Seemanns Lichtbildanstalt, 1929). He also directed a documentary on Asia and Australia. For more, see Chapter Two.

⁸⁷ Richard Katz, *Funkelnder Ferner Osten: Erlebtes in China–Korea–Japan* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1931); and, Richard Katz, *Japan von heute: Erlebnisse eines Weltenbummlers* (Reutlingen: Enßlin & Laiblin, 1933). The former was translated into English as *Rays from the East*. Katz worked as a correspondent in East Asia for the *Vossische Zeitung* (some of his articles were cited in Chapter One). He also worked for the Ullstein press. His writing career grew so lucrative that he earned enough to travel on his own and write about his trips.

⁸⁸ Kurt Faber, *Weltwanderers letzte Fahrten und Abenteuer: Baltikum, Balkan, Südsee, Japan, Korea, China, Sibirien, Moskau, Palästina, Syrien, Kanada* (Stuttgart: Robert Lutz Nachfolger Otto Schramm, 1930). Faber lived as an adventurer and died as an adventurer. Early in his life he worked in various odd jobs and traveled as a drifter, mostly in the Americas, including a stint on a whaler based in San Francisco. His most spectacular feat was a trek on foot across Canada from the Arctic coast to Edmonton. He died in northern Canada in 1929.

opinion. For Ross, the accounts of his exploits attracted Hitler's attention and even led to audiences with the Führer himself.⁸⁹

Moreover, Japan was almost always articulated within the context of a much broader trip so that it made up but one of many components. In addition to the bulky titles mentioned above, other works donned even lengthier ones. For example, a popular account from the early 1920s was called *Around the Earth: Scenes from America, Japan, Korea, China, India, and Arabia* (*Rund um die Erde: Amerika, Japan, Korea, China, Indien und Arabien*).⁹⁰ Another one, by two zoologists, was titled *Sunny Worlds: East Asian Travel Sketches—Borneo, Java, Sumatra, India, Ceylon, and Japan* (*Sonnige Welten: Ostasiatische Reise-Skizzen—Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Vorderindien, Ceylon, Japan*).⁹¹ Lastly, a work from 1937 also placed Japan among various places by carrying the title, *Foray to Japan, Java, Bali, America, Africa, China, Ceylon, Sumatra, Celebes, Borneo, the Philippines, and Honolulu* (*Streifzug nach Japan, Java, Bali, U.S.A., Afrika, China, Ceylon, Sumatra, Celebes, Borneo, Philippinen, Honolulu*).⁹² Several other pieces, though less expansive, included China, Korea, and India alongside Japan as part of the journey overseas. In short, while sojourners with a purpose like missionaries, merchants, or diplomats traveled specifically to Japan, those who wandered for leisure, sightseeing, or adventure tended to see more than just one country.

⁸⁹ Faber might also have met Hitler. He joined the Nazi Party in 1925, when it was rebuilding after the failed putsch, and Faber could have crossed paths with Hitler in the relatively small party circles. In any case, Faber—blond, brash, and bold—would have been precisely the type of man Hitler admired.

⁹⁰ Eduard Büchler, *Rund um die Erde: Erlebtes aus Amerika, Japan, Korea, China, Indien und Arabien* (Bern: A. Francke, 1921). Büchler was a Swiss writer. The book reached at least a third edition, which was published in Leipzig by R. Voigtländer.

⁹¹ Emil Selenka, and Lenore Selenka, *Sonnige Welten: Ostasiatische Reise-Skizzen—Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Vorderindien, Ceylon, Japan*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: C. W. Kreidel, 1925). This edition was published posthumously after the deaths of both Selenkas.

⁹² Ernst Josef Hoßdorf, *Streifzug nach Japan, Java, Bali, U.S.A., Afrika, China, Ceylon, Sumatra, Celebes, Borneo, Philippinen, Honolulu* (Frick: A. Fricker, 1937). Curiously, Hoßdorf was also Swiss.

Why did Japan appear so often as but one of many places? The titles may seem unnecessarily unwieldy and excessively exhaustive, but we should remember that basically the travelogues were written by the authors and printed by the publishers to make money. Thus the titles served as a marketing tool for the publications in question over competitors in the same genre, especially since, then as now, books in Germany were not always adorned with very graphic covers. Titles encompassing many places would also make the sojourners look more accomplished and their accounts more impressive; one cannot help but suspect that the travelogues were engaging in an arms race to outdo one another in expansiveness. Lastly, one simply could not move from Germany to Japan without traversing or visiting other places. Even if one could, why would anyone do so? If someone was going to expend the time and money to travel from one end of a landmass to the other, one naturally would want to make the most out of the undertaking by taking in as many scenes as possible. The resulting travelogues penned by these globetrotters thus did not focus just on Japan. Instead, Japan merely appeared as another destination on a crowded itinerary, as one among many.

Within the sections about Japan, the place would have given readers a first impression of exoticness and unfamiliarity. Whether visually or textually, the writers often began by remarking on how odd a place Japan struck them. Ross, for instance, selected several photos for his album that paraded foreign scenes and landscapes. They showcased Mount Fuji, women in traditional garments, the Gion Festival in Kyoto, and the room in a typical house.⁹³ In Japan these sights would hardly have caused a stir, but transposed to Germany the ordinary became extraordinary, so much so that mundane household arrangements garnered attention abroad. Katz in *Sparkling Far East* even titled a section “Different than We” („Anders als wir“) to highlight some of the stranger things he noticed in Japan. He was rather

⁹³ Ross, *Ostasien*, 36–9.

bemused by the extreme politeness exhibited in the elaborate greetings among the Japanese. He was even more impressed by the superb skill that he observed in the swarms of cyclists and pedestrians in crisscrossing in every direction without colliding. He surmised that the Japanese must have a “sixth sense” that enabled them to navigate the traffic without falling victim to wheels.⁹⁴ Faber went farther still in painting an otherworldly portrait of Japan. He wrote of the “fantastical Japanese script” as if it were a magical spell cast all over the country, “standing on walls, fluttering on banners, and dancing from the lines of the newspapers,” and he sometimes wondered if the Japanese themselves could actually read the writing. In Japan, he marveled, even the Moon seemed to loom larger and the stars shine brighter.⁹⁵

Certainly, some exoticism must be indulged in this genre. A travel writer unskilled in rendering a foreign country alien probably could not sell many copies, and any adventurer had an incentive to embellish the strangeness of his destinations in order to burnish his reputation. Moreover, the odd features mentioned in the travelogues, such as frequent bowing, the indecipherable language, and Mt. Fuji, should really not have struck any knowledgeable reader in Germany as truly bizarre. Rather, the customers would have expected (and many still do) to see photographs of Mt. Fuji and ladies in kimonos in an album about Japan. Put

⁹⁴ „Die Straßen sind gut in Japan, die Japaner sind ein progressives Volk und radeln dementsprechend hurtig. Signale halten sie für überflüssig. Das sind sie tatsächlich auch für die japanischen Fußgänger. Dieses Volk hat eine sechsten Sinn entwickelt, sich für Fahrrädern in Sicherheit zu bringen... Hinzugenommen, daß hier Kinder vorzugsweise auf der Straße spielen, kann man sich nicht genug darüber wundern, wie wenige Menschen alles in allem in Japan unter die Räder kommen. Manchen passiert es zwar trotz des sechsten Sinnes, aber immerhin bleibt doch eine ganze Menge unüberfahren. Und das ist eigentlich das Seltsamste an Japan,“ in Katz, *Funkelnder Ferner Osten*, 206–7.

⁹⁵ „Das Leben ist hier ein offenes Buch für den, der zu lesen versteht. Es schreit von allen Hauswänden, es steht auf dem Saum des Kimono bei jedem Hoteldiener, jedem Rikschakuli, jedem Sackträger am Hafen. Nur eben Japanesisch muß man können, und das ist die Kunst. Verwirrt steht man vor der Fülle der wunderlichen Schriftzeichen, bei deren Anblick man sich fragt, ob die Japaner das selber lesen können. Sie stehen an allen Wänden, sie flattern von Fahnen, sie tanzen aus den Zeilen der Zeitungen. Ja, Menschen und Dinge sind wunderbar in dieser Welt... War es nur dieses, das einen alles anders ansehen ließ? Der Mond schien größer als anderswo. Die Sterne schienen sich heller als sonst zu spiegeln in dem schwarzen Wasser des von zahlreichen Brücken überwölbten Kanals,“ in Faber, 140.

differently, a work on Japan without mentioning these obligatory clichés would appear to be missing something. Much like the motion pictures discussed in the last chapter, some of the travelogues catered to prevalent tastes of the audience by using familiar scenes of unfamiliar places to depict a known *and* unknown Japan.

Unlike the films, however, travelogues enjoyed more space to delve into the causes behind the strangeness one felt in Japan. After all, one should be prepared to encounter new sights when one ventured afar. What made Japan so special, however, was its odd mixture of East and West, and old and new. The travel writers could recognize objects and elements like those found in Germany, but their appearance in a Japanese setting caught their attention. That is, once again, the parallel coexistence of different worlds in one place rendered Japan a peculiar place in German eyes. For instance, in 1925 an Austrian correspondent even devoted her whole travelogue to the theme in *Japan, the Country of Juxtaposition: A Winter Journey across Japan, Korea and Manchuria* (*Japan, das Land des Nebeneinander: Eine Winterreise durch Japan, Korea und die Mandschurei*).⁹⁶ Along the same theme of strange parallels, in 1937 another popular travel writer titled his work *Generals, Geishas and Poems: Journeys and Adventures in Japan, from Sakhalin to Manchukuo* (*Generäle, Geishas und Gedichte: Fahrten und Erlebnisse in Japan, von Sachalin bis Manchukuo*).⁹⁷

More specifically, Ross chose several pictures to illustrate visually the combination of past and present in Japan. One, titled “Wooden Huts and Skyscrapers in Tokyo” (‘Holzhäuser und Wolkenkratzer in Tokio’), showed the stark contrast of modern buildings,

⁹⁶ Alice Schalek, *Japan, das Land des Nebeneinander: Eine Winterreise durch Japan, Korea und die Mandschurei* (Breslau: Ferdinand Hirt, 1925). She was known as a prolific writer, though her most famous achievement was probably working as a war correspondent on the Italian front during World War I, presumably the only woman to have done so.

⁹⁷ Alfred E. Johann, *Generäle, Geishas und Gedichte: Fahrten und Erlebnisse in Japan, von Sachalin bis Manchukuo* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1937). Johann was a travel writer whose accomplishments were comparable to those of Katz, Faber, and Ross. The majority of his trips were conducted after World War II.



Fig. 3.1 The cover of a travelogue, *On Volcanic Ground* (1925), by AEPM Director Witte. Note that the illustration was not of any actual scenery, but a compilation of “must have” features like a volcano, pagoda, gate to a Shinto shrine, and a man rowing a boat.



Fig. 3.2 The cover of the travelogue *Japan, the Country of Juxtaposition* (1925). Note again that the image was an artificial construct highlighting the “split personalities” found in portrayals of Japan: a high rise building next to a wooden hut, a trolley alongside a rickshaw.

which withstood the Great Kanto Earthquake, towering over hastily constructed barracks that stood in place of old houses destroyed in the catastrophe. He wrote of the “lively and variegated” traffic on the curious streets, where automobiles and oxcarts, and bicycles and handcarts shared road space.⁹⁸ He noted too the struggle between old and new Japan, where, despite the efforts of some conservatives to revive ancient values, the country as a whole continued apace to “Japanize” European culture for its own purpose.⁹⁹

Katz also described the blending, sometimes deceptively harmonious, between the ancient and the modern in one place and time. He wrote of an incident whilst traveling on an electrified express train in a “Pullmanesque” sleeping car. Just as he delighted in the “American” efficiency and amenities proffered by New Japan, Old Japan reared its head in another car in same the train. Unbeknownst to Katz, a Japanese naval captain took his own life in the gleaming wagon with his gleaming dagger by ritual suicide (harakiri) because he disapproved of the outcome of a naval conference.¹⁰⁰ The event prompted Katz to muse that,

Here in Japan there is still always a seamless juxtaposition: the unfathomed dark green sea of the Asiatic soul and the immaculate offices of the new practicality. At day, iron and concrete prevail. But at night it is different. At night, the crusty wood reigns again, the same wood that houses the ancestral shrine. As the first stars begin

⁹⁸ „Ein lebhafter und buntgemischter Verkehr flutet durch diese seltsamen Straßen. Automobile neben Ochsenkarren. Fahrräder, Handkarren nebeneinander. Dazwischen hocken die Zeitungsverkäufer am Boden und klingeln da die modernsten Zeitungen aus. Die ganze Unsicherheit des Japaners der europäischen Kultur gegenüber ist aus unserem Bilde von Tokio ersichtlich. Das alte Japan hatte Sinn für niedliche Zierate. Auch das ärmlichste Haus hatte eine freundliche Note; denn einen Garten hatte fast jeder, wenn er auch nur aus einem Zwergbaum bestand. Im modernen Tokio drängen sich die Häuser so dicht, daß für keinen Baum mehr Platz bleibt,“ in Ross, *Ostasien*, 44.

⁹⁹ „Die japanische Kultur ist augenblicklich in Umbildung begriffen. Genau wie dieses Volk vor Jahrhunderten die chinesische Kultur übernahm und für seine eigenen Zwecke wandelte, ist es heute dabei, die europäische Kultur für sich zu japaisieren. Es gibt japanische Kreise, die die gesamte europäische Kultur und die westlichen Ideenkreis bewußt ablehnen, und die mit allen Mitteln die alten Sitten und Überlieferungen zu erhalten und wieder zu erneuern suchen. Der Zeitpunkt ist jedoch schon zu spät,“ in *ibid.*, 45.

¹⁰⁰ „Erst später habe ich aus der Zeitung erfahren, daß sich im selben Zuge, der mich so modern und pullmanbequem Tokio entgegnetrug, im selben Expreszug Kobe—Tokio, der mit amerikanischem Elan die elektrische Schnellbahn überholte, ein abseitig fernöstliches Begebnis zutrug. Neu-Tokio ist es so fremd wie der geheimnisvolle Inselbezirk des Kaisers den Hochhäusern diesseits des Wassergrabens,“ in Katz, *Funkelnder Ferner Osten*, 256.

to glisten, the chalk-white practicality submerges into the dark green sea. Asia awakes at night. Even in New Tokyo. Even in the sleeping car.¹⁰¹

All seriousness aside, Katz also found humor within Japan's split personalities. He wrote that the Westernization of Asia could be considered a success in terms of hygiene and road building, but when it came to the electric motor, one should pray to Buddha.¹⁰² He mentioned that an American article gloated that Tokyo "had become as beautiful as a big American city," though he then added dryly that Tokyo "was not quite so bad yet."¹⁰³ Although ancient Japan might never fade away completely, Katz believed in the inexorable march of modern Japan. Like Ross, he depicted the near-collision between old and new in the traffic in the streets, or more precisely the displacement of the old by the new. He pointed out specifically that many roads in Tokyo were surfaced with asphalt, so that vehicles no longer came and went in a dust cloud. Occasionally one might still see an oxcart or two, but the battle had been decided: wooden houses and ox carts had lost.¹⁰⁴ The dark green sea, which he used as a metaphor for the "Asiatic soul," had been contained by the white, concrete dams.

This portrayal of a Japan divided between the past and the future was echoed in other travelogues. For example, Faber called Japan "the country of unlimited contradictions" (das

¹⁰¹ „Das liegt hier noch immer übergangslos nebeneinander: das ungelotete graugrüne Meer der asiatischen Seele und die übersichtlichen Büros neuer Sachlichkeit. Tagsüber siegt der Eisenbeton. Aber abends ist es anders. Abends gilt wieder das altersgraue Holz, das die Ahnen-Nische stützt. Wenn die ersten Sterne schimmern, versinkt die kalkweiße Sachlichkeit im graugrünen Meer. In der Nacht erwacht Asien. Sogar in Neu-Tokio. Sogar im Schlafwagen,“ in *ibid.*

¹⁰² „Verwestlichung Asiens’—wenn sie nur Hygiene bedeutete und Straßenbau, sie wäre zu begrüßen. Aber zu Elektromotoren beten statt zu Buddha—nein, sie ist doch bedenklich,“ in *ibid.*, 239.

¹⁰³ „Tokio ist so schön geworden wie eine amerikanische Großstadt’, begeistert sich ein USA.-Bericht. Nun, ganz so schlimm ist es noch nicht,“ in *ibid.*, 252.

¹⁰⁴ „Doch der Asphalt bleibt weit aus der City heraus bis zu den Wohnvierteln. Breite Asphaltstraßen kreuzen einander, und der Verkehr auf ihnen gleicht keineswegs mehr einer Staubwolke. Sondern die Flüsse all der blauen und grünen Busse, der Taxis und der Privatlimousinen fügen sich den Verkehrs-Schutzleuten, stauen sich vorschriftsmäßig, fließen vorschriftsmäßig wieder ab, rollen so eilig und ordentlich dahin wie auf Friedrichstraße oder Madison-Street. Und wo mal ein seltener Ochsenkarren hinzukommt, hält er sich bescheiden am Rinnstein. Ja ja, der Kampf ist entschieden, und Holzhäuser und Ochsenkarren haben ihn verloren. Das graugrüne Meer ist vor den weißen Betondämmen zurückgewichen,“ in *ibid.*, 255.

Land der unbegrenzten Widersprüche) where, as in other nations, some people pined for better bygone days in the face of progress.¹⁰⁵ He saw little chance for turning back in Japan, where the adoption of modern ways had advanced so much that the Tokyo Central Station was built in the “Berlin style” and that he found the train service really the best, cheapest, and most punctual in the world—high praises from a German.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps the most succinct summary of this Janus-faced Japan might be found in *Generals, Geishas and Poems*:

Our conception of Japan vacillates between two extremes. The first, older depiction sees in Japan nothing but a magical, fairytale-like country of cherry blossoms and geishas, the Japan of flowery kimonos, delicate woodcarving, and lacquerware. The second, newer view describes Japan only as the violent rapist of defenseless China, the cunning, ruthless competitor in the world market that would stop at nothing to undercut trade rivals in order to drive them out of business.¹⁰⁷

What implications did this conceptualization of Japan with multiple personalities have on the creation of knowledge about Japan in Germany? First, many of these impressions were gathered from cursory stays in or superficial observations of Japan. The whirlwind tours conducted by these globetrotters meant that they spent a relatively brief time in the country, and the slower transportation limited their ability to take in many sights. Faber, for example,

¹⁰⁵ „Auch im Lande der aufgehenden Sonne ist nicht alles Morgenröte, auch hier hört man das heute mehr als je in aller Herren Länder erklingende Lied von den vergangenen besseren Zeiten und von der neuen Welt, die nichts taugt; auch hier gibt es nicht wenige, die die moderne Entwicklung mit einem nassen und einem heiteren Auge begrüßen und sich durch keinen Fortschritt davon belehren lassen, daß man hier etwas Altes und Ganzes gegen ein Halbes vertauscht habe, das Land und Leuten nicht einmal gut zu Gesicht stehe,“ in Faber, 141.

¹⁰⁶ „Wie dem auch sei: man muß ihnen zugestehen, daß sie vieles von dem, was sie von den weißen Teufeln übernommen, wenigstens gut nachgeahmt haben. Und hierher gehört vor allem das japanische Eisenbahnwesen, über das jeder Reisende in diesem Lande nur mit Bewunderung sprechen kann. Auf den ersten Blick kann man sehen, wer hier die Lehrmeister gewesen sind. Der Bahnhof Tokio in seinem überladenen Berliner Stil aus der sogenannten Gründerzeit spricht eine deutliche Sprache... Doch da sind wir mit unseren Betrachtungen unversehns wieder bei den japanischen Eisenbahnen angelangt, und wenn man auf dieses Thema zu sprechen kommt, so kann man nicht umhin, immer wieder ein neues Loblied anzustimmen. Sie sind wirklich die besten, wirklich die billigsten, wirklich die pünktlichsten der Welt“ in Faber, 141, 154.

¹⁰⁷ „Unsere Auffassung von Japan schwankt zwischen zwei Extremen: das erste, ältere, will in ihm nichts weiter sehen als das zauberhafte, märchenschöne Land der Kirschblüten und Geishas, der blumenbunten Kimonos und der zarten Holzschnitte und Lackarbeiten; für die zweite, jüngere Auffassung ist Japan nur noch der brutale Vergewaltiger des wehrlosen China, der gerissene, rücksichtslose Konkurrent auf den Weltmärkten, dem alle Mittel recht sind, wenn es gilt, den Mitbewerber zu unterbieten aus dem Felde zu schlagen,“ in Johann, 171.

spent less than a month in Japan, and Katz, four months. The sightseeing nature of their stay also led them to predictable facilities and destinations; that both Katz and Faber wrote of their experiences with Japanese trains and hotels, and with Kobe and Yokohama, did not result from coincidence. It should not have surprised them that they encountered a blend of civilizations at those venues; hotels and port cities owed their ascendancy to the opening of Japan and were designed to cater to foreigners. Moreover, the language barrier prevented the travel writers from understanding the country and its people in a truly meaningful fashion. None of the explorers could speak Japanese, and even some of those who resided there for a while could not claim to know Japanese fluently. Consequently, the authors, to the extent that they had any contact with the population at all, could only interact with the most Westernized Japanese individuals—those straddling the two worlds.

Ultimately, the depiction of a Japan with elements of old and new amounted to but a selective, self-centered understanding of the country. After all, which modern Western nation did not feature a mix of the past and the present? In interwar Berlin too one would encounter automobiles alongside horse-drawn carriages in the streets. In interwar Berlin too one would see buildings designed by cutting-edge Bauhaus architects next to half-timbered houses from centuries past. In interwar Berlin too one would hear some speak longingly of the past but also others talk expectantly of the future. If one wanted to, one could certainly pen books on Germany at the crossroads between looking forward and backward. As a matter of fact, one arguably had a much better chance of seeing something new in interwar Tokyo than Berlin, because the former had undergone various disasters that left precious little from the past standing. Yet, since the writers had already decided that Japan was caught between old and new, they wrote their books accordingly.

More crucially, the disagreement over what qualities characterized Japan stemmed from the writers' different political persuasions. Just as for Hitler, discussing Japan served for the authors the purpose of commenting on conditions at home, and the malleability and multiplicity of the portrayals of Japan allowed the travelers to choose the Japan with which to compare Germany. For example, Katz opted to highlight the harmony he witnessed. As he was boarding the ship to depart Japan, he reflected on the pleasant dealings he had with "the yellow people," while everything that revolted him in Japan came from those of his own race. He concluded, "I believe firmly that they are better than us."¹⁰⁸ Faber, who seemingly spent most his time in Japan on a train, wrote glowingly of the affordability of rail travel and the outrageous prices in Germany.¹⁰⁹ Ross perhaps went the farthest in deploying Japan as a yardstick. He used the caption for a photo of the Osaka train station to go on a tangent by lamenting that as Japan Westernized, "it has today the nouveau riche (*narikin* 成金), the wartime and postwar profiteers, the grafters and usurers just like we do."¹¹⁰ He went on to complain about the rise of powerful industrial and financial concerns that controlled more and more of the national economy and had begun to influence public opinion by acquiring newspapers. Meanwhile a disgruntled working class was rising against the traditional belief

¹⁰⁸ „Ich habe viel Güte von inen erfahren, von diesen Gelben, in all den Monaten hire, und was mich kränkte, kam von Menschen meiner Rasse. —Ich glaube fest, sie sind besser als wir,“ in Katz, *Funkelnder Ferner Osten*, 298.

¹⁰⁹ „Von Tokio bis zur Endstation der von Japan beherrschten Südmandschurischen Eisebahn, also auf einer Strecke von 2500 Kilometern, kostet eine Fahrkarte der dritten Klasse 37 Yen, also etwa 71 Mark. Und nun vergleiche man damit die Preise auf unserer Dawesbahn!“ in Faber, 141–2.

¹¹⁰ „Japans Geschäftsleben hat sich zu allererst europäisiert und mit dieser Europäisierung auch dessen moderne Schäden übernommen. Japan hat heute den Narikin, den Kriegs- und Nachkriegsgewinnler, den Schieber und Wucherer ebenso wie wir. Es hat gewaltige Industrie- und Finanzkonzerne, die immer größere Teile der nationalen Produktion in ihre Hand bekommen und in allerletzter Zeit angefangen haben. Zeitungen aufzukaufen, um die öffentliche Meinung in ihrem Sinne beeinflussen zu können. Auf der andern Seite aber steht das, was Japan mit seiner festen Familientradition früher nicht kannte: ein wachsendes, unzufriedenes Proletariat, das für die traditionellen Ideen von der Göttlichkeit des Herrscherhauses keinen Sinn mehr hat,“ in Ross, *Ostasien*, 45.

in the sacrosanct imperial family. One cannot help but note that Ross's words against war profiteering, big businesses, and restless proletariat sounded virtually identical to Nazi rhetoric against the same forces.

Nevertheless, extensive commentaries on politics stood out for their absence among travelogues for much of the interwar era. When the writers did feel compelled to discuss politics at home or in Japan, they did so in side comments like the ones mentioned above. One author actually titled a section "Nothing More on Politics!!" („Nichts mehr von Politik!!“) just to squeeze in a few paragraphs on the topic.¹¹¹ Another, a diplomat even, devoted only five pages or so in a chapter labeled "A Little Politics" („Ein wenig Politik“) on the subject.¹¹² Rather, most travelogues did not delve into current events, preferring instead to discuss, sometimes in great detail, Japanese arts, religions, and traditional architecture.

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

The lack of attention to current events meant that the travelogues, seen as a whole, reflected little change in Japan over the years in the 1920s and 1930s (besides descriptions of the epoch-making earthquake). Especially, the preference of some travel writers to seek out old Japan, be it in theaters, shrines, or the countryside, had the consequence, intended or otherwise, of portraying a timeless Japan. After all, the classics were supposed to transcend temporal boundaries. As a result, travelogues painted a fairly static picture of the country, so that, overall, accounts written in the 1920s differed little from those in the 1930s.

¹¹¹ Arthur Holitscher, *Das unruhige Asien: Reise durch Indien – China – Japan* (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1926), 325. Holitscher was a Jewish, Hungarian-born playwright.

¹¹² Hans Anna Haunhorst, *Das Lächeln Japans* (Leipzig: Georg Kummer, 1936), 97–101.

Around the mid-1930s, however, ideological opinions began to seep into a few of the travel accounts. For example, in a work in 1933, a writer described his encounter the previous year with a group of Chinese while on his way from North America to East Asia. The Chinese passengers, returning home from their studies abroad, complained bitterly to him about the Japanese attack on China at the time. The author wrote that, “Their hatred of the heavily armed Japanese aggressors who oppressed poor, defenseless China was genuine and thoroughly convincing to a German, who also belonged to a defenseless nation.”¹¹³ Of course, the writer could not have known that Germany would soon transform into an armed power, and as it did so, it would also reverse its attitude toward China. Meanwhile, a work from 1934, *Attention! Asia Is Marching! A Factual Report* (*Achtung! Asien marschiert! Ein Tatsachenbericht*), also devoted many pages to the developing news in Asia.¹¹⁴ The book differed from a typical travelogue because it aimed at gathering and relaying contemporary facts. Moreover, the co-authors were trained to investigate current events: Roland Strunk worked as a reporter for the Nazi newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter*, and Martin Rikli made propaganda films for the Nazi regime. The book also depicted the Chinese as hapless and incapable of self-defense by asking, “Why does China not defend itself like other peoples would? Why does the danger of foreign invasion not unite the feuding warlords?”¹¹⁵ By placing the onus of blame on self-defense rather than the restraint on aggression, the authors

¹¹³ „Ihr Haß gegen die schwer bewaffneten japanischen Angreifer, die das arme, wehrlose China unterjochten, war echt, und gerade für einen Deutschen, der auch einer wehrlosen Nation angehört, durchaus überzeugend,“ in Hans Thierbach, *Welt in der Wandlung: Eindrücke von einer Reise durch die Vereinigten Staaten, Japan und Sowjetrußland* (Berlin: Nachbarschafts-Verlag, 1933), 7. Emphasis original.

¹¹⁴ Roland Strunk, and Martin Rikli, *Achtung! Asien marschiert! Ein Tatsachenbericht* (Berlin: Drei Masken Verlag, 1934). See Chapter Two for more on Rikli.

¹¹⁵ „Warum wehrt sich China nicht—nicht so—wie andere Völker sich wehren würden? Warum vereint die Gefahr fremder Invasion nicht die heute noch gegeneinander wütenden Generale?“ in *ibid.*, 11.

placed their sympathy not with the Chinese but the Japanese. In case anyone had any doubt left regarding their stance toward Japan, the authors quoted a Japanese officer, “‘We are the Prussians of the East! We are convinced that the Germans, who taught us so much, will once again rediscover themselves. The fate of our two nations has much in common. No one would welcome more and understand better Germany’s national regeneration than we would!’”¹¹⁶

As it turned out, these opinionated travelogues emerged along a broader sea change, as Germany in the early and mid-1930s witnessed the rapid growth of political commentaries on Japan, and on Germany *and* Japan. To be sure, such works had a long pedigree. Right after World War I and in the early 1920s, there emerged a group of books pontificating on current Japan. Several such works, understandably, indulged in a sort of backward-looking, “what-if” re-fighting of the Great War. For instance, one author revisited the harebrained tripartite scheme in the Zimmerman Telegraph in *Mexico-Germany-Japan (Mexico-Deutschland-Japan)*.¹¹⁷ For him, the true path for a German-Japanese bond should go through Mexico. Even Erich Ludendorff found it worthwhile to mention Japan in his war memoir by faulting German diplomats for having failed to prevent Japan from joining the Allies.¹¹⁸ He spoke of Japan in the context of the Eastern Front, implying that if Japan had sided with Germany it might have tied down enough Russian troops in Siberia. In other

¹¹⁶ „Wir sind die Preußen des Ostens!’ sagt er mit höflichem Lächeln, ‚wir sind überzeugt, daß das große deutsche Volk, das uns so viel gelehrt, sich wiederfindet. Das Schicksal unserer beiden Völker hat vieles gemein, niemand würde Deutschlands nationale Wiedergeburt freudiger begrüßen, besser verstehen, als wir!’“ in *ibid.*, 14.

¹¹⁷ Ernst Schultze [Americanus, pseud.], *Mexico-Deutschland-Japan* (Dresden/Leipzig: Globus, 1919).

¹¹⁸ „Es war eine bittere Enttäuschung gewesen, daß es unserer Diplomatie nicht gelungen war, Japan aus der Zahl unserer Feinde zu halten: Das war die Folge unserer unglücklichen Politik, die uns nach dem Frieden von Shimonoseki 1895 für Rußland die Kastanien aus dem Feuer holen ließ und die Besitzergreifung von Port Arthur seitens Japans verhinderte. Rußland hat es uns nie gedankt, bei Japan hat es uns unendlich geschadet. Es konnte mit Recht nicht verstehen, welches Interesse wir an seiner Schwächung hatten,“ in Erich Ludendorff, *Meine Kriegserinnerungen 1914–1918* (Berlin: Mittler, 1919), 60.

words, for him, any collaboration between Germany and Japan should target Soviet Russia. Of course, future events would prove him correct, though only temporarily: The Anti-Comintern Pact did target the Soviet Union, but ultimately the two nations did not coordinate an attack on the communist country.

The first postwar years also abounded with forward-looking, speculative publications about Japan. One author warned of an “inevitable war” between Japan and America.¹¹⁹ Meanwhile, an astrologer in 1920 also predicted a “coming world war” between the same two countries.¹²⁰ He read from the stars as well that Germany would collapse before rising again. His prophesy proved uncannily prescient. A few years later, the combination of the war reparations, foreign occupation of the Ruhr region, and hyperinflation did ruin Germany economically and almost politically. The country survived these crises and even revived itself for a while before another economic downturn felled the republic. Germany then came under the control of the Nazis and recovered militarily, economically, and diplomatically. Finally in 1941, a world war did end up breaking out between Japan and the United States.

Of course, predictions without a timetable meant little. As it turned out, Germany in the early 1920s did not lack speculation about or propositions for some sort of coordination with Japan, but none of the schemes came anywhere near realization within a reasonable amount of time. As early as February 1919, barely three months after the armistice, a book titled *Japan and We* (*Japan und wir*) was published. The author argued that Germany and Japan should build a bloc stretching from Europe to Asia through and in conjunction with

¹¹⁹ Friedrich Wencker-Wildberg, *Der unvermeidliche Krieg zwischen Japan und Amerika: Eine politische Studie* (Stuttgart/Leipzig: Neuer Stuttgarter Verlag, 1921).

¹²⁰ Hermann Leo, *Berechnung des kommenden Weltkrieges zwischen Amerika und Japan: Deutschlands Zusammenbruch und Deutschlands Aufstieg im astrologischen Lichte* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Peter Hofmann, 1920).

Russia as an equal counterweight to Anglo-American encirclement.¹²¹ Just a year later, another writer, Paul Ostwald, published *Germany and Japan (Deutschland und Japan)*, in which he suggested an identical German-Russian-Japanese arrangement. He emphasized the need for Germany and Japan to utilize the Trans-Siberian railway to enhance bilateral trade. Only such a land-based European-Asian continental bloc, he projected, could counter the Anglo-Saxon control of the seas.¹²² The same year, Ostwald published another work, *The Modern Japan (Das moderne Japan)*, a textbook for postsecondary institutions. Again he left his student-readers with the thought that Germany should build a continental bloc with Russia and Japan to combat Anglo-Saxon world domination: “In terms of world politics and economy our interests lie with Japan.”¹²³ Even a skeptic of the scheme had to acknowledge in

¹²¹ „Für sich selbst hat auch Japan genau das gleiche außerordentliche Interesse an der Festigung der staatlichen Zustände in Großrußland wie das Deutsche Reich; und ein darauf sich wiederum neu aufbauendes russisch-japanisches Zusammengehen vermag nach diesem Kriege seine Spitze gegen das deutsche Volk nur zu richten, wenn die deutsche Politik das selber fördert. Schafft sich vielmehr das Deutsche Reich nach seinem eigenen Wiederaufbau und gründlicher Erneuerung von innen heraus endlich auch einen eigenen Grundriß tätiger Weltpolitik, wozu es selbst die unerhört blutigen und opferreichen Jahre seines Daseinskampfes vergeblich ermahnten, da jenes Weltenringen und seine Durchführung in einem so entscheidenden Maße Sache der großen Politik geworden war; so wird es über Rußland die Brücke nach Japan zu schlagen wissen. Auf diesem Wege heißt es, dem anglo-amerikanischen Staatenring einen ebenbürtigen Block entgegen zu setzen, der des deutschen Volkes Lebensbedingungen und Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten verbürgt, der ihm Betätigungsgelenheiten wieder schafft, der seinen wirtschaftlichen und politischen Wirkungsbereich nach Osten hin bis in den benachbarten Erdteil hinein erweitert, und der dann Europa und Asien umfassen und zusammenschließen wird,“ in Otto von Schwarzenegg, *Japan und wir* (Munich: Hugo Bruckmann, 1919), 44–5.

¹²² „Von größter Bedeutung für einen regen Handelsverkehr in jeder Beziehung zwischen uns und Japan wird die Sibirische bahn werden. Sie muß ausgenutzt werden, denn gerade sie gibt dem Handelsverkehr der beiden so weit von einander getrennt liegenden Staaten ein starkes Übergewicht in Rücksicht auf das Angelsachsentum und seiner Seeherrschaft. So führen uns denn auch wirtschaftliche Gesichtspunkte von dieser Art zu der notwendigen Erkenntnis, daß alles versucht werden muß, auch Rußland zu einer Anlehnung an uns und Japan zu vermögen. Politisch wie wirtschaftlich eröffnet der europäisch-asiatische Block, von dem wir oben sprachen, die größten Aussichten, die es möglich erscheinen lassen, einer Zwangherrschaft des Angelsachsentums zu entrinnen,“ in Paul Ostwald, *Deutschland und Japan* (Berlin: Leonhard Simion Nachfolger, 1920), 31.

¹²³ „Ein unter angelsächsischem Einfluß stehendes China würde für Japan den Anfang vom Ende bedeuten. Mit einem solchen Feind im Rücken wäre es dem Angelsachsentum preisgegeben. Für uns aber würden damit nicht nur wertvolle Aussichten in politischer Beziehung hinsichtlich eines großen zu schaffenden und gegen die Weltherrschaft des des Angelsachsentums sich richtenden deutsch-russisch-japanischen Blockes schwinden, sondern wir müßten dann auch alle Hoffnungen auf eine neuentfaltung unserer wirtschaftlichen Kräfte in Ostasien, besonders in China, begraben. Wessen wir uns von angelsächsischer Seite in Ostasien zu versehen haben werden, das zeigt die Vertreibung der Deutschen aus China ja zur Genüge. Weltpolitisch wie weltwirtschaftlich liegen also unsere Interessen bei Japan. Das gilt es zu erkennen und danach zu handeln!“ in

1921 that, should his own preferred cooperation with Britain not come to fruition, then perhaps Germany might find it expedient to work with Japan, just as Ostwald and the more well-known geopolitician Karl Haushofer theorized.¹²⁴ This path was indeed the one Germany under Hitler would embark upon—a decade and a half later.

In hindsight, of course, these authors might seem extraordinarily farsighted of events to come, and their prognostications might appear to validate the explanation that Germany and Japan became collaborators due to their common “have not” status after World War I. Yet in their own time their arguments had little influence on events and policies, and without the unpredictable outbreak of the world economic crisis and subsequent rise of the Nazi regime, it seemed unlikely that their schemes would have come to fruition. While Japan and certainly Germany found much to dislike in the Versailles settlement, it bears pointing out that *none* of the powers involved in the negotiations could claim complete satisfaction with the outcome. France and Italy thought they did not extract enough from the treaty, which Britain perceived as too harsh. The United States signed but failed to ratify the treaty, China did not even sign it, and the Soviet Union was shut out of the negotiations altogether. German and Japanese reactions to the treaty differed in that Japan could live with the arrangement enough that it participated in multilateral organizations in the interwar period, but Germany sought to change, redress, or undermine the treaty even before the ink dried. In

Paul Ostwald, *Das moderne Japan*, Die Bücherei der Volkshochschule 2 (Leipzig: Velhagen & Klasing, 1920), 95. Ostwald wrote a third book on Japan with similar themes, see Paul Ostwald, *Japans Entwicklung zur modernen Weltmacht: Seine Kultur-, Rechts-, Wirtschafts- und Staatengeschichte von der Restauration bis zur Gegenwart* (Bonn/Leipzig: Kurt Schroeber, 1922).

¹²⁴ „Bleibe aber die jetzige Verbindung zwischen Amerika, England und Frankreich weiter bestehen, so würde Japan vor angelsächsischem Druck Anschluß an Rußland und Deutschland suchen müssen. Rußland hat für uns die größte Bedeutung, da wir uns wirtschaftlich ergänzen, und sobald die inneren Zustände Rußlands es erlauben, ist Rußland unser natürlich gegebener Verbündeter. Es käme dann die seinerzeit von Haushofer gewünschte Verbindung Deutsch—Rußland—Japan durchaus in Frage, mit der Ostwald als einziger Möglichkeit rechnet,“ in Friedrich Klemann, *Japan, wie es ist* (Leipzig: R. Voigtländer, 1921), 135.

the 1920s, “have-not” Germany did work with other losers of the settlement—the Weimar Republic came to a pragmatic understanding with the Soviet Union and developed a lucrative trade with China. At that point Japan, as far as Germany was concerned, did not belong to the “have-not” club.

Also some authors’ schemes promoting alliances with Japan likely resulted from a lack of choices. Many of the authors took pride, with some justification, in proclaiming that Germany fought against the whole world in the Great War. After the war, as a result, Germany had a difficult time in finding an ally of worthwhile strength and heft. Austria and Turkey were but rumps of their former selves. Neither the United States nor Britain wanted binding alliances. France was the hated archenemy. The Soviet Union was preoccupied by civil war and then Bolshevization. So only Japan, against which Germany did not hold a grudge, could appear as a potential partner. This plan might seem farfetched, but it certainly did not stretch imagination more than those—like Hitler—who fantasized about an Anglo-American feud in which Germany would serve as Britain’s sidekick. Indeed, it appeared that the unsettled and unsettling early 1920s created imaginative space for wild schemes of all sorts, and an alliance with Japan represented but one of many floated in the era. To wit, these authors believed that in order for Germany to break out of the Anglo-American box in which it found itself, it also had to think diplomatically outside of one.

As German internal politics and external relations regained a semblance of normalcy in the mid- to late 1920s, the number of works focusing on Japanese politics or promoting German-Japanese cooperation dwindled. The republic stabilized and pursued a foreign policy of “fulfillment” that aimed to answer to Allied demands while seeking incremental redress of Versailles and reintegration of Germany into the world community. Certainly, those

academics interested in Japan regardless of its relevance to current affairs continued to produce fine studies. For example, Hans Ueberschaar devoted a work to explaining the nuances and peculiarities of the culture of state building in Japan, and Friedrich Max Trautz wrote a pamphlet that articulated bilateral relations in the cultural and scholarly, rather than the political and diplomatic, realms.¹²⁵ Even Haushofer, “the father of geopolitics” and avid advocate of a continental bloc stretching from Germany to Japan, did not expend much time or page space on this idea in his two publications on Japan in the period.¹²⁶

The outbreak of the world economic crisis and the consequent collapse of the political order in Germany again witnessed a spike in the volume of books on relations with Japan. In some ways, the publications of travelogues and of works on current events maintained an inverse relation. Whereas travelogues had their heyday in the late 1920s, books on politics thrived in the turbulent early 1920s and 1930s. More importantly, the breakdown of economic and political systems, the second in a decade or so, seemed again to have freed minds to countenance an unprecedented, more radical state of German-Japanese relations, much as in the period immediately after World War I. The early 1920s differed from the early 1930s in that, in the former period, Japan, however dissatisfied it might have been with Versailles, chose to remain within multilateral organizations and agreements. In the latter period, however, Japan, having been denounced by the international community for its invasion of Manchuria and bombardment of Shanghai, walked out of the League of Nations in early 1933. Along with the rise of the Hitler regime that was willing to depart radically

¹²⁵ Hans Ueberschaar, *Die Eigenart der japanischen Staatskultur: Eine Einführung in das Denken der Japaner* (Leipzig: Theodor Weicher, 1925); and, Friedrich Max Trautz, *Japan: was es uns war und was es uns ist: Ein Vortrag* (Hamburg: N.p., 1929). Both Ueberschaar and Trautz will be introduced in the next chapter.

¹²⁶ Karl Haushofer, *Japan und die Japaner: Eine Landeskunde* (Leipzig/Berlin: B. G. Teubner, 1923); and, Karl Haushofer, *Japans Reichserneuerung: Strukturwandlungen von der Meiji-Ära bis heute* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1930).

from established practices and Germany's own withdrawal from the League in October the same year, the time seemed ripe for some kind of bilateral arrangement.

The heightened interest in Japan in German books in the 1930s did not necessarily lead to more or better information about the country. On the contrary, confusion and uncertainty stood out as a recurring theme. Just as the publication trends of travelogues and commentaries on current affairs had an inverse relationship, the experience and knowledge of their authors also had a similar bond. Even if the travel writers did not know Japan deeply, they at least saw the country with their own eyes, walked on its soil, and met its people. In contrast, many commentators on current affairs related to Japan in the mid-1930s showed no ostensible education on or experience with the country, and relied solely on secondary sources. Even Haushofer, so prolific a proponent of a rapprochement with Japan, had spent only about one and a half years in the country from early 1909 to mid-1910, and it remains unclear whether he actually had functional command of the language.

Perhaps it amounted to no surprise then that some of the commentators seemed at a loss regarding what to do with Japan and its rise to prominence on the world stage. One book, for example, was titled *What Does Japan Want? (Was will Japan?)*.¹²⁷ Another author also titled his work with a question, *Japan: Danger or Model? (Japan: Gefahr oder Vorbild?)*.¹²⁸ A third author wondered, *Will the World Become Japanese? (Wird die Welt japanisch?)*.¹²⁹ Even when an author did not feel compelled to use a question for his title, he still called his

¹²⁷ Hugo Wilhelm von Doemming, *Was will Japan?* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1934).

¹²⁸ Johannes Stoye, *Japan: Gefahr oder Vorbild?* (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1936).

¹²⁹ Walther Funder, *Wird die Welt japanisch?* (Hamburg: Walther Funder, 1936).

book *The Japanese Sphinx* (*Die Japanische Sphinx*) to highlight the stereotypical “Asian inscrutability” of the Japanese people.¹³⁰

The uncertainty surrounding Japan manifested itself more broadly in the books—and yet again—as a country with different personalities. A few publications attempted to underscore the threat that Japan posed. One particular author seemed to have been motivated by a fear of the unknown. He was convinced that the end of the world, as depicted in the Book of Revelation, was nigh and Japan would be the agent. So motivated was he that he penned a trilogy titled “Christ and Antichrist on the Battlefield” („Der Christus und der Antichristus auf der Walstatt”).¹³¹ He quoted a few times the warning of Kaiser Wilhelm II of the “Yellow Peril” presented by Japan, “Nations of Europe, protect your holiest things” („Völker Europas, wahrt eure heiligsten Güter”). Less irrational and hyperventilating, the other source of anxiety stemmed from commercial grounds, namely that Japan would come to dominate the world market through its aggressive export-oriented policy. The previously mentioned *Will the World Become Japanese?* expressed concern that Japan would have a monopoly over soy beans. Along this vein, an author penned a two-tome series to detail and dissect Japanese commercial expansion and its damaging ramifications for the white races.¹³²

In some ways, these arguments only reiterated old fear-mongering about Japan, but times had changed in the mid-1930s. Repetitions of the ex-Kaiser’s warnings about Japan

¹³⁰ Johannes F. E. Meier, *Die Japanische Sphinx: Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis des Landes und seiner Bewohner* (Frankfurt am Main: Karl Poths, 1936).

¹³¹ Respectively, Fritz Bodinus, *Japans Schatten über Deutschland* (Bielefeld: Hermann Mattenklodt, 1933); Fritz Bodinus, *Morgendämmerung? Das Gesicht Japans im Lichte der Offenbarung des Johannes und des Geheimdokument des Grafen Tanaka* (Bielefeld: Hermann Mattenklodt, 1934); and, Fritz Bodinus, *Der Vormarsch Japans: Die kommenden Ereignisse im Lichte der Offenbarung* (Contance: Huß Verlag W. Müsken, 1934).

¹³² Ernst Schultze, *Die weisse und die gelbe Gefahr: Japans gewaltsame Erschliessung und wirtschaftliche Entwicklung*, Japan als Weltindustriemacht 1 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935); and, Ernst Schultze, *Japan als Exportindustriestaat*, Japan als Weltindustriemacht 2 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935).

would have carried little weight in Nazi Germany. The same applied for warnings based on Christian holy books or interpretations thereof under a government scarcely hiding its contempt for Christianity. Similarly, arguments about Japanese commercial and colonial expansion would not have worried the new masters of Germany as they might have previous governments. Nazi Germany was more focused on autarky and independence from the world market, and it saw its own future in conquering living space in Eastern Europe, which was little affected by Japanese actions one way or another. One should also remember that the highly ideological Third Reich was fully willing and capable of acting against its rational interest in pursuit of dogmatic consistency—one only needs to consider the self-destructive persecution of the Jews that the regime pursued with ruthless doggedness.

In contrast to the small group of publications denouncing Japan, a much bigger cluster of works emerged to defend, praise, or advocate for Japan. Interestingly enough, one author, a corvette captain, also wrote three equally emotional works in support of Japan: *The Raid against Japan! When Will the Nations Finally Defend Themselves? (Der Raubzug gegen Japan! Wann endlich wehren sich die Völker?)* and *The Truth about Shanghai: The Attack of the World Leadership against the Last Free Nation, Japan (Die Wahrheit über Shanghai: Der Angriff der Weltleitung gegen das letzte freie Volk Japan)* in 1932, and in 1934, *The Struggle between Juda and Japan: Japan as Champion of the Free National Economy (Der Kampf zwischen Juda und Japan: Japan als Vorkämpfer freier Volkswirtschaft)*.¹³³ In these works he conjured up the vision that there existed a global conspiracy orchestrated by the Jews to use the League of Nations (“world leadership”) to

¹³³ Alfred Stoss, *Der Raubzug gegen Japan! Wann endlich wehren sich die Völker?* (Munich: Ludendorffs Volkswarte-Verlag, 1932); Alfred Stoss, *Die Wahrheit über Shanghai: Der Angriff der Weltleitung gegen das letzte freie Volk Japan* (Hamburg: Selbstverl., 1932); and, Alfred Stoss, *Der Kampf zwischen Juda und Japan: Japan als Vorkämpfer freier Volkswirtschaft* (Munich: Ludendorffs Verlag, 1934).

subjugate the racially pure Japanese. Needless to say, the books featured a barrage of hyperbole and incendiary rhetoric, but what really stood out was an articulation of potential common grounds between Germany and Japan as alleged victims of Jewish machinations. It mattered little that the Japanese government and public did not embrace anti-Semitism, but those in Germany who viewed the world with a racial lens, like this author, as well as Hitler, just *knew* that Jewry would target both the Germans and the Japanese as its enemies.

Indeed, in the mid-1930s there emerged more books discussing Germany and Japan with the same breadth, an intensification of the phenomenon last seen in the early 1920s. As early as 1933, a book in a series with rightwing leanings aiming for a young readership declared that “Japan is like Germany also a ‘people without space.’”¹³⁴ Haushofer went even farther in declaring that the inner pressure to expand was stronger in the Japanese empire than Germany or Italy.¹³⁵ The book that asked “What does Japan want?” in its title answered the question by proclaiming that Japan belonged to the same group of nations, including Italy and Germany, which needed and wanted to consolidate themselves internally in the realms of politics, religion, and race by forming a “national block of steel.”¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Robert Mohl, *Der Japaner*, Deutsche Jugendbücherei 482 (Berlin/Leipzig: Hermann Hillger, 1933), 31.

¹³⁵ „Trotz Deutschland und Italien—denen es wahrlich an innerer Dynamik nicht fehlt—ist heute das japanische Reich der Erdenraum, der unter dem gefährlichsten Hochdruck steht; mit mehr als neunzig Millionen auf viel zu engem Raum; im Altkulturgebiet, wenn man das reine hochwertige Kulturland allein rechnet, mit dem furchtbaren Gedränge einer Volksdichte von fast tausend Menschen auf dem Quadratkilometer des Stammbodens,“ in Karl Haushofer, *Mutsuhito, Kaiser von Japan*, Colemans kleine Biographien 36 (Lübeck: Charles Coleman, 1933), 50. Haushofer advanced a similar argument of a crowded Japan in another work in the same year, see Karl Haushofer, *Japans Werdegang als Wehrmacht und Empire* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1933).

¹³⁶ „Wenige Nationen haben bis heute ihre politische, religiöse und rassenmäßige Einheit aufrechterhalten oder wieder zu ihr zurückgefunden... Italien und Deutschland sind erst heute dabei, ihre mannigfachen inneren Gegensätze zu einem stählernen Volksblock zusammenzuschweißen, und vielleicht ist die Zeit nicht allzufern, wo sich das gesamte Europa auf seine ursprüngliche Zusammengehörigkeit besinnt. Die Zeiten der imperialistischen Eroberungen sind vorbei, und die Weltkräfte gruppieren sich neu, um durch innere Konsolidierung späteren Anforderungen der Weltgeschichte gewachsen zu sein, die nur solche Völker überdauern werden, welche politisch, religiös und rassenmäßig in sich gefestigt sind. Zu diesen Ländern gehört Japan, und dies ist der Grund, weshalb es nur einer verhältnismäßig kurzen Zeit bedurfte, um sich mit den

Beginning in 1935, some books began to suggest the concrete possibility for collaboration between Germany and Japan in order to guard against a specific threat perceived to jeopardize both countries. One observer pointed out that “Germany stood on the side of Japan against the assembled nations in Geneva [at the League of Nations], and Germany was like Japan the natural opponent of the Soviet Union.”¹³⁷ Meanwhile, a colleague of Haushofer also linked the fates of Germany and Japan through the Soviet Union. The author, a geographer, speculated that Germany would one way or another be tied to events in the Far East. If the Soviet Union suffered a defeat in the east, then it would inevitably pivot its attention to the west. Or if it gained a victory in the east, then it would certainly strengthen its pressure in the west as well.¹³⁸ Lastly, in April 1936 there appeared *Japan and Germany, the Two Enigmas of the World* (*Japan und Deutschland, die beiden*

technischen Spielregeln eines fortschrittlichen Zeitalters, in dessen Strudel es ohne Rücksicht und ohne Warnung gezogen wurde, vertraut zu machen... Nicht konjunkturmäßige Kolonialeroberungen, sondern die Schaffung einer uneinnehmbaren Verteidigungsstellung zur vernichtenden Abwehr wesensfremder Gewalten... D a s w i l l J a p a n !“ in Doemming, 308–9.

¹³⁷ „Es kann heute keinem Zweifel mehr unterliegen, daß Tokyo, in der folgerichtigen Ausnutzung bestehender Spannungen, zeitweilig auch eine Annäherung an Berlin versucht hat. Man wußte, daß hier der stärkste Widerstand gegenüber Moskau bestand, und man dachte, von der im Jahre 1934 unzweifelhaft bestehenden Isolierung Deutschlands Gebrauch machen zu können. Deutschland stand gleich Japan abseits der in Genf versammelten Nationen, Deutschland war gleich Japan der natürliche Gegner der Sowjetunion. Reibungsflächen zwischen Tokyo und Berlin bestanden weder in politischer noch in wirtschaftlicher Beziehung,“ in Ernst Otto Hauser, *Gefährlicher Osten: Japan und die Mächte* (Zürich/Leipzig: Max Niehans, 1935), 110–1. Hauser was a long time correspondent in East Asia and author of a few books on the topic.

¹³⁸ „Ob und wann es zu einer entscheidenden Auseinandersetzung zwischen den Kolonialmächten des Westens, Japan und der Sowjetunion kommen wird, ist schwierig zu sagen. Die gewaltigen inneren Reibungen, die von der Mandschurei über die Mongolei und China bis Turkestan und Tibet heute vorhanden sind und sich noch verstärken, lassen keine friedliche Regelung der großen Machtfragen erwarten. Deutschland hat machtpolitisch hier keine Einsatzmöglichkeit und auch keine Ursache dazu, wohl aber kann es und muß es in der heute so allgemeinen wirtschaftlichen und politischen Verflechtung der Völker untereinander durch die Vorgänge in Ostasien mittelbar auf das stärkste berührt werden. Schon allein durch die verhältnismäßige Nachbarschaft der Sowjetunion, die zu den Hauptbeteiligten der Fernostfragen gehört, kann Deutschland durch ostasiatische Ereignisse empfindlich berührt werden. Schon einmal hat sich Rußland nach einer Niederlage im Osten nach Westen gewandt und ein Sieg im Osten müßte den Druck nach Westen erst recht verstärken,“ in Gustav Fochler-Hauke, *Der Ferne Osten: Macht- und Wirtschaftskampf in Ostasien* (Leipzig/Berlin: B. G. Teubner, 1936), 69. Fochler-Hauke was a Sudeten German. He traveled for some time in Asia, and studied under Haushofer. He had moved in Nazi circles since the early 1930s, finally becoming a member of the party in 1938 when the Sudetenland was annexed by Germany.

Welträtzel). It argued that the two countries had out of their inner conviction and without prior arrangement or formal pacts come together to fight against Bolshevism and against the hegemony of international capital and Marxism. Not only did the two governments make known their intention to combat Bolshevism, but the two peoples had also closed ranks for the struggle like no nation run by squabbling political parties could. Most remarkably, the publication itself resulted from literal German-Japanese collaboration, as it was co-authored by a German and a Japanese.¹³⁹ That is, several months before the two regimes concluded the Anti-Comintern Pact, a bilateral union—printed and bound—against Bolshevism had already been concluded by proactive advocates from civil societies on both sides, so that the governments merely caught up with some of the opinion-makers.

Sense and Sensibility

Even if you are young and do not understand much of politics, you would still grasp that there exist great tensions here in the Far East. Another fact would be clear to you: how similar Japan's situation is to ours. We too are a nation with a long, glorious past and yet full of the fresh vigor of youth. Only three years separate Japan's national restoration and Bismarck's national foundation. Both peoples are animated by the same national zeal and the same selfless devotion to a purposeful national leadership. The same industriousness and energy drive both nations. Yet the two peoples also have to fight hard for their living space, and they stand together in the defense against the destructive power of Bolshevism. Would it have been surprising, if these two—as

¹³⁹ „In den verschiedenen Kapiteln dieses Werkes sind klare Antworten auf die im Vorwort erwähnten Rätselfragen gegeben: ‚Was will Deutschland und was will Japan?‘ Sie lassen sich dahin zusammenfassen, daß beide Nationen aus innerem Antrieb, ohne vorherige Verabredung und ohne formelle ‚Pakte‘ sich im Kampf gegen den Bolschewismus und gegen die Vorherrschaft des internationalen Kapitals und Marximus zusammengefunden haben... Nicht nur haben die Regierungen des neuen Deutschlands und Japans sie eindeutig verkündet, sondern auch die beiden Völker treten mit einer Geschlossenheit für sie ein, wie sie in keinem Lande mit wechselnden Parteiregierungen erreicht werden kann. Wie die kapitalistischen Mächte sich damit abfinden, daß ihre Länder fortgesetzt durch schwere innere, von den Bolschewisten geschürten Unruhen erschüttert werden, ist ihre Sache. Rätselhaft bleibt nur, wie sie glauben können, durch das Zusammengehen mit Moskau, dem Verkünder des gewaltsamen Umsturzes der bestehenden Ordnung in allen Weltteilen, die Befriedung der Welt fördern zu können,“ in Eduard von Pustau, and Okanouye-Kurota, *Japan und Deutschland, die beiden Welträtzel: Politische, wirtschaftliche und kulturelle Entwicklung* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Politik und Wirtschaft, 1936), 202. Pustau was a naval captain and pioneer of flight. “Okanouye-Kurota” most likely referred to the journalist Kuroda Reiji 黒田禮二, whose real name was Okanoe Morimichi 岡上守道.

one of the leading German statesmen put it—spiritually related peoples had early on begun to work together?¹⁴⁰

So wrote in 1937 an author who had lived in Japan in the 1920s. The establishment of formal bilateral ties facilitated the publication of some books but hindered others. Works that depended on a peaceful environment that allowed international traffic, such as missionaries' accounts and travelogues, virtually disappeared in the late 1930s. The production of dissertations continued apace, though as more young men and women were consumed by the war effort, there were fewer doctoral candidates left to write fewer dissertations. Only works with a political message could be said to have thrived, though of course the opinions expressed within showed little diversity and often only propaganda. The last hurrah, so to speak, could be heard in May 1941, when Paul Ostwald, who first wrote a book called *Germany and Japan* in 1920, published a second book with the identical title. He had every reason to feel vindicated—both Germany and Japan had concluded a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union, and the continental bloc seemed stronger than ever.¹⁴¹ Little would he have known, of course, that in a month or so Operation Barbarossa would turn his cherished dream into a living nightmare.

¹⁴⁰ „Auch wenn du jung bist und noch nicht viel von Politik verstehst, wirst du doch begreifen, daß hier im Fernen Osten große Spannungen vorhanden sind. Noch ein anderes wird dir klar geworden sein: wie ähnlich die Lage Japans der unseren ist. Auch wir sind ein Volk mit einer langen, ruhmreichen Vergangenheit und doch voll frischer Jugendkraft. Japans Reichserneuerung und Bismarcks Reichsgründung liegen nur drei Jahre auseinander, beide Völker beseelt die gleiche völkische Begeisterung, die gleiche opferwillige Hingabe an eine zielbewußte nationale Führung, beide Völker treibt derselbe Fleiß und die gleiche Tatkraft, beide haben aber auch schwer um ihren Lebensraum zu kämpfen und stehen in dem gleichen Abwehrkampf gegen die zerstörende Macht des Bolschewismus. Wäre es verwunderlich gewesen, wenn sich diese beiden nach dem Auspruch eines führenden deutschen Staatsmannes geistesverwandten Völker frühe zusammengefunden hätten?“ in Alfred Bohner, *Japan und die Welt* (Berlin/Leipzig: Julius Beltz, 1937), 130. Alfred Bohner was the brother to the accomplished Japanologist Hermann Bohner, who served as a missionary for the AEPM in China. Alfred and Hermann, and a third brother Gottlob, all taught German in Japan for some time.

¹⁴¹ „Die Brücke, die Deutschland und Japan über weite ihre Völker trennende Räume zueinander geschlagen haben, steht somit auf festen Grundpfeilern, die sich auch schwersten Stürmen gewachsen zeigen werden, und zwar das um so mehr, als auf beiden Seiten der bestimmte Wille besteht, bei dem Erreichten nicht stehen zu bleiben, sondern dafür Sorge zu tragen, die gegenseitigen Beziehungen in jeder Richtung immer noch weiter auszubauen, um so die Freundschaft noch intensiver zu gestalten,“ in Paul Ostwald, *Deutschland und Japan: Eine Freundschaft zweier Völker* (Berlin: Junker und Dünhaupt, 1941), 146.

Returning to the question posed at the end of the quotation above, the answer would have to be affirmative, namely that it would have been surprising if the two countries had begun collaborating sooner. In the interwar period, or even earlier, there never lacked talk of or proposals for some sort of collaboration between the two countries. Especially in the early 1920s, one saw a blossoming of such publications. Yet nothing came of such chatter until the mid-1930s, when developments within Germany readied the government to act on the idea of rapprochement. Most importantly, Germany experienced the rise of a radical regime with no interest in following the sensible paths in foreign policy laid down by its republican predecessor. Although some historians saw the German-Japanese alliance as a realization of the plan of a continental bloc promoted by Haushofer and other students of geopolitics, they often neglected that most such schemes needed the inclusion of Russia in the union. When Hitler recklessly attacked the Soviet Union in 1941, he effectively decimated all prospects of such a dream. In fact, one can argue convincingly that the Weimar Republic implemented the concept of the continental bloc far better than Nazi Germany ever did. It benefited far more and for far longer from its cooperation with the Soviet Union and China than the Third Reich ever managed to do from its dalliance with Japan.

In any case, none of the books discussed in this chapter, or even all of them together, created the German-Japanese alliance, but they fostered an intellectual environment in which cooperation became imaginable, since they portrayed Japan at least as a Westernizing Kulturstaat capable of self preservation and advancement, and with which Germany could deal on a more-or-less equal footing. The missionaries saw a Japan eligible for salvation. The doctoral candidates saw a Japan worth studying in depth. The travelers saw a renewing Japan shedding vestiges of its past. The opinion-makers saw Japan as a counterweight to the Anglo-

Americans and the Soviets. Even if some Germans feared or worried about Japanese strength, at least no one disputed that Japan had its strengths. Fundamentally, Nazi Germany respected Japanese strength more than Chinese weakness, and valued Japanese racial purity over Asiatic racial inferiority. Indeed, interwar German books on Japan stood out far more for the dearth of biological, racist remarks than for the occasional stereotypical clichés such as the “inscrutable” Asians.

To be sure, none of the authors maintained a completely positive view of Japan. Praises for Japan often came with a caveat, not to mention that many writers actively cultivated a Jekyll-and-Hyde diagnosis of the country. Yet the overarching image of Japan remained that of a competent, energetic, and industrious nation that *belonged* to the same group of powers in which Germany saw itself as a member. Japan was not meant to be the perfect partner for Germany, it just needed to be good enough. For Nazi Germany, Japan was always going to be a second, if not third choice of collaborator, behind Britain and even Italy. No doubt Hitler was never fully satisfied with Japan. Ever since childhood he kept a vision of Japan that blended dual or multiple sentiments—envy and admiration, underestimation and romanticization, and misinformed bigotry and misguided fascination. In some ways, the question “Japan: danger or model?” posed by one writer was also one that Hitler would have asked about Japan. Just as the writer concluded that Japan was danger *and* model, Germany under Hitler likewise reached the same conclusion, that Japan was at once threatening and instructive. If Westernizing Japan presented a danger, Germany might also find an opportunity in channeling the danger of Japan to threaten the liberal democratic West. One would have a hard time imagining rhetoric that would have convinced the violence-obsessed leadership of the Third Reich of an alliance with hapless China. Sure, economic rationality

and logic argued for cooperation with China, but the same type of reason also argued for not attacking the Soviet Union, for not declaring war on the United States, and not persecuting the Jews. Romance, not sensible trade figures, appealed to the sentimental Nazis. Japan for Germany never needed to be perfect, it only needed to be useful, and for certain moments, Japan was useful. Germany did not need to embrace Japan, it just needed to accept it as good enough, as portrayed in the books. The German-Japanese alliance, to the extent that it “functioned” at all, could do so because the two countries never got close enough to have a serious conflict of interest, so that in this one sense the long distance worked to the advantage of the bond. Fundamentally, before Germany and Japan could forge a link spanning thousands of kilometers in the real world, the rapprochement must first take place intellectually in the minds of some Germans, and, as we shall soon see, Japanese as well.

CHAPTER FOUR

JAPAN AS HOBBY: JAPAN IN VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

Ein Deutscher, ein Philosoph. Zwei Deutsche, ein Verein. Drei Deutsche, Krieg.

—Aphorism¹

Zweck der Gesellschaft:

Gemeinsame Erforschung der kulturellen, politischen und wirtschaftlichen Probleme Japans, Verbreitung von richtigen Vorstellungen über Japan in der deutschen Öffentlichkeit sowie Pflege der persönlichen Beziehungen zwischen Japanern und Deutschen.

—Statute §1 of the German-Japanese Society, 19 March 1930²

Zweck der Gesellschaft ist:

die Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und Japan zu pflegen, die Kenntnis von Japan in Deutschland zu fördern und in Deutschland sich aufhaltenden Japanern mit Rat und Hilfe zur Seite zu stehen.

—Statute §1 of the German-Japanese Society, 20 November 1933³

The Motorist

Eberhard Ponndorf had a big idea. The time was early 1938, not long after Italy had acceded to the Anti-Comintern Pact forged by Germany and Japan. A native of Weimar in the cultural

¹ “One German, a philosopher. Two Germans, an association. Three Germans, war.” There are multiple versions of the saying.

² “Purpose of the society: collective research on the cultural, political and economic problems of Japan, propagation of accurate presentations of Japan in the German public sphere as well as maintenance of personal relations between Japanese and Germans,” in statutes of the Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft (DJG), Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (hereafter PA), R104900 Po 26, Vereinwesen (DJG), 19 March 1930.

³ “Purpose of the society is: to cultivate the relations between Germany and Japan, to bolster the knowledge of Japan in Germany, and to provide advice and assistance to those Japanese staying in Germany,” in statutes of DJG, PA, R104900 Po 26, Vereinwesen (DJG), n. d. The document in the PA is undated, but it matches a dated one at the Federal Archives at Koblenz. See statutes of the DJG, Bundesarchiv Koblenz (hereafter BAK), R64IV/3, DJG, 20 November 1933. See also the finding aid for the DJG, Bundesarchiv, *Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft R64-IV 1930–1945*, ed. Klaus-Dieter Postupa (Koblenz, Bundesarchiv, 1979).

and geographical heartland of the country, he had been kicked upstairs not long ago to the fringe, backwater of East Prussia as the *Gruppenführer* (equivalent of a major general) of the region's unit in the National Socialist Motor Corps (Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrkorps, NSKK).⁴ Having joined the Nazi Party and the SA in 1931, he must have learned by 1938 that his path out of Königsberg and upward in the polycratic jungle of Nazi Germany required him to seize the initiative to work proactively toward the Führer. Thus, he wrote a letter to his boss in Munich to pitch his scheme—a motorcycle and automobile rally from Berlin to Tokyo via Rome.

Before he was dismissed outright as crazy, Ponndorf pleaded, the proposal had its potentials and merits. The SS had long been polishing its popular image through excelling at horsemanship, fencing and other feats, the NSKK should do the same: “but why should we not for once do something, something to show off to the public the NSKK’s courage and determination?”⁵ Ponndorf envisioned a nine-month long expedition, starting from Germany, traversing Switzerland, Italy, Tripolitania, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, India, Burma, Siam, and Indochina, finally finishing in Japan. The tour would not only

⁴ Ponndorf was born in 1897 in Weimar and participated marginally in rightwing politics in the 1920s. In late 1936 he became the Gruppenführer of NSKK-Motorgruppe Ostland. For more on him, see Joachim Lilla, ed., *Statisten in Uniform: Die Mitglieder des Reichstags 1933–1945* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2004), 475; and Erich Stockhorst, *Fünftausend Köpfe: Wer war was im Dritten Reich* (Velbert und Kettwig: blick + bild Verlag, 1967), 328. To put it simply, the NSKK was composed of Nazis who happened to be car enthusiasts and vice versa. During World War II it assumed a critical military importance because its members commanded valuable mechanical and automotive knowledge, at a time when most Germans could not even drive, let alone maintain, a car. For more on the NSKK, see Dorothee Hochstetter, *Motorisierung und “Volksgemeinschaft”: Das Nationalsozialistische Kraftfahrkorps (NSKK), 1931–1945* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 2005).

⁵ „Beifolgend schicke ich Ihnen einen Entwurf über eine NSKK-Expedition Berlin – Rom – Tokio. Halten Sie mich bitte nicht gleich von vornherein für verrückt, sondern es ist mir hiermit wirklich ernst. Die SS versteht es in wirklich beneidenswerter Weise durch Reitsport, Fechtsport und alles mögliche andere sich ihr Ansehen in der Öffentlichkeit einzigartig zu festigen. Auch das NSKK hat es verstanden, sich das Ansehen in der Öffentlichkeit durch wirkliche Leistungen zu erwerben und zu erhalten. Aber warum sollen wir nicht einmal was machen, womit wir in der Öffentlichkeit den im NSKK vorhandenen Schneid und Einsatzwillen zeigen können,“ in letter from Ponndorf to *Obergruppenführer* Erwin Kraus, Bundesarchiv Berlin (hereafter BA), NS24/255, NSKK, 11 Februar 1938.

achieve an international propaganda coup for Germany and its automobile industry, but even more crucially also cement once and forever the predominance of the NSKK in all things automotive versus other institutions within the Third Reich. In addition, he believed that the NSKK would not be burdened financially since carmakers like BMW would flock to underwrite the undertaking once Hitler and Göring showed their excitement. “I myself want to assume leadership of the expedition,” he added hopefully.⁶

Ponndorf was rejected as deranged, apparently. He did not seem to have received a response to the letter, the expedition never took off, he stayed put in East Prussia, and by the end of the year he even appeared not to belong to the NSKK altogether.⁷ Not surprisingly the episode had no appreciable effect on German-Japanese relations, but as we shall see, it does illuminate the influence Japan, or the idea of Japan, could exercise in associational life in interwar Germany, as well as Nazism’s impact on interpersonal, social, and political dynamics.

Japan might not have done much for Ponndorf’s fortune or the NSKK, but it made the careers of others and provided the *raison d’être* for a few other organizations. Indeed, interest clubs sat atop the step pyramid of knowledge acquisition for Germans striving to familiarize themselves with Japan. After consulting the newspapers, films, and books examined in the

⁶ „Die Leitung der Expedition will ich selber übernehmen... Kosten werden dem NSKK aus dieser Expedition nicht entstehen, da das Geld hierfür von anderer Seite aufgebracht werden kann, wenn es gelingt, den Korpsführer dafür zu interessieren, denn sobald der Korpsführer eine derartige Fahrt befürwortet, wird es möglich sein, den Führer und Göring für diese Expedition zu interessieren und in diesem Moment wird auch die die Fahrt hauptsächlich interessierende Industrie die nötigen Geldmittel aufbringen,“ in *ibid.* Earlier in the letter he suggested using vehicles by BMW, Stoewer and Tempo for the expedition.

⁷ Both Lilla and Stockhorst report that Ponndorf was out of the NSKK by 31 December 1938, though SA documents as of 1941 still indicated that Ponndorf was an NSKK-Gruppenführer. See BA, SA108B, Sturmabteilung. Perhaps he managed to rejoin the NSKK and regain his rank in the meantime, though it seems likelier that the SA papers merely contained outdated information. Since it cannot be determined with absolute certainty that he left the NSKK, it is impossible to say if his departure had anything to do with his wild proposition. In any case, he remained in Königsberg as a businessman and the deputy for East Prussia at the Reichstag until the end of World War II. He died in 1980 in Hamburg. Many thanks to Professor Dr. Michael Grüttner for pursuing the leads regarding Ponndorf’s career.

previous chapters, they had literally very few places left to turn to for more information. Almost all lacked the means to travel to East Asia, and universities, normally the fount and disseminator of the nation's collective knowledge, for once furnished only limited help. As of 1935, just a year before the onset of the alliance, Germany's twenty-three universities together counted only three tenured professorships of Japanology.⁸ Moreover, in stark contrast to the phenomenon of German learning in Japan to be discussed in Chapter Eight, even finding a venue to study Japanese language presented a challenge in and of itself, since only four universities—Berlin, Hamburg, Bonn, and Leipzig—were staffed with a department that offered regular classes on Japanese.⁹ In any case, only a tiny sliver of the population enjoyed the privilege of access to higher education.¹⁰ Also unlike the effort by some Japanese to teach themselves German, attempts at self-instruction in the exotic Japanese tongue would have struck Germans as the height of lunacy and futility. Moreover, the main textbook still in use during the 1920s was written more than thirty years earlier in 1890.¹¹

⁸ Appendix to letter from Wilhelm Burmeister to Paul Behncke, BAK, R64IV/38, DJG, 7 June 1935. Burmeister was head of the German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, DAAD), and Behncke president of the German-Japanese Society who will be introduced in due time. For more on Burmeister, see Michael Grüttner, *Biographisches Lexikon zur nationalsozialistischen Wissenschaftspolitik* (Heidelberg: Synchron, 2004), 33. Hamburg had the first and only *ordentlicher Professor* of Japanology in Germany, while Berlin and Leipzig each had an *ausserordentlicher Professor*. In addition, there was also one lecturer in Jena, one (a Japanese) in Frankfurt, and in Bonn one lecturer and an honorary professor from Japan. For comparison, there were twenty professors of Indology, seven of Sinology, fifteen of Semitology, four of Islamic studies, eight of Egyptology, one of Assyriology, sixteen of Oriental studies, two of East Asian studies (both with a focus on China), and one of Near Eastern studies.

⁹ Appendix to letter from Behncke to Minister of Education and Culture Bernhard Rust, BAK, R64IV/38, DJG, 12 June 1935. For more on Rust, see Grüttner, *Lexikon*, 143. The lecturers of Japanology in Jena and Frankfurt also taught some language courses.

¹⁰ In 1931, the year in the interwar period with the highest number of enrollments in the universities, there were 103,912 university students out of Germany's population of roughly 65 million, in Michael Grüttner, *Studenten im Dritten Reich* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1995), 487.

¹¹ See Rudolf Lange, *Lehrbuch der japanischen Umgangssprache I: Formenlehre und die wichtigsten Regeln der Syntax*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1922).

Under these circumstances, interest clubs had the opportunity and latitude to help create and project knowledge of Japan in Germany and to facilitate bilateral rapprochement. Voluntary associations (Verein) had long performed key functions in public and personal lives in modern Germany,¹² to the point of becoming the stuff of poems and adages.¹³ In an uncanny approximation of the aphorism introducing the chapter, interwar German-Japanese relations began with a few visionaries philosophizing about Japan, then progressed to associations promoting collaboration, and ended with the two nations joining forces in a world war. Accordingly this chapter analyzes the nature and extent of the influence which civic organizations in interbellum Germany exercised in molding public opinion and steering international relations. What kind of associations had Japan as their area of focus? Who founded and maintained these groups, and who joined and participated out of interest? What activities did these organizations undertake to enhance their status and to promote their agenda? Finally, how did the rise of National Socialism affect these groups, their contribution to German-Japanese convergence, and the overall creation of knowledge about Japan in Germany? The chapter presents the case that since the Weimar Republic's many crises kept the state from pursuing an energetic diplomacy with Japan, German civil society, with substantial initiative and support from some Japanese, had to step into the vacuum to maintain relations through the available and familiar medium of voluntary associations. In the 1920s and early 1930s the individuals guiding the groups mostly concerned themselves with cultural and scholarly ties with Japan, though a few activists agitated for a more political

¹² Historians have pointed out citizens' right to associate freely as a proof and protector of the bourgeoisie's prerogatives versus those of the state. See David Blackbourn, and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 194–205; and Klaus Nathaus, *Organisierte Geselligkeit: Deutsche und britische Vereine im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009).

¹³ For example, Theodor Fontane's poem *Lebenswege* mentions him joining an association.

dimension. The ascendancy of Nazism triggered structural and ideological changes within Japanese studies in Germany that on the one hand bestowed unprecedented authority on the most politically active organization but on the other installed rank amateurs to its leadership positions, politicized knowledge about Japan, and prioritized ideology over truth.

The Chemist

Most historical accounts trace the origins of German-Japanese associations to the *Wa Doku Kai* 和獨會 (Japanese-German Society),¹⁴ established in 1888 in Berlin by the philosopher Inoue Tetsujirō 井上哲次郎 and reputedly the first bi-national organization in Germany in which members of both countries enjoyed equal standing.¹⁵ At its height it counted about one-hundred-fifty members, mostly Japanese students in Berlin and Germans knowledgeable about or otherwise experienced with Japan. The group published the journal *Ost-Asien (East Asia)* and also hosted lectures and gatherings in an attempt to raise the profile of Japan in the German public at large.¹⁶ Despite its outreach efforts, however, the organization exercised negligible influence outside its immediate circles and dissolved under

¹⁴ There is some discrepancy among German and Japanese primary and secondary sources in the translation of names of bilateral associations. Regardless of the groups' official titles, German works tend to call them German-Japanese, while Japanese ones usually label them Japanese-German. For example, the Japanese-German Cultural Society is rendered in German as *Deutsch-Japanisches Kulturinstitut* and in Japanese as *Nichidoku Bunka Kyōkai* 日獨文化協會. In this dissertation I translate the titles into English based on the original word order and perhaps the location of the organization in question. Therefore, the *Wa Doku Kai* is called Japanese-German Society because *Wa* refers to Japan and *Doku* Germany.

¹⁵ Günther Haasch, ed., *Die Deutsch-Japanischen Gesellschaften von 1888 bis 1996* 『独日協会の昔と今』 (Berlin: Wissenschaftsverlag Volker Spiess, 1996), xxiii. Haasch was the president of the German-Japanese Society in Berlin during the 1990s. This work is not an official history, but it helps to keep in mind the perspective and position of the editor and some of the contributors in the organization.

¹⁶ The journal was edited for years by the adventurer Tamai Kisaku 玉井喜作. For more, see footnote 45 in Chapter Six.

obscure circumstances around 1912—that is, even before the outbreak of the Great War and the subsequent hostilities between Germany and Japan.¹⁷

Although World War I sowed no profound or lasting animosity among Germans toward Japan, it did reduce Germany to such chaos that, as far as the infant republic was concerned, far more urgent priorities eclipsed maintaining ties with distant Japan beyond negotiating a peace treaty and re-establishing diplomatic relations in 1920. The central government, with scarce resources to spare in foreign affairs after its campaign to redress the grievances stemming from Versailles, could do little to support the ambassador to Japan, Wilhelm Solf. As a matter of fact, it took until mid-1927 for Berlin and Tokyo to conclude a new treaty of commerce and navigation to replace the one nullified by war, even though it would have behooved Germany to have done so sooner due to its trade surplus with Japan.¹⁸ Consequently, in this near-absence of official attention, private individuals inherited the role of caretakers of foreign relations, and they went about jumpstarting bilateral exchanges through associational activities.

In fact, initiative and labor by elements within German civil society to revive and encourage interactions with Japan had borne fruit even before the renewed commerce treaty. In 1925, after a well-received tour to Japan in the previous year, the Nobel laureate in chemistry Fritz Haber began publicly advocating stronger scholarly and cultural bonds with

¹⁷ For more on the Wa Doku Kai, see Haasch, ed., 11–66; Günther Haasch, “Die Wa-Doku-Kai (1888–1912) als Vorläuferin der Deutsch-Japanischen Gesellschaft Berlin ベルリン独日協会の前身としての和独会,” in *Berlin-Tôkyô im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* 『東京・ベルリン 一九世紀～二〇世紀における両都市の関係』, eds. Wolfgang Brenn et al. (Berlin: Japanisch-Deutsches-Zentrum ベルリン日独センター, 1997), 79–82; and Bert Becker, *Japan an der Spree: Deutsch-Japanische Beziehungen im Spiegel Berlins und Brandenburgs* 『日本とベルリン—ブランデンブルグ』 (Berlin: Ausländerbeauftragte des Senats, 1996), 22. The current German-Japanese Society in Berlin also sees itself as a descendant of the Wa Doku Kai. See its website, <http://www.djg-berlin.de/>.

¹⁸ The treaty was signed on 20 July 1927. Curiously, Berlin wanted the treaty to be drafted in both German and Japanese, but Tokyo preferred it to be in French. See BA, R5/6662, Reichsverkehrsministerium, 1924–7; and BA, R431/1099, Reichskanzlei (Neue Reichskanzlei), 1927.

the country, and laying the groundwork for a new organization to realize the goal.¹⁹ He gathered likeminded figures, especially notable Germans in Japanese studies and expatriate Japanese scholars, for their endorsement, input and cooperation. His energetic leadership and his colleagues' preparation finally culminated in the opening of the Japan Institute (Japaninstitut) in Berlin as a registered association (eingetragener Verein, e. V.) in 1926.²⁰

Haber's reputation, as well as those of the heavyweights in Japanese studies he mobilized for his cause, endowed much prestige to the institute and made it the premier German-Japanese association into the early 1930s.²¹ Its honorary members included the aristocratic statesman Gotō Shinpei 後藤新平, the ex-ambassador to Germany Honda Kumatarō 本多熊太郎, and Solf. The officers, headed by Haber as chairman, counted representatives highly placed in academia and bureaucracy.²² Even more impressively, the

¹⁹ For example, Haber delivered an oration on 30 April 1925 at a club in Berlin to highlight the necessity of cooperation between the two countries. The script of his speech was translated into Japanese and reproduced as a pamphlet in Japan later in the year. See footnote 37 in Chapter Six, and for more on Haber's trip to Japan, see Chapter Five.

²⁰ For more on the Japan Institute, see Eberhard Friese, *Japaninstitut Berlin und Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft Berlin: Quellenlage und ausgewählte Aspekte ihrer Politik 1926–1945* (Berlin: East Asian Institute, Free University of Berlin, 1980); Eberhard Friese, “Wir brauchen den Austausch geistiger Güter!” 「我々には精神文化の交流が必要だ」, in *Berlin–Tōkyō im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, 233–244; and Haasch, ed., 73–77. The Japan Institute was meant to be paired with a Germany Institute that became the Japanese-German Cultural Society, which opened in Tokyo in mid-1927. See Chapter Six for more. For ambassador Solf's impression of the opening ceremony of the society, see his report to the Foreign Ministry, PA, R85969 Po.28 Jap, Deutsch-Jap Institut, 19 July 1927.

²¹ Haber was born in Breslau in 1868 to a Jewish family but converted to Christianity in his 20s. His main scientific contribution was the Haber process that enabled the extraction of atmospheric nitrogen and thus the production of ammonia for fertilizer or explosives without any need for natural nitrate deposits. For this invention he was awarded the Nobel Prize in chemistry in 1918. A staunch German patriot, he was also notorious for his personal supervision of Germany's use of poison gas during World War I. He led the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physical Chemistry and Electrochemistry until his retirement in 1933 when he could not prevent the sacking of his Jewish colleagues, though he himself was not targeted by the regime. He died in 1934 in Switzerland while on his way to Palestine. For more, see Dietrich Stoltzenberg, *Fritz Haber: Chemiker, Nobelpreisträger, Deutscher, Jude* (Weinheim: VCH, 1994).

²² The deputy chairmen were Dr. M. Donnevert of the Interior Ministry and Professor Dr. W. Richter of the Prussian Ministry of Education. The treasurer was Professor Dr. V. Bruns of international law at Berlin. Other members included Dr. Oskar Trautmann of the Foreign Ministry (known chiefly for his last-ditch efforts to

roster of the board of trustees read like a who's who of Japanese studies in the country. It featured Karl Florenz, the first and at the time only professor of Japanology in Germany; Otto Kummel, director of East Asian art at the Berlin State Museum; Ludwig Riess, an authority on Japanese history and the last head of the Wa Doku Kai; Karl Haushofer, a proponent of geopolitics and rapprochement with Japan; and Clemens Scharschmidt, the lecturer of Japanese language at the University of Berlin. Simply put, almost everyone who was anyone in the field in Germany had something to do with the Japan Institute—a far cry from the loosely organized, open and informal Wa Doku Kai.

To be sure, it bears pointing out that all these men were employed by the state in one fashion or another. Since at the time Germany had no private universities, all academics and many researchers worked as civil servants by definition, with Haber as the director of a Kaiser Wilhelm Institute the most obvious example. Yet, in particular for Haber the scientist, their participation in the Japan Institute did not fall within their official capacities but should be considered “extracurricular” activities. What is more, although the Foreign Ministry and especially Solf welcomed the idea of the institute, German officialdom only played a passive role in its establishment and operation. The government issued no directives to the association and demanded no results; its involvement consisted only of providing office space for the institute and its library in the Berlin City Palace, as well as a subsidy after 1926. In the preparation stage, moreover, the seed money came almost entirely from donations by the pharmaceutical entrepreneur Hoshi Hajime 星一, who admired Haber so much that he invited the chemist to visit Japan in 1924. Interaction with Japan, then, to the extent that it attracted any interest in the German public at all, aroused no political passion; it posed no

mediate the Sino-Japanese War in 1938) and Professor F.W.K. Müller, director of the Berlin Ethnological Museum. See composition of the Japan Institute, PA, R85969 Po.28 Jap, Deutsch-Jap Institut, 1926.

divisive issues that provoked strong feelings among Germans. Instead, anyone vaguely familiar with the issue of German-Japanese relations would agree that encouraging the flow of goods and technology (in the form of patent licensing) to an eager and voracious Japan could only enrich a Germany exhausted by war and burdened by reparations.²³

Indeed, throughout the development of the Japan Institute from blueprint to reality, advancing Japanese studies in Germany and facilitating bilateral scholarly communication superseded foreign-policy considerations. In his speech inaugurating the institute Haber proclaimed his vision for the association to play an independent role for Germany in cultural and scientific exchanges similar to those of embassies in diplomacy or of chambers of commerce in international trade.²⁴ Similarly, Friedrich Max Trautz, a rising star in Japanology appointed as the German co-director of the institute,²⁵ had already in 1923 tried to convince the authorities that abstract knowledge of Japan could translate into concrete benefits and that scientific expertise remained the only card Germany could play after the ruinous war and hyperinflation.²⁶ If nothing else, even the organization's registered,

²³ For more on the transfer of German know-how to Japan, see Akira Kudō, *Japanese-German Business Relations: Cooperation and Rivalry in the Inter-war Period* (London: Routledge, 1998).

²⁴ Speech by Haber opening the Japan Institute, PA, R85969 Po.28 Jap, Deutsch-Jap Institut, 4 December 1926.

²⁵ Trautz was born in 1877 in Karlsruhe. In 1906 he entered the war academy and began his studies of Japanese. In 1909–1910 he spent about fifteen months in Japan and received in 1911 a *Diplom* from the Seminar für Ostasiatische Sprachen in Berlin. Since then he attended courses at the University of Berlin (interrupted by World War I, which saw him rise to the rank of major) and received his doctorate in Japanology in 1921. He worked in the East Asian section of the Ethnological Museum and in 1927 earned his *Habilitation* at Berlin, where he also became the professor of Japanology in 1933. In the 1930s Trautz spent several years on sabbatical in Japan, eventually taking over the leadership of the German Research Institute in Kyoto and residing in the country until at least the end of World War II. He died in 1952.

²⁶ „Die geringe Berücksichtigung Japans ist eine Lücke in der deutschen wissenschaftlichen Rüstung, der einzigen Rüstung, die Deutschland noch geblieben ist,“ in memorandum by Trautz to Foreign Ministry, PA, R85969 Po.28 Jap, Deutsch-Jap Institut, 1923. To illustrate his argument for cultivating Japanese studies in Germany he cited the case of the drawing of the new German-Polish boundary in a coal-producing region in Upper Silesia by a five-member multinational commission. The German and British delegates squared off with the Polish and French ones, so winning over the tie-breaking Japanese vote became all important. Yet both the Foreign Ministry and the University of Berlin were found wanting in their ability to translate certain documents

exhaustive title, Institute for the Promotion of Reciprocal Knowledge of the Intellectual Life and Public Institutions in Japan and Germany (Institut zur Förderung der wechselseitigen Kenntnis des geistigen Lebens und der öffentlichen Einrichtungen in Japan und Deutschland, e. V.), made no reference to any aspiration for meddling with official affairs.

On paper the institute commanded formidable human and material resources to accomplish its mission. Its officers held high posts in academia and society,²⁷ and its reading room boasted a sizable collection of journals and reference books in Japanese.²⁸ In reality, however, it also had to operate within inflexible constraints. For instance, the German populace as a whole was, or at least was perceived to be, far more concerned and sympathetic with China than Japan. In the 1930s, not only would Berliners encounter more resident Chinese than Japanese in more parts of the city,²⁹ if they so wished they could also venture to Chinatowns of sorts near the Jannowitz Bridge or on Kantstrasse.³⁰ In addition—and

into Japanese, so ultimately a “Japanese miner” employed by a German firm had to come to the rescue and completed the task just in time.

²⁷ At a typical meeting of the institute one could expect to see a mix of academics, bureaucrats and perhaps a military officer or two. See for example the list found in BAK, R57NEU/1043, Deutsches Ausland-Institut, 23. Japaninstitut, n. d.

²⁸ See the inventory of the institute’s library in PA, R85970 Po.28 Jap, Deutsch-Jap Institut, 24 December 1929. The holdings included *Chūō Kōron* 『中央公論』, *Kaizō* 『改造』, *Gaikō Jihō* 『外交時報』 and several other periodicals and common reference works.

²⁹ Take for example 1936, the year of the Anti-Comintern Pact. There were 665 Chinese nationals registered with the police to be living in Berlin versus 356 Japanese. See *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Berlin 1937* (Berlin: Statistisches Amt der Reichshauptstadt Berlin, 1938), 99. Most Chinese in Berlin lived in Charlottenburg, Lichtenberg and Schöneberg, plus a smattering in Mitte, Spandau, Wedding, Pankow, Köpenick, Neukölln, Kreuzberg and Steglitz. In contrast the Japanese congregated overwhelmingly in Schöneberg. There were, however, more Japanese than Chinese visitors to Berlin, though of course they stayed only for short periods of various lengths.

³⁰ See the reproduced newspaper article “Im Chinenviertel von Berlin. Chinesische Handwerker und Studenten. Anhaenger der nationalrevolutionaeren Partei,” in Gonda Yasunosuke 權田保之助, *Doitsu shinbun kenkyū* 『獨逸新聞・究』, Dokuwa taiyaku shōbin bunko 2 獨和對譯小品文庫 第二冊 Aus den deutschen Zeitungen Universal-Jugendserien Heft 2 (Tokyo: Yūhōdō Shoten 有朋堂書店, 1929), 153–67. Regrettably neither the exact date nor title of the paper was given. Perhaps not coincidentally, today the Chinese embassy sits at one end of the bridge. For more on the history of Chinese in Germany, see Dagmar Yu-Dembski,

dispiritingly so for those striving to popularize Japan in Germany through associational activities—more organizations concentrated on interpreting China than existed for Japan, even though China’s chaotic state would have rendered it a less-lucrative, more-difficult topic, and meant that no financial or political support from China could be expected.³¹ In the face of China’s popularity over Japan’s in the hearts and minds of Germans, Trautz wrote in 1928 to a colleague that the Japan Institute must take measures to counter the “Germans’ generally widespread preference for China and comparatively low regard for Japan.”³² In fact, in as early as 1922 he even tried to use this interest in China to leverage the Foreign Ministry to support an institute for Japanese studies by arguing rather circuitously that after all “Japan is the world’s oldest and most successful researcher of China and Sinologist.”³³ What is more, the very excellence and formality of the institute would likely have intimidated and thus excluded those only casually curious about Japan. One needs to look no further than its library sequestered on the fourth floor of the splendid City Palace. Since perhaps only about a dozen Germans, scattered across the country, had the training to read Japanese without great

Chinesen in Berlin (Berlin: berlin edition im be.bra verlag, 2007); and Erich Gütinger, *Die Geschichte der Chinesen in Deutschland: Ein Überblick über die ersten 100 Jahre ab 1822* (Münster: Waxmann, 2005).

³¹ In the interwar period there were the China-Studien-Gesellschaft, Verband für den Fernen Osten (renamed Deutsch-Chinesischer Verband in 1943), Verein zur Förderung der deutsch-mandschurischen Wirtschaftsbeziehungen, and China-Institut.

³² „Nur auf diese Weise können wir uns allmählich hier durchsetzen gegen 1) die allgemein verbreitete, im Gegensatz zu China geringere Vorliebe der Deutschen für Japan,“ in letter from Trautz to Wilhelm Gundert, PA, R85970 Po.28 Jap, Deutsch-Jap Institut, 3 October 1928. Gundert was the German director of the Japanese-German Cultural Society in Tokyo. He would succeed Florenz’s professorship in Hamburg in the 1930s and become *Rektor* of the university. For more, see Grüttner, *Lexikon*, 67.

³³ „Japan ist der älteste und erfolgreichste China-Forscher und Sinologe der Welt,“ in memorandum by Trautz to Foreign Ministry, PA, R85969 Po.28 Jap, Deutsch-Jap Institut, January 1922.

difficulty, most of the magazines and books probably sat gathering dust on the shelves in the institute in Berlin.³⁴ The institute was, alas, merely preaching to a nearly-empty choir.

To be fair, despite Trautz's rhetoric of broadening Germans' awareness of Japan, the institute was never designed to appeal to the man in the street, at least not as its top priority. Its social functions, though not very thoroughly documented in the early years, consisted not unpredictably of public lectures and exhibitions. While laypeople would have been charmed by a sampling of artwork by Japanese pupils, the same might not necessarily hold true for presentations on more obscure subjects such as the "Japanese Attitude toward European Music," "Medical and Ethical Matters from Japan," or "Zen-Buddhist Meditation."³⁵ The institute's management also seemed content to host talks on narrow themes before smaller audiences in its own facilities rather than to expend resources in a vain attempt to attract larger crowds.³⁶ Additionally, although German readers and moviegoers could hardly avoid coverage of the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in newspapers and newsreels in the 1930s, the institute maintained an uncharacteristic silence over the crisis. Not only did the institute understandably not want to anger its Japanese participants and patrons, but it probably also stayed away from the hot topic because it ignited some political furor among Germans. One

³⁴ Trautz made the statement about the paucity of Germans being able to read and write Japanese in Friedrich Max Trautz, "'Kulturbeziehungen' und 'Kulturaustausch' zwischen Deutschland und Japan," *Ostasiatische Rundschau* 9:2 (1928), 42–44; mentioned in Christian W. Spang, and Rolf-Harald Wippich, eds, *Japanese-German Relations, 1895–1945: War, Diplomacy and Public Opinion* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 10. Trautz's claim is likely exaggerated, since besides the academics known to command Japanese (Kümmel, Trautz, Lange, Scharschmidt, Florenz, and perhaps to an extent Müller and Riess), a few German businessmen and missionaries must also have mastered the language in order to perform their jobs. Still, his point of Japanese being a rarefied skill could not be far from the truth.

³⁵ "Einstellung der Japaner zur europäischen Musik" by Leonid Kreutzer, "Ärztliches und Ethisches aus Japan" by Fritz Härtel, and "Meditation nach dem Zen-Buddhismus" by Martin Steinke, in report of the meeting of the institute's trustees and members, PA, R85971 Po.28 Jap, Deutsch-Jap Institut, 23 June 1932.

³⁶ „Der Erfolg des letzten Vortrags von Herrn Steinke, der im Japaninstitut stattfand, hat bewiesen, dass kleinere Vorträge über ein bestimmtes Interessengebiet ökonomischer in den eigenen Räumlichkeiten abgehalten werden können," *ibid.*

only needs to bring to mind the controversy and passion the Manchurian crisis ignited in the German press (Chapter One) and silver screen (Chapter Two).

The Philosopher

The institute's contentment with its academic character, restricted membership, and particularly political irrelevance spurred the emergence of a splinter group around the personality of Kanokogi Kazunobu 鹿子木員信.³⁷ Kanokogi, a philosopher of religious and spiritual matters, had played a role in the conceptualization of the Japan Institute by nominating members for its board of trustees.³⁸ He suggested as well that a small, action-oriented subcommittee be formed within but separate from the more deliberative and cumbersome board. After the institute came into existence, he also served as the Japanese co-director for about two years until the end of his visiting professorship at Berlin in early 1929, though he seemed not to have participated in its activities with much regularity or great enthusiasm.³⁹

From the outset Kanokogi had a certain idea of what a bilateral association should aim for, and he would have found the institute disappointing, for he had visualized a more activist, ambitious entity. In the same letter to Haber in which he recommended members for

³⁷ Kanokogi was born in 1884 in Tokyo to a family of the Kumamoto Domain. He graduated from the naval staff college and rose to the rank of lieutenant before being discharged due to ill health. He studied philosophy at the Kyoto Imperial University and also in America and Germany, ultimately completing a dissertation in 1912 at Jena, where he also met his future wife Cornelia Zielinski (see Chapter Eight). Since 1926 he was a professor at the Kyushu Imperial University. In the 1930s his political views drifted increasingly toward nationalism and xenophobia. In 1945 he was arrested as a Class A war criminal and died in 1949.

³⁸ Letter from Kanokogi to Haber, PA, R85969 Po.28 Jap, Deutsch-Jap Institut, 27 April 1926. He nominated, among others, Florenz, Kümmel, Müller, Haushofer, Scharschmidt and Riess to the board.

³⁹ In an overview of the institute in 1932 Solf mentioned Kanokogi as the Japanese director as of 1926. Trautz in 1934 also labeled him as such, though in quotation marks and with much sarcasm. In any case, Kanokogi could not have been in office for long, since he left Germany in early 1929, and the Japanese co-director at the institute's opening ceremony in December 1926 was the Sinologist Uno Tetsuto 宇野哲人.

the board of trustees, the philosopher also articulated his sweeping ambition for the institute to concern itself not merely with “backward-looking Japan research. It should instead strive to be a living institution for bilateral spiritual exchanges in the realms of culture and civilization as a whole.”⁴⁰ Moreover, he evidently made a gadfly of himself to the institute by agitating for its leadership to steer it into more political waters. Trautz became so annoyed or alarmed that he ranked the frustration of the endeavors championed by Kanokogi to “pull the rug from under the scientific and cultural Japan Institute and to drag it toward the political and economic” as the second objective behind popularizing Japan in a Sinophilic Germany.⁴¹ Trautz fumed privately that Kanokogi seemed reluctant to work within the framework of the institute and was scheming to exploit it as a vehicle for his own aggrandizement. Still later, Trautz would complain to a local chapter of the Nazi Party in Japan that while he tried to lead the institute in the “German tradition and for German interests,” Kanokogi attempted to hijack it to serve the purpose of Japanese propaganda.⁴² Kanokogi’s behavior, even if not quite as egregious as described, infuriated Trautz, who always considered himself the *Ur-*

⁴⁰ „Da nun aber unser Institut sich die Aufgabe stellt, nicht nur ein Organ der rückblickenden Japan-Forschung, sondern weit mehr ein lebendiges Organ des wechselseitigen geistigen Verkehrs auf dem Gebiete der gesamten Kultur und Zivilisation zu sein, so ist es zweckmässig namhafte, einflussreiche Persönlichkeiten aus allen Kulturgebieten, insofern sie das Interesse für die Sache haben, heranzuziehen,“ *ibid.*

⁴¹ „Nur auf diese Weise können wir uns allmählich hier durchsetzen gegen... 2) die Bestrebungen, die darauf hinauslaufen, dem wissenschaftlichen und kulturellen Japaninstitut nach Möglichkeit das Wasser abzugraben und in die Kanäle politisch und wirtschaftlich gerichteter Streber zu leiten, die nur ihre eigenen Vorteile und ihre eigene Machtausdehnung mit Hilfe des Instituts zu erreichen suchen. Zu den politisch Gerichteten und nach Macht Strebenden gehört vor allen Dingen Herr Professor Kanokogi selbst, der sich durchaus nicht damit begnügen will, im Rahmen des Japaninstituts zu arbeiten,“ in letter from Trautz to Gundert, PA, R85970 Po.28 Jap, Deutsch-Jap Institut, 3 October 1928.

⁴² „Was den Professor K. Kanokogi betrifft, so hatten wir in Berlin zusammen am Japaninstitut zwei Jahre als sog. ‘Leiter’ nebeneinander zu wirken. Ich versuchte, das Institut in deutscher Tradition und im deutschen Interessen zu lenken, und er bemühte sich, es mehr seiner japanischen Propaganda dienstbar zu machen, als ich für recht hielt und halte. Alles weitere ist nur von historischem Interesse, zumal ich mit den anderen japanischen Leitern des Japaninstituts, die keine solchen Ansprüche erhoben, gut auskam,“ in confidential report by Trautz to the *Ortsgruppe* of the Nazi Party in Kobe-Osaka, PA, R85961 Po.25 Jap, Deutschtum in Japan, 7 June 1934.

father of the institute—reasonably so, for after all he had been lobbying the government to sponsor such a group since the early 1920s.⁴³

Small wonder, then, when in July 1928—not even two years after the Japan Institute opened—Kanokogi took to launching the German-Japanese Study Group (Deutsch-Japanische Arbeitsgemeinschaft, DJAG). As a matter of fact, already in 1926 he had proposed a distinct “society of friends of Japan research” for *promoting* Japanese studies, while the institute itself would focus on *supporting* Japanology.⁴⁴ In other words, the society would function as a public relations arm for the institute and perhaps Japan. His idea met either rejection or silence, which, together with his apparent dissatisfaction with the *modus operandi* of the institute, prompted him to strike out on his own.

The DJAG was tailored to Kanokogi’s liking and reflected his own ideal of a bilateral association.⁴⁵ Whereas the institute specifically ruled itself out of any political or economic entanglements, the DJAG had as its expressed mission “the collective investigation of the cultural, political and economic problems of Japan, and the propagation of accurate presentations of Japan to the German public.”⁴⁶ The spiritual philosopher’s fingerprints on the DJAG also surfaced in the group’s stated interests in exploring Japan’s “national psyche,” which diverged from the institute’s generally more scientific orientation. Also, unlike the

⁴³ Notably, all his petitions and arguments came to naught until Haber and Hoshi supplied respectively the reputation and the money for the project.

⁴⁴ „Da wir uns als Aufgaben des Instituts nicht allein die Förderung der japanologischen Forschung, sondern unter anderem die Verbreitung der Kenntnis derselben stellten, muß sich das Institut ein Mittel schaffen, das ihm die Durchführung dieser Aufgaben ermöglicht und erleichtert. Und dieses Mittel sehe ich in der Gestalt einer ‚Gesellschaft der Freunde der Japanforschung,‘“ in letter from Kanokogi to Haber, PA, R85969 Po.28 Jap, Deutsch-Jap Institut, 27 April 1926.

⁴⁵ For more on the DJAG, see Haasch, ed., 78–94.

⁴⁶ „...gemeinsame Erforschung der kulturellen, politischen und ökonomischen Probleme Japans und Verbreitung von richtigen Vorstellungen über Japan in der deutschen Öffentlichkeit,“ in statutes §1 and §2 of DJAG quoted in Haasch, ed., 80.

institute's all-star constitution of its leadership and management, the DJAG had to make do with figures less well known and established in Japanese studies, co-chaired by Kanokogi and the artist Fritz Rumpf.⁴⁷ In addition, as part of the strategy to put a positive spin on Japan, the DJAG published a journal titled *Yamato*, a channel of communication the institute pointedly abjured. Rather tellingly, the DJAG even set up shop in a different part of the city, away from the Japan Institute cloistered in the City Palace.

Nevertheless, one would err in seeing the institute and the study group as adversaries; rather they operated in distinct but related and increasingly overlapping areas. Foremost, less than a year after summoning the DJAG to life, Kanokogi departed Germany for Japan, followed not long afterward by Trautz, thereby removing from the organizations their simmering interpersonal enmity.⁴⁸ In addition, at the same time Solf retired from his wildly successful tenure as ambassador to Japan and took over the institute at Haber's request. He also became the honorary German co-chairman of the DJAG, thus bridging the leaderships of both organizations. In early 1930 the DJAG resolved to formalize itself as a registered association called German-Japanese Society (Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft e. V., DJG), and besides Solf, board members of the institute like Kümmel and Scharschmidt also assumed supervisory roles in the DJG. Likewise, while the two entities maintained a

⁴⁷ There was eventually some overlap in membership between the institute and the DJAG, but in the early years of the DJAG it was led by several individuals with no ties to the institute. For more on Rumpf, see Chapter Three.

⁴⁸ Even in Japan Kanokogi would continue to agonize and antagonize Trautz, and eventually make himself a nuisance to the Nazi organization there. In 1934, when Trautz was in Kyoto on sabbatical, both became embroiled as adversaries in a minor controversy. Kanokogi and his alleged cousin, Momo Minosuke 百々巳之助 (the only Japanese to have met Hitler before 1933; see Chapter Six) somehow appointed themselves protectors of a German seeking to join the Kobe-Osaka chapter of the Nazi Party. The young man's mother, backed by the two Japanese professors' endorsement, accused Trautz of sabotaging his son's application out of professional jealousy. Trautz defended himself vigorously by counterclaiming that Kanokogi was maneuvering to accumulate more power. Clearly, there was no love lost between Kanokogi and Trautz. In the end, the applicant was rejected and did not become a member until late 1937. See the confidential report by Trautz to the *Ortsgruppe* of the Nazi Party in Kobe-Osaka, PA, R85961 Po.25 Jap, *Deutschtum in Japan*, 7 June 1934. In all likelihood, Kanokogi and Momo overestimated their influence in the internal affairs among local Nazis.

semblance of division of labor—the institute in research and scholarship, the DJG in politics, economy, and public relations—they also began co-hosting lectures and performances. As a tangible sign of their convergence, the institute in 1931 moved out of its perch in the City Palace to Schöneberg and therefore closer to the resident Japanese colony in Berlin.

Still, the DJG nearly monopolized the realm of cultivating personal bonds between Germans and Japanese; the society even included the goal in its first statute (see the 1930 version quoted at the outset of the chapter).⁴⁹ Factors that once seemingly disadvantaged the DJG vis-à-vis the institute, such as its non-academic character, less restrictive membership, and more publicity-minded mission, would actually recommend it as the preferred venue for Germans and Japanese to mingle casually and without intellectual expectations. For example, the DJG used the institute's facilities to organize regular "German-Japanese gentlemen's evenings," and for the ladies, get-togethers to learn about Japanese floral arrangements.⁵⁰ For Germans mildly interested in Japan, then, the DJG would have presented them with the rare opportunity to meet Japanese in person, a feat that not even many universities in Germany could always perform.

By the end of 1932, both the specialists in the Japan Institute and the activists in the DJG had reasons to be optimistic about the prospect of improving Germany's familiarity

⁴⁹ Other associations included a certain Japanischer Verein in Deutschland, located in Berlin-Wilmersdorf. Its main task seemed to be a gathering venue for resident and transient Japanese in Berlin, rather than a place for intercultural exchange. There was also the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens (also known as Ostasiatische Gesellschaft, OAG), but it was based in Japan. The Gesellschaft für ostasiatische Kunst busied itself mainly with art and not only with Japan but all East Asia. In Hamburg there were also a few associations with East Asia as a focus, like the Ostasiatischer Verein Hamburg-Bremen.

⁵⁰ „Eine neue, aber schon ständig gewordene Einrichtung wurde getroffen in der Abhaltung von deutsch-japanischen Herrenabenden, für die seit vorigem Herbst die Instituteräume gleichfalls zur Verfügung gestellt werden. Auch die Zusammenkünfte der Gesellschaft für japanische Blumenkunst, die Dr. Prenzel leitet und an denen vorwiegend deutsche und japanische Damen teilnehmen, fanden im Japaninstitut statt,“ in report of the meeting of the institute's trustees and members, PA, R85971 Po.28 Jap, Deutsch-Jap Institut, 23 June 1932.

with Japan. The institute's funding from the government, though reduced, continued.⁵¹ Far more importantly, despite the dreadful economic meltdown and political paralysis, a new department of Japanese studies opened in mid-1932 at the University of Leipzig, with indispensable financial backing from Japanese donors in Osaka.⁵² The freshly-created professorship of Japanology (the second in the country) was occupied by Hans Ueberschaar, a highly promising talent among the next generation of Japanologists who had lived for two decades in Japan. In the fifteen years or so that he spent teaching in the Kansai region he established personal ties to luminaries, businessmen, and public intellectuals in Osaka that ultimately bore fruit for the advancement of knowledge creation about Japan in Germany.⁵³

Perhaps one should not exaggerate the impact of an individual, but in the unofficial atmosphere that characterized much of the exchange between Germany and Japan in the

⁵¹ In the fiscal year 1931-32 the institute received about 44,000 Reichsmark (RM) from the government: about 30,000RM from the Foreign Ministry, 6,000RM from Interior, 7,000RM from Education and 1,000 from the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute. In the late 1920s, the institute typically received 61,000RM a year. See table of the institute's funding source between 1926 and 1935, BAK, R64IV/224, DJG, 15 May 1936.

⁵² Sata Aihiko 佐多愛彦, the first president of the Osaka City Medical Academy and a member of the Japanese-German Cultural Society, raised 60,000RM. Motoyama Hikoichi 本山彦一, head of the Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbun, contributed 15,000 Yen, while Nippon Chisso 日本窒素, a manufacturer of fertilizer then based in Osaka, chipped in 25,000 Gold Yen. Interestingly enough, and for reasons unknown, the university and the city of Cologne also helped fund the fledgling Japanology department in Leipzig by providing 15,540.47RM, which Sata disapproved as insufficient. Of all people, Konrad Adenauer, then mayor of Cologne, was involved in the negotiations over the sum. In any case, the total endowment amounted to 110,000RM. By comparison, a midlevel civil servant would make about 4,000RM a year. See Universitätsarchiv Leipzig (hereafter UL), Phil.Fak D1/17:07, Akten der Philosophischen Fakultät zu Leipzig betr. Stiftung: Deutsch-Japanisches Studentenheim, 1932; letter from dean of the school of philosophy at Leipzig to the Saxon Ministry of Education, UL, PA1008, Personalakte Prof. Dr. Otto Georg Johannes Ueberschaar, 27 July 1931; and letter by Woelker of the Saxon Ministry of Education to the Saxon Foreign Ministry, UL, PA1008, Personalakte Prof. Dr. Ueberschaar, 27 November 1931.

⁵³ Ueberschaar was born in 1885 in Meissen to a middle class family. He received his *Abitur* 1906 in Cologne and his doctorate in 1913 from the University of Leipzig, with a dissertation on the constitutional status of the emperor in Japan. From 1911 on he taught German at the Osaka City Medical Academy, where he most likely befriended Sata. In 1914 he was captured during the hopeless defense of Tsingtau (Qingdao) and stayed in captivity as a POW in Narashino Internment Camp (習志野収容所) until 1920. Upon his release he returned to his position in Osaka, and since 1925 worked as a lecturer of German literature at Kyoto Imperial University. For more on life in the Narashino Camp, see Narashinoshi Kyōikuiinkai 習志野市教育委員会, ed., *Doitsu heishi no mita Nippon: Narashino furyo shūyōjo 1915-1920* 『ドイツ兵士の見たニッポン 習志野俘虜収容所 1915～1920』 (Tokyo: Maruzen 丸善, 2001). As we shall see, Ueberschaar's stint in a POW camp would become a fateful turning point in his life.

interwar era, international relations did amount to the aggregate of interpersonal relations. Without personalities such as Haber, Solf, Trautz, Kanokogi, and Ueberschaar and his Japanese friends, German-Japanese collaboration in the associational realms would likely have been much diminished.

The Admiral

The year 1933 ushered in a new era for Germany and by extension the associational activities centering on Japan as well, though not necessarily in ways one might expect. Upon their installation into power the Nazis wasted no time to transform the country into a *Volkgemeinschaft* (national community) in line with their *weltanschauung*. People deemed unfit to enter the future National Socialist paradise, such as non-Aryans (Jews especially), communists, and eventually homosexuals and other social pariahs, were systematically through legal and extralegal means prevented from participating in Germany's political, social, economic, and cultural life. In practice the movement unleashed the *Gleichschaltung* (coordination) campaign to implement totalitarian rule by suppressing pluralism in entities ranging from private hobby clubs to the Reichstag. At times the regime enforced uniformity from above, as when it usurped state governments, though more often than not the population Nazified itself, as when groups removed members deemed undesirable according to Nazi ideology.

At first glance, the descent upon Germany of the pall of Nazism with its rhetoric of Aryan supremacy seemed to defeat the purpose of organizations like the Japan Institute and particularly the DJG whose very essence constituted respectively the scholarly appreciation and the political promotion of an alien folk. Indeed, there is anecdotal evidence of

overzealous Nazis harassing or disrespecting Japanese nationals in Germany in 1933 and 1934,⁵⁴ and the Japanese government protested language in new legislation that indiscriminately discriminated against all non-Aryans.⁵⁵ Yet, the fact remained that few Japanese could have been terribly inconvenienced by the Nazi ascendancy, if for no other reason than too few lived in Germany to be inconvenienced.⁵⁶ No SA thugs stood guard outside the few Japanese-owned shops and restaurants to intimidate potential customers,⁵⁷ and no Japanese residents or visitors had to endure the trauma and humiliation of physical harm.⁵⁸ Moreover, Japanese expatriates, mostly academics, diplomats, officers, or merchants, usually moved in formal, cultured, and respectable circles of colleagues that virtually ruled out boorish behaviors toward guests from so far away.⁵⁹ From at least the racial standpoint,

⁵⁴ For example, the leftwing journalist Suzuki Tōmin 鈴木東民 mentioned getting jeered as a “Jap” outside the courthouse in Leipzig in which the trial of the Reichstag Fire suspect took place in September 1933 (see Chapter Eight), and the constitutional expert Minobe Tatsukichi 美濃部達吉 reported being confronted by Nazis on a train for his failure to give the Hitler greeting (see Chapter Six). The hygienist Akano Rokurō 赤野六郎 also witnessed an incident at the University of Berlin. When a student mentioned in a seminar that the physician Erwin von Bälz took a Japanese wife, a number of students audibly signaled their disapproval. The German professor complained to the authorities that the incident probably drove Akano away, even though the two had planned to collaborate further. See letter from Heinrich Zeiss to the Interior Ministry, Geheime Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Rep 76 Va Sekt. 1 JiA. XII No. 42 Bd. II, 25 September 1934. Many thanks to Professor Dr. Grüttner for forwarding me the information.

⁵⁵ For example, in October 1933 the Japanese embassy requested that the German government explain the term “colored” in its proposed reform to the criminal law code. See Harumi Furuya, “Japan’s Racial Identity in the Second World War: The Cultural Context of the Japanese Treatment of POWs,” in *Japanese Prisoners of War*, eds. Philip Towle, Margaret Kosuge and Yoichi Kibata (London: Hambledon and London, 2000), 123.

⁵⁶ For instance, throughout the 1930s roughly between 350 and 400 Japanese lived in Berlin. See *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Berlin*, 1930-1939.

⁵⁷ Most patrons of the Japanese restaurants would have been Japanese anyway. The phenomenon of ethnic cuisine, so prevalent in German cities today, emerged only in the late twentieth century.

⁵⁸ The larger Chinese colony did not seem to have been bothered either, at least until the early 1940s. See Dagmar Yü-Dembski, “Verdrängte Jahre: Einige Fragen der deutsch-chinesischen Beziehungen während des Nationalsozialismus,” in *Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur: Studien zu den deutsch-chinesischen Beziehungen*, ed. Mechthild Leutner, Berliner China-Studien 31 (Münster: Lit Verlag, 1996), 329–47.

⁵⁹ Note that the unpleasantness experienced by the Japanese mentioned in footnote 54 all came at the hands of strangers from social milieus lower than those of the Japanese victims—random onlookers in the case of Suzuki, fellow passengers in a third-class wagon for Minobe, and university students for Akano.

then, the Nazi authorities raised no objections to Japanese belonging to bi-national associations. The DJG, at the request of its Japanese participants, even refrained from adopting an Aryan paragraph for its German members, which made the society a rarity in the country.⁶⁰

Nevertheless, the DJG could not remain untouched by the wholesale Nazification of society all around it. Remarkably, some *Japanese* in Berlin might have opened the door for the Gleichschaltung of the DJG in April 1933 by complaining discreetly to the Nazi authorities that the DJG had Jews as its chairman and a member of the board who were also allegedly vilifying Germany to impressionable Japanese newly arriving in the country.⁶¹ The whole leadership of the DJG was made to step down—never mind that the chairman had led the DJAG since Kanokogi's departure and the board member had belonged to the organization since its days as a humble working group. A coterie of opportunistic amateurs hitherto marginally involved in German-Japanese exchange inserted itself into the vacuum to

⁶⁰ „Auf Wunsch der Japaner haben wir keinen Arierparagraphen für die deutschen Mitglieder aufgenommen,“ in letter from Friedrich Wilhelm Hack, general manager of the DJG, to Kümmel, BAK, R64IV/231, DJG, 19 September 1933.

⁶¹ „In Berlin ansässige Japaner haben sich bei mir darüber beklagt, dass die Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft als Vorsitzenden den Juden Prof. Dr. W. Haas, Berlin-Halensee, Kurfürstendamm 154 hat. Bis vor kurzem war der Geschäftsführer dieser Gesellschaft der Galizier Dr. A. Chanoch, Berlin W 30, Eisenacherstr. 87/88,“ in letter from Deputy Gauleiter Artur Görhlitzer to Commissioner for Special Duties Kurt Daluge, PA, R104900 Po 26, Vereinwesen (DJG), 24 April 1933.

Annette Hack, the author of the chapters in Haasch, ed. on the DJG before 1945, conjectures that the accusers of Haas and Chanoch were not Japanese but instead the one or more Germans scheming to take over the DJG. She reasons that since the information about Chanoch in the letter was not current, the allegations must have been made by individuals not closely involved with the DJG. See Haasch, ed., 113. I think there is no reason to doubt the content of the document in question. In his letter to Daluge, Görhlitzer stated unambiguously that the resident Japanese lodged the complaint to him personally; he would have no tangible motive to lie to Daluge over that point. Moreover, Görhlitzer's explanation that the Japanese were troubled that Haas was sowing hatred of Germany to those Japanese just coming into the country, if true, would have concerned the local Japanese enough to try to remove Haas. Finally, if some German members wanted to target the Jewish Haas they could have done so directly and easily within the DJG. That the denunciation was made to outside authorities indirectly and secretly indicates strongly that it originated from the Japanese, whose cultural background and status as guests in Germany would have deterred them from speaking out openly against Haas and Chanoch.

make over the association in compliance with the new political climate.⁶² The precise details and sequence of events in this local “seizure of power” remain shrouded in some uncertainty, but the outcome certainly was not.⁶³

Foremost, the DJG adopted a new set of statutes that introduced a new management structure.⁶⁴ In accordance with the Nazi *Führerprinzip* (leadership principle), the German-Japanese co-chairmanships were abolished and replaced by an administration under the sole presidency of the retired admiral Paul Behncke.⁶⁵ The post of “secretary” was reserved for a very un-secretarial *SS-Obersturmbannführer* (lieutenant colonel) who more than compensated for his clerical deficiencies with his political connections. He held a position in the liaison staff of the Nazi Party, and his close relations with Deputy Führer Rudolf Hess

⁶² The mastermind behind the Gleichschaltung of the DJG appeared to be Friedrich Wilhelm Hack, owner of a trading firm with business ties to East Asia who had experience living in Japan. In the mid-1930s the aptly-named Hack would earn some notoriety for his rogue diplomacy on behalf of Ribbentrop to bypass the conservative and China-friendly Foreign Ministry. Hack’s main contribution to the Anti-Comintern Pact was as an early go-between for the Ribbentrop Bureau and the Japanese army. For more on Hack, see John P. Fox, *Germany and the Far Eastern Crisis 1931–1938: A Study in Diplomacy and Ideology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985). Another busybody responsible for the Gleichschaltung of the DJG was Hans Musa. Musa received his Diplom in Japanese and later worked in the Academy for Politics. In early 1934 he was in Japan on a self-appointed diplomatic mission but only managed to antagonize thoroughly the local Nazi group. At this juncture Momo again intervened in internal German affairs on Musa’s behalf by threatening to denounce the local Nazi leader in the press. Ultimately the German embassy had to become involved by getting both sides to sit down and sign a ceasefire of sorts. See report by Ambassador Herbert von Dirksen to Foreign Ministry, PA, R85961 Po.25 Jap, *Deutschum in Japan*, 24 April 1934.

⁶³ Annette Hack (a grandniece of Friedrich Wilhelm Hack) likely provides as good and detailed an account of the Gleichschaltung of the DJG as there can be, in Haasch, ed., 106–22. The takeover is described as a “coup” in Haasch, ed., xxv. This characterization seems accurate, as long as one remembers that the DJG was not unique in this regard. While the coup at the DJG unfolded in its particular manner, tens of thousands of other associations in Germany underwent a similar process that involved the ouster of Jews and others deemed unsuitable for the Volksgemeinschaft, and the promotion of those whose main qualification was their devotion to Nazism or at least eagerness to jump onto the bandwagon.

⁶⁴ Statutes of DJG, BAK, R64IV/3, DJG, 20 November 1933.

⁶⁵ Behncke was born in 1866 in Süsel near Lübeck. He joined the navy as a cadet in 1883 and advanced through the ranks, including two years in the Far East as the captain of a gunboat. At the outbreak of World War I he was a rear admiral and participated in the Battle of Jutland in 1916. After the war he became the head of the naval command and oversaw what might pass for a rebuilding program under difficult circumstances. He retired from the service in 1924. See Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv (hereafter BAM), RW59/2161 Admirale, Personalakte Admiral Behncke.

could attract a powerful patron for the DJG.⁶⁶ At one point the architects of the new DJG apparently even aimed to invite Göring and Foreign Minister Konstantin von Neurath to the honorary steering committee, but they ultimately had to “settle for” Solf and the Japanese ambassador.⁶⁷ The board was cleansed of people distasteful to the new regime; at least one individual, and quite likely more, had been approached confidentially to identify “definite” and “possible” Jews and hence leftwing radicals among the membership.⁶⁸ A large advisory committee, consisting of many prominent representatives from the bureaucracy, military, academia, and businesses, was created to lend even more clout to the DJG.

The far more consequential seizure of power, however, took place outside the DJG, as it displaced and eclipsed the Japan Institute in Germany’s associational life revolving around Japan. As mentioned, the two organizations had already begun to share some members and functions prior to 1933. Political developments afterward simply hastened their convergence, or more precisely, the subordination of the institute to the DJG. The institute had drifted about for some time, since the departures of Haber and Trautz deprived it of sustained guidance, and its cumbersome leadership structure proved inadequate to negotiate the vicissitudes in the early 1930s, much as Kanokogi had foreseen. Solf’s vocal opposition to National Socialism before and after its rise did not endear him or the institute to the

⁶⁶ The officer was Herbert W. Scholz. In addition to his rank in the SS, he was also Aussenpolitischer Referent im Ministeramt der Obersten SA-Führung. Between 1936 and 1940 he worked in the German embassy in Washington, and in 1941 as consul in the consulate in Boston until Germany declared war on America.

⁶⁷ See draft of proposed members for the DJG, and list of leadership structure of DJG, PA, R104900 Po 26, Vereinwesen (DJG), ca. 1933.

⁶⁸ „...auch sollen die in der Gesellschaft bisher befindlichen jüdischen Mitglieder nicht disqualifiziert werden. Dr. Scholz wüsste aber gern, welche der deutschen Mitglieder nichtarisch sind, um festzustellen, dass keine linksradikalen politischen Bestrebungen in der Gesellschaft vertreten sind. Wären Sie vielleicht in der Lage, in der beigegeführten Mitgliederliste die Namen der Mitglieder anzustreichen, die Ihres Wissens nach nichtarisch sind? Sie kennen die Mitglieder ja wohl alle persönlich, während ich nur wenige kenne,“ in letter from Hack to Kümmel, BAK, R64IV/231, DJG, 19 September 1933. Herbert Scholz was the SS officer and new secretary of the DJG.

movement either.⁶⁹ Moreover, the institute was weighed down by the “baggage” of having Haber the Jew as its founder, so that in early 1934—six years after Haber vacated the chairmanship and two months after his death—Trautz still had to fight off accusations of having worked closely with a Jew.⁷⁰

In contrast, the more-agile and less-scrupulous DJG reinvented itself to take advantage of the regime change to amass worldly power. Although Gleichschaltung effectively destroyed pluralistic, civil society in Germany by outlawing, hollowing, infiltrating, or absorbing most organizations not explicitly affiliated with the ideology, groups willing to conform and transform like the DJG not only managed to survive the process but thrived under it. The DJG jettisoned its human baggage soon after Hitler became chancellor and installed a new management in tune and in touch with the new masters of Germany. It adopted a new set of statutes to anoint itself the epicenter of the overall relations between Germany and Japan (compare the two versions reproduced at the chapter’s beginning). The rapidly expanding ambitions of the association threatened to outgrow its budget, but through appealing to the DJG’s “in-house” SS-Obersturmbannführer the admiral could wangle more money from other institutions and the government. Tellingly, in his request for funds Behncke mentioned specifically that the reduced means of the Japan Institute could no longer support and serve the DJG, thereby revealing a reversal of their

⁶⁹ After Solf’s death in 1936, a group resisting the Nazi regime coalesced around his widow Johanna. Known as the Solf Circle, the group consisted of Foreign Ministry officials, bureaucrats and aristocrats and met under the guise of parties organized by Frau Solf. It was broken by the Gestapo and its members arrested and tried by the bloodthirsty People’s Court. Most were executed, though the trial of Solf and her daughter were delayed enough—with possible intervention by the Japanese ambassador on their behalf—that they managed to outlive the Nazi regime. For more, see John Wheeler-Bennett, *The Nemesis of Power: The German Army in Politics, 1918–1945*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 593; Rudolf Pechel, *Deutscher Widerstand* (Erlenbach-Zürich: Eugen Rentsch Verlag, 1947), 88–93; and William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (New York: Touchstone, 1990), 1025.

⁷⁰ Letter from Sofie Leo to Hitler’s adjutant Wilhelm Brückner, PA, R85961 Po.25 Jap, *Deutschtum in Japan*, 27 March 1934.

roles and a new pecking order. Indeed, the ascendancy of the DJG over the institute soon became unmistakable. Concretely, in addition to his chief appointment as president of the DJG Behncke also became the head of the institute. Symbolically, the DJG and the institute moved next door to each other on Kurfürstenstrasse in Schöneberg in central Berlin.⁷¹

To fortify its position within Germany, the DJG assiduously cultivated allies near the source of power in the Nazi regime. It created new positions to accommodate “advisers” with no knowledge of or prior interest in Japan but only substantial connections, which in turn helped the association attract other influential individuals. Businesses too could become corporate members. As a result of the DJG’s recruitment drive, by early 1934 membership had swollen by six fold to about three-hundred-fifty.⁷² Insightfully the DJG was determined to cozy up to personalities in the growing SS. Already by late 1934, not even a full year after its reconstitution, the DJG felt confident enough to invite Himmler himself to its lectures, concerts, film screenings, and luncheons. The *Reichsführer-SS* never seemed to have attended any DJG event, but he did feel obliged enough to dispatch high-ranking SS underlings in his stead.⁷³ After failing repeatedly to land Himmler, the DJG expanded its guest list to include other SS chieftains.⁷⁴ It worked equally hard to associate itself with officials in other branches of the party or government, so that by late 1935 Behncke could boast at the opening of a lecture at the DJG that he had the honor and joy to welcome

⁷¹ Respectively, the Japan Institute and the DJG were on Kurfürstenstrasse 55 and 56. Today, No. 56 is still standing, a renovated *Altbau* housing a few law offices and a pleasant restaurant on the street level. No. 55 probably did not survive the war; the plot is now part of a school.

⁷² Letter from Behncke to Second Secretary Rudolf Graf Strachwitz, PA, R104900 Po 26, Vereinwesen (DJG), 23 February 1934.

⁷³ Obergruppenführer Werner Lorenz represented Himmler at DJG functions a few times, including in 1940 the celebration of the supposed 2600th anniversary of the start of the imperial line in Japan.

⁷⁴ For example, *Oberführer* Franz Breithaupt, *Gruppenführer* Wilhelm Reinhard (he was also the national leader of the Reichskriegerbund, a veteran and reservist organization), and *Obergruppenführer* Josef “Sepp” Dietrich were all invited by the DJG at some point.

Ambassador Ribbentrop, the mayor of Berlin Heinrich Sahn, General Ernst Schaumburg, numerous representatives from the army, navy and air force, as well as the ministries and the party, and the government and city authorities.⁷⁵

With Admiral Behncke at the helm the DJG navigated resolutely into the realm of power politics. Notwithstanding its bombast about a radical break from the past, the Nazi government like its Weimar predecessor did not devote much attention to nurturing ties with Japan, especially since traditional conservatives kept control of the Foreign Ministry in the early years. The DJG filled the void by donning the camouflage of an official entity and assigning itself the functions of an advocacy group, mediation firm, and liaison agency in all things German-Japanese, capable of addressing state and party bureaucracies on an equal footing.

The DJG missed no chance to enhance its relevance in society by concerning itself with matters trivial and profound. For instance, in late 1935 it took up the cause of a Japanese restaurateur whose business suffered because he could not obtain an alcohol license. The DJG contacted the proper authorities on his behalf and attempted to get its way by depicting the local issue in global terms of foreign policy. It suggested that the borough police department should take into account “German interests” in considering the restaurant’s application for a permit to serve alcohol, since the Japanese chef and patrons could construe a rejection as a national affront.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ „Ich habe die Ehre und Freude, zu dem ersten Vortrag unserer D.J.G., mit dem wir das neue Winterhalbjahr eröffnen, Sie herzlich willkommen zu heissen. Es ist mir eine grosse Freude und Ehre, zahlreiche Gäste heute abend begrüßen zu können, insbesondere Herrn von R i b b e n t r o p, Oberbürgermeister Dr. Sahn, Generalleutnant Schaumburg, und zahlreiche Vertreter von Heer, Marine und Luftwaffe, der Ministerien und der Partei, der Regierungs- und städtischen Behörden,“ in speech by Behncke, BAK, R64IV/257, DJG, 29 October 1935.

⁷⁶ „Die Japaner würden es wohl als Zurücksetzung auffassen, wenn bei der geringen Anzahl japanischer Gaststätten, die ihnen zur Verfügung stehen, dieses Restaurant mit einem Ausschankverbot belastet wäre. Wir

Nor did the DJG shirk more sensitive problems. In the 1930s it took on interceding for the few people of mixed German and Japanese ancestries ensnared in the Nazi dragnet fishing for non-Aryans. As mentioned, the regime did not launch any systematic campaign against Japanese nationals, since as guests they could not and did not seek inclusion or participation in the Volksgemeinschaft. The “hyphenated” Japanese-Germans, however, presented a different problem; their partial Germanness enabled them to stake an understandable claim to membership in the national community and thus ironically rendered them a threat to its racial make-up.⁷⁷ Of course, they were not persecuted like Jews, but they did experience humiliation and hindrance in their everyday livelihood. A few lost their jobs. Some were barred from the Nazi Party or other organizations. Others were expelled from universities. Many ran afoul of the authorities when they wanted to marry “full Aryans.” In their frustration and faced with a dearth of options for redress, a dozen or so such victims turned to the DJG for assistance.⁷⁸ Individual DJG members vouched for the character of some Japanese-Germans; Ueberschaar, who as a party member commanded more credibility in the Third Reich, single-handedly interceded for at least three such sufferers in Leipzig.⁷⁹ Meanwhile the DJG as a whole corresponded copiously on the victims’ behalf with agencies

hoffen, dass Sie sich diesem auch im deutschen Interesse gelegenen Gesichtspunkt nicht verschliessen werden,“ in letter from DJG general secretary Rudolf Strobl Edler von Ravelsberg to the police department of Schöneberg-Wilmersdorf, BAK, R64IV/239, DJG, 28 January 1936.

⁷⁷ Curiously, these people referred to themselves literally as “German-Japanese” (Deutsch-Japaner). I translate them as “Japanese-Germans” because they fundamentally identified themselves as Germans; their Japaneseness was only an attribute.

⁷⁸ For an analysis of some of these cases, see Furuya, 123–127.

⁷⁹ Ueberschaar managed to help reinstate two Japanese-German students expelled on racial grounds from the University of Leipzig. He also helped a German man who wanted to marry a Japanese-German. This case remained unresolved for a few years; the man’s membership in the Nazi Party complicated the matter, since more was expected from him than normal citizens. See note on conversation between Behncke and Chargé d’affaires Fujii Keinosuke 藤井啓之助, BAK, R64IV/31, DJG, 21 November 1933; and letter from general secretary of DJG Helmut Werner to Ueberschaar, BAK, R64IV/31, DJG, 18 March 1935.

like the Nazi Office of Foreign Affairs (NS Ausserpolitisches Amt, APA) Nazi Overseas Organization (NS Auslands-Organisation, AO), Nazi Office of Racial Policy (NS Rassenpolitisches Amt, RPA), Interior Ministry, Foreign Ministry, Ribbentrop Bureau, and Japanese Embassy. The DJG's mediation in such delicate matters was destined to be a thankless task, and as far as can be ascertained the petitions for exemption or relief from Aryan laws were mired in bureaucratic delay and indecision.⁸⁰ On the surface the DJG had nothing to gain by lending a hand to helpless ordinary individuals, but by representing them it created for itself a reality and reputation as a peer of other formal institutions.

Likewise, throughout the 1930s the DJG used Japan as a tool to defend and expand its turf in the Nazi polycratic jungle. For example, in 1935 in a letter to the Education Minister offering the service of the DJG in fostering German-Japanese relations, Behncke explained that now that Japan had risen to a world power, it behooved Germany to get to know the country better.⁸¹ Behncke suggested that the DJG could encourage exchange in the cultural, intellectual, and scientific realms; networking among leaders of the two nations in politics, the army, and navy; and mutual propagation of information for the German and Japanese publics. The DJG lobbied for resources and attention for Japanese studies in Germany

⁸⁰ Much has been made about Hitler conferring the status of "honorary Aryans" (Ehrenarier) to the Japanese. It was, however, merely a quip and carried no legal weight. A few of the petitioners did cite the Führer's utterance to support their cause, to no apparent avail.

⁸¹ „Japan hat sich in ungeahnter Weise vom abgeschlossenen Nationalstaat zur Gross- und Weltmacht entwickelt, die als Vormacht im Fernen Osten einen mitbestimmenden, schnell wachsenden Einfluss auf die Weltpolitik ausübt. Das politische Kräftespiel hat dazu geführt, dass Deutschland und Japan eine schon seit jeher bestehende, freilich meist verkannte, jetzt aber stark hervortretende politische Bedeutung für einander gewonnen haben. Dieser Entwicklung ist die planmässige Pflege unserer Beziehungen mit Japan bis heutigen Tages, trotzdem Japan jetzt auch in der deutschen Öffentlichkeit mehr Beachtung findet als bisher, nicht gefolgt... Die Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft ist bemüht, sich auf den verschiedenen Gebieten der Pflege unserer Beziehungen mit Japan einen Ueberblick zu verschaffen und zwischen den vielen Stellen, die sich mit dieser Pflege befassen, eine Sammel- und Verbindungsstelle zu bilden,“ in letter from Behncke to Rust, PA, R104900 Po 26, Vereinwesen (DJG), 12 June 1935.

through more professorships of Japanology, exchanges of students and teachers, and improved and broadened instruction of the Japanese language.

In particular, the Japanese language gave the DJG an opening to wedge itself into the armed forces. In this enterprise it helped the association tremendously that Japan had established a martial reputation and that the DJG, like a naval task force, was commanded by an admiral who could communicate with military leaders on friendly, personal, and equal terms. In October 1935 Behncke sent a letter, similar to the one to the Education Minister, to the War Minister to push for the teaching of Japanese within the military.⁸² Besides the bromide of Japan being a great power that Germany needed to study, the admiral underlined the deplorable state of Japanese knowledge in the armed forces—not even the military and naval attachés in the embassy in Tokyo knew the language. Indeed, by one count in 1936 only three officers in the army and two in the navy could claim to speak any Japanese.⁸³ Behncke proposed that the DJG could rectify the situation by arranging to have majors or lieutenants enroll in language classes, or to train students in Japanology to become candidates for officers. When the army chief, citing various difficulties, declined the offer, Behncke then suggested that the DJG could recruit Germans in Japan already fluent in the language for the army. The army again demurred, but through sheer persistence and prestige he succeeded in persuading the navy and the air force to spare a few officers to study Japanese.⁸⁴

⁸² Letter from Behncke to General Werner von Blomberg, BAK, R64IV/60, DJG, 10 October 1935.

⁸³ Letter from Behncke to Robert Matthiass, BAK, R64IV/60, DJG, 26 May 1936. Matthiass was the head of C. Illies & Co., a large and important trading firm founded by German merchants in Japan in 1859. It is still in business today.

⁸⁴ Letter from Rear Admiral Heinz Eduard Menche to Behncke, BAK, R64IV/60, DJG, 18 November 1935. Menche led the Far Eastern Division of the Auslands-Organisation. Behncke also appealed personally to Rear Admiral Wilhelm Canaris to get the navy on board.

Therefore, by Behncke's death days into the year 1937, the DJG could look back and forward to many achievements. The vacant presidency was duly filled by another reputable admiral, the newly-retired chief of the fleet Richard Foerster, thereby guaranteeing the group's status as a powerbroker and access to the highest reaches of the government, party, and military.⁸⁵ Enabled and empowered by Gleichschaltung, the DJG overtook the Japan Institute in almost every aspect of German-Japanese interaction. It had consolidated its position as the one-stop intermediary in Germany for dealings with Japan, as even government ministries, party organizations, and the armed forces had to acknowledge the semi-official niche the DJG had carved for itself. To be sure, the DJG as a voluntary association played no direct role in the negotiations behind the Anti-Comintern Pact—they were conducted secretly and guarded jealously by Ribbentrop from all potential rivals. Yet well before the alliance the DJG helped pioneer and intensify the politicization of Japan's image in Germany by boosting it and widening its relevance in the public. As Japan's fortune rose so did that of the organization, which extracted its very essence and legitimacy from its self-proclaimed mastery of the previously apolitical, little cared-for subject. To wit, if a chemist founded the scholarly Japan Institute, then alchemists at the DJG transformed knowledge of Japan into power in Germany.

⁸⁵ Richard Foerster was born in 1879 in Stralsund to a middle class family. He entered the navy in 1899. He served on various vessels, often as artillery instructor. In 1907-8 he was a watch officer on the *Arcona* during its tour to East Asia. At Jutland he was the first artillery officer on the heavily engaged cruiser *Seydlitz*. In 1926–1928 he was the commander of the cruiser *Emden* on its voyage around the world. He was chief of the fleet since 1933 and retired from active service by the end of 1936. He died in 1952. See BAM, Pers6/2321, Personalakte Admiral a. D. Richard Foerster; and resume of Foerster, BAK, R64IV/258, DJG, ca. 1939.

The Fugitive

Thus, in the mid- to late 1930s the DJG seemed more robust than it had ever been. Beyond the wildest dreams of its founders, its ranks grew into hundreds and eventually more than a thousand; dignitaries like Himmler, Ribbentrop, navy chief Admiral Erich Raeder, the celebrated pilot Wolfgang von Gronau, and other persons and firms had either joined or would soon become members. Shortly into Foerster's tenure the DJG pulled off another political and publicity stunt by swooping in to oversee and summon prominent guests to the Berlin premiere of the film *The Daughter of the Samurai* (see Chapter Two), even though it had played no role in the movie's production.⁸⁶ Beginning in the late 1930s, the DJG embarked on a spree of expansion that gradually saw the foundation of branches in cities such as Cologne, Frankfurt, Leipzig, Hamburg, Munich, Vienna, and Breslau. In February 1939 the DJG captured the ultimate prize when the Führer with his entourage of hangers-on visited an exhibition of old Japanese art at the Pergamon Museum.⁸⁷

Besides marking a high point of the DJG's influence, however, this episode also symptomized an ailment plaguing the creation of knowledge about Japan under Nazism. Put simply, Hitler visiting an event by the DJG basically meant an amateur artist being hosted by an amateur association. Although the curator at the exhibition, Kümmel, more than qualified as a rightful art connoisseur, the DJG as a whole was run by people with little expertise on Japan. As late as 1944, only two of the fifteen people who worked at the Berlin head office of the DJG commanded any usable Japanese.⁸⁸ Neither Behncke nor Foerster had studied the

⁸⁶ Notes of potential invitees for the film screening, BAK, R64IV/67, DJG, 17 March 1937.

⁸⁷ Minutes of Hitler's visit to the exhibition, BAK, R64IV/92, DJG, 27 February 1939.

⁸⁸ Appendix on employees at the DJG in Berlin and their language abilities, BAK, R64IV/241, DJG, 9 August 1944.

country or its language, and as the membership expanded it inevitably included more and more individuals with no knowledge of or prior interest in Japan. All the while the more serious Japan Institute languished in the DJG's shadows.

Certainly, the DJG by no means stood alone in becoming overrun by dilettantes with few relevant skills, education, or experiences on their resumes except political acumen; in some sense the Nazi "seizure of power" imposed amateurization onto the entire country. For example, the ragtag paramilitary SA dreamed of replacing the traditional Reichswehr, the former chicken breeder Himmler took over the police, the once champagne salesman Ribbentrop became Foreign Minister, and Göring, who last commanded fighter squadrons, now headed the entire *Luftwaffe* and coordinated the country's entire economic mobilization for war. In addition, the Aryanization of businesses typically meant replacing successful Jewish owners with less-competitive German counterparts. Most egregiously, the ill-educated, barely-employed ex-lance corporal Hitler was elevated to the chancellorship and commander of the armed forces. Therefore, with few exceptions Nazification of an institution led to inefficiency, cronyism, corruption, un-professionalism, and an exodus of talent.⁸⁹

Under Gleichschaltung the DJG's knowledge-for-power bargain generally strengthened its position vis-à-vis other outfits in the Third Reich, but the relentless quest for authority also weakened the quality of the association's human capital. If nothing else, the "original sin" of the reconstituted DJG entailed the oppression and expulsion of two Jewish members who after all were interested in Japan enough to have helped found and manage the

⁸⁹ On the one hand, Nazi fanaticism made internal security apparatus like the Gestapo and People's Court more effective and facilitated the construction of a totalitarian state and the Holocaust. One may also point out that the ideologically motivated *Waffen-SS* fought more ferociously, but it was also supplied with better equipment than the *Wehrmacht* as a whole. On the other, the *Luftwaffe* under Göring focused too heavily on tactics and neglected strategy, and Ribbentrop as foreign minister offended his counterparts and embarrassed his subordinates.

lowly DJAG. Moreover, the DJG in its pursuit of politically connected figures even scratched individuals from the membership list once they ceased to be useful to the organization, regardless of their curiosity in Japan or eagerness to participate. For example, it removed a reservist lieutenant colonel for no other reason than he had just retired from the leadership of the veterans' federation. It replaced him with two active officers still serving in the forces even though he made known his wish to continue to take part as a private civilian.⁹⁰ The DJG, alas, had little use for common people. In other words, it might not have officially discriminated against members by race or pedigree, but it certainly discriminated by political backing.⁹¹

Outside the DJG, Nazi ideology also inflicted much harm on German-Japanese interactions overall. One only needs to bring to mind Haber, the father of the Japan Institute, who had to emigrate abroad and whose plight at the hands of the Nazis made headlines unfavorable to Germany in Japan. Or Solf, the miracle-worker who restored German respectability in Japan, whose outspoken criticism of Nazism made him a nuisance to the new masters of the country. Or the Jewish pianist Leonid Kreutzer (who delivered the presentation "Japanese Attitude toward European Music" at a joint DJG–Japan Institute event in 1932), who fled Germany and found refuge in Japan, never to return. Apparently it did not satisfy the Nazi authorities that the musician left the country and thus no longer threatened the Volksgemeinschaft; the German embassy, where the honorable Solf once

⁹⁰ „Nachdem Obestleutnant a. D. Freiherr von M a l t z a h n aus der Reichskriegerführung ausgeschieden ist, wird gebeten, ihn aus der Liste der Mitglieder der dortigen Gesellschaft zu streichen und an seiner Stelle die Herren Major a. D. Freiherr v. Rechenberg und Kapitän z. See a. D. v. Schlick als Mitglieder zu führen,“ in note regarding DJG membership of Freiherr von Maltzahn, BAK, R64IV/251, DJG, 9 September 1939.

⁹¹ Although it was true that the DJG did not have an Aryan paragraph and that some Jews remained on the membership roster until 1937 (see Haasch, ed., xxv), the privilege of being allowed to participate in the DJG offered little solace to Jews in a society where they were kicked out of their jobs, barred from marrying whomever they wanted and increasingly threatened with violence.

worked, even dishonorably spied on him and other Jewish exiles in Japan.⁹² Or those Japanese-Germans caught as collateral damage under a regime with increasingly less tolerance for minorities, despite their standing as products of literal German-Japanese unions and fraternization.

Most ironically, Nazism dealt its heaviest blow against Japanese studies in Germany at a moment when it most needed accomplished Japanologists to interpret contemporary Japan—after the signing of the Anti-Comintern Pact in November 1936. Merely weeks afterward, in December, the Nazi Party expelled Ueberschaar, and the University of Leipzig, when notified in early 1937 of the expulsion, suspended his teaching responsibilities. Ueberschaar was not Jewish. He belonged to the Nazi Party; in fact he was one of the “old fighters” (those who joined the party before it entered the government) because he became a member in 1932, shortly after his repatriation from Japan to Germany. He even assumed a few posts in the local and regional party organizations concerned with culture and education. In late 1934 he as a civil servant dutifully swore an oath of personal loyalty to the Führer.⁹³ At the helm of Japanese studies at Leipzig he very arguably exceeded all expectations. He gave several public lectures on Japan’s poetry, national character, and bid to host the Olympics. At the university he not only offered standard classes on Japanese language and literature, but also topically relevant and diverse seminars on the Manchurian problem, social history, and current events through Japanese newspapers.⁹⁴ Indeed, it amounts to no

⁹² Report by Ambassador Herbert von Dirksen to Foreign Ministry, PA, R85961 Po.25 Jap, Deutschland in Japan, 13 April 1934. The report also mentioned fifteen other exiles in Japan at the time, including the mathematician Hilda Geiringer, the composer Arnold Schoenberg and the economist Arthur Salz. Unlike Kreutzer, all three moved on to the United States.

⁹³ Ueberschaar’s signed oath of loyalty, UL, PA1008, Personalakte Ueberschaar, 1 November 1934.

⁹⁴ He taught those seminars in the winter semester of 1934, and the summer and winter semesters of 1936. See Universität Leipzig, *Verzeichnis der Vorlesungen* (Leipzig: Universitäts-Buchhändler, 1934-1936).

exaggeration to think that, since the “department” consisted of a lone tenured faculty member, Ueberschaar *was* the department.

Why then did the movement turn on one of its own and deprive itself of one of its most brilliant Japanologists just when the destinies of Germany and Japan became more intertwined than ever? What had Ueberschaar done to incur the wrath of the authorities? As it turned out, he was accused of and prosecuted for violating Paragraph 175 of the Penal Code criminalizing “unnatural fornication between men.”⁹⁵ Although the Nazi regime did expand the scope of the law in 1935 (originally promulgated in 1871) and escalate its general persecution of male homosexuals, its motivations for specifically targeting Ueberschaar remain unclear, let alone the vindictiveness and nastiness with which it did so. In fact, one could not and cannot prove beyond a reasonable doubt that he engaged in any homosexual acts. The charges were dropped in April 1937, but the damage was done.⁹⁶ The Saxon Ministry of Education used the mere allegation to launch a case against him for committing “the grossest misconduct and violating his obligations as a university teacher and educator of German youth.”⁹⁷ It also fired him from his tenured professorship of Japanology. Ueberschaar did not wait to see how his fate would be formally sealed. Fearing the

⁹⁵ For more on Nazi persecution of homosexuals, see Burkhard Jellonnek and Rüdiger Lautmann, eds., *Nationalsozialistischer Terror gegen Homosexuelle: Verdrängt und ungesühnt* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2002); and Burkhard Jellonnek, *Homosexuelle unter dem Hakenkreuz: Die Verfolgung von Homosexuellen im Dritten Reich* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1990).

⁹⁶ The state prosecutor of Saxony cited three instances in which Ueberschaar allegedly attempted to perpetrate homosexual acts on the witnesses. They supposedly all took place before 1 September 1935 and so could only be tried under the older version of §175. The prosecutor also claimed that Ueberschaar became a homosexual during his confinement in a POW camp in Japan. Even if the witnesses’ testimonies were taken at face value, however, the case against Ueberschaar remained weak and built entirely on their words. See report on the withdrawal of the case by the state prosecutor, UL, PA1008, Personalakte Ueberschaar, 25 April 1937.

⁹⁷ „Dessen ungeachtet aber hat sich der Beschuldigte gegen seine Pflichten als beamteter Hochschullehrer und Erzieher der deutschen Jugend in der gröblichsten Weise vergangen,“ in the order to institute proceedings by Saxon Ministry of Education, UL, PA1008, Personalakte Ueberschaar, 25 May 1937.

extrajudicial arrest and detention by the Gestapo, he fled as a fugitive to Japan in mid-1937.⁹⁸ Even his exile could not mollify his tormentors, who in early 1939 resorted to the extraordinary step of revoking his doctorate in absentia to discredit his life achievements.⁹⁹

The Nazi regime's proscription of Ueberschaar gutted the department of Japanese studies at Leipzig and thereby wreaked havoc with the creation of knowledge about Japan in Germany overall. As expected, the department never recovered. The number and variety of courses dropped precipitously. The very haste with which the authorities pursued Ueberschaar left no time for a replacement to be found. In the end the university had to settle for placeholders, a series of lecturers from Japan who mostly taught just the language. Not until January 1942 was a proper successor, Horst Hammitzsch (see Chapter Three), installed in the professorship; he taught for one semester before being conscripted into the depleted army. The University of Leipzig re-opened its Japanese studies department in 1996.

This episode surrounding Ueberschaar exposed the fraud of the new German-Japanese alliance and its accompanying propaganda. Neither the real shortage of experts capable of interpreting Japan for the public and the government, nor at least the appearance

⁹⁸ On the Gestapo pursuing Ueberschaar, see Steffi Richter, "Japanologie in Leipzig – was war, was sein wird" (speech delivered at the opening of the Ostasiatisches Institut, Japanologie at the University of Leipzig), November 1996. It is unclear whether the Japanese knew of the circumstances of Ueberschaar's departure. In any case, male homosexuality did not arouse nearly the antagonism in Japan as in Nazi Germany. For more on attitudes toward male homosexuality in interwar Japan, see chapters 5 and 6 in Gregory M. Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-Male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600–1950* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 235–335.

⁹⁹ Letter from Werner Studentkowski to the Rektor of University of Leipzig, UL, PA1008, Personalakte Ueberschaar, 23 March 1939. For more on Studentkowski, see Grüttner, *Lexikon*, 171–2.

The ferociousness and meticulousness with which Ueberschaar was attacked boggle the mind. Even far more stubborn and open foes of Nazism did not always receive such punishment. The Nazi regime revoked the German citizenship of some exiles, for example Kreutzer the pianist and Thomas Mann. Ueberschaar too presumably was robbed of his citizenship, but the revocation of his doctorate went far beyond any punishment prescribed by §175 in the Penal Code. I speculate that someone orchestrated a campaign to destroy Ueberschaar. The schemer, who shall remain unnamed here because my evidence is only circumstantial, likely coveted the position that Ueberschaar occupied and mobilized his substantial political connections to persecute and remove Ueberschaar. The plan ultimately failed, since the individual in question did not accede to the professorship.

of concern for advancing Japanology in Germany, could mitigate his plight. To begin with, the “crime” in question—never proven and even if true—paled in comparison in the Nazi worldview with the immutable “offense” of being Jewish. At times the regime could and did make practical exceptions for individuals of partial Jewish heritages whose service was deemed too valuable to lose, yet it did not do so when it faced the prospect of depriving itself of one of its top experts on its new ally.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, the Japanese consulate in Leipzig expressed concern for Ueberschaar and the impact of his legal troubles on Japanese studies at the university, especially since the professorship and department were funded largely by Japanese underwriters acquainted with Ueberschaar. Some professors at Leipzig also worried that the dismissal of Ueberschaar would lead to damaging repercussions overseas.¹⁰¹ The dean of the school of philosophy too submitted a statement to testify for Ueberschaar, citing his academic excellence and persistent work in building the department from scratch.¹⁰² All these appeals fell on deaf ears. Even the normally-ubiquitous DJG, so ready to intervene in such matters, for once seemed not to have been apprised of the prosecution, which unfolded at a breathtaking speed in the overeager hands of the state government of Saxony. The

¹⁰⁰ One of the more prominent of such exempted individuals was Luftwaffe Field Marshal Erhard Milch, who was probably at least “half Jewish.” For more, see Bryan Mark Rigg, *Hitler’s Jewish Soldiers: The Untold Story of Nazi Racial Laws and Men of Jewish Descent in the German Military* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002).

¹⁰¹ Letter from Professor Dr. Heinrich Junker to dean Erich Bräunlich, UL, PA1008, Personalakte Ueberschaar, 13 May 1937. Junker was an expert on Iran and Korea.

¹⁰² „Professor Ueberschaar hat durch seinen langen Aufenthalt in Japan ein wahrhaft inneres Verhältnis zu diesem Lande, seinem Volke und seiner Sprache gewonnen. Ein damals in Leipzig weilender japanischer Dozent der Universität Tokio sagte mir einmal, dass er kaum einen Europäer gefunden habe, der so gut Japanisch gelernt habe wie Professor Ueberschaar. Nach seiner Berufung an die Universität Leipzig ist Ueberschaar sofort mit Energie an den Aufbau des Japan-Instituts gegangen. Dabei ist er vor auftauchenden Schwierigkeiten nicht zurückgewichen, es ist ihm vielmehr in verhältnismässig kurzer Zeit gelungen, der Philologie des modernen Japanisch in Leipzig den Boden zu bereiten. Sein Ziel ist gewesen, dem Fache der Japanologie nicht nur eine den übrigen Zweigen der Orientalistik gleiche Vertretung in Deutschland, sondern sogar eine bevorzugte Stellung zu verschaffen,“ in statement by Bräunlich regarding Ueberschaar, UL, PA1008, Personalakte Ueberschaar, 5 June 1937.

Berlin-based DJG was kept so much in the dark that it still planned to invite Ueberschaar to the premiere of *The Daughter of the Samurai* in March 1937. In any case, some powerful elements seemed so determined to undo Ueberschaar that it remains doubtful whether the DJG could have shielded or sheltered him. Ultimately, we need not insist on weighing every deed of Nazism on the scale of reason; the same ideology after all drove away Einstein and other geniuses. Despite all the known negative consequences to German-Japanese exchanges and the state of Japan-learning in Germany, the regime in persecuting Ueberschaar placed dogma before reason and ideology before diplomacy.

The Devil

Richard Foerster also had a big idea. The time was mid-1942, when Germany and Japan were fighting their respective wars of destiny. Although the retired chief of the fleet must have realized that the global conflagration all but cut off the most vital diplomatic communication and military transportation between the two countries, he still decided to try to float his scheme. Like Eberhard Ponndorf, Foerster seized the initiative by writing a letter to the proper authorities:

At the University of Leipzig Professor Hans Ueberschaar had occupied the professorship of Japanology up to 1937. At the time in Leipzig he faced certain legal proceedings against him, though he avoided their execution by accepting a position at a Japanese university in Kobe-Osaka, where he has been leading a reclusive life ever since. He keeps no contact whatsoever with the Germans living in Japan, though he is endorsed and sought after for collaboration by prominent Japanese professors. Since Ueberschaar is one of the few German Japanologists, it would greatly benefit Japanology in this country if his expertise and knowledge could once again be tapped. In view of his outstanding qualifications it is regrettable that this strength can at this time not be adequately used.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ „An der Universität Leipzig hatte bis zum Jahre 1937 Professor Hans U e b e r s c h a a r den Lehrstuhl für Japanologie inne. Damals wurde gegen ihn ein Verfahren in Leipzig anhängig gemacht, dessen Durchführung er seinerzeit aus dem Weg ging, indem er eine Anstellung in Kobe-Osaka an einer japanischen Universität annahm. Seitdem lebt er dort völlig zurückgezogen und hat keinerlei Verbindung zu den in Japan lebenden Deutschen.

Foerster added that since he knew not the nature or outcome of the case against Ueberschaar, he asked the Ministry of Education to enlighten him of the current situation and the possibility of reinstating the exiled professor.¹⁰⁴ He did not receive any response, so in October he instructed the DJG's general secretary to follow up on the initial inquiry.¹⁰⁵ This request also went unanswered, apparently, but soon enough none of it mattered any more, as Germany and Japan would have graver concerns than the wasted talents of one individual. Ueberschaar never returned to Germany.¹⁰⁶

The historian Carol Gluck once remarked that in the more-than-a-century of German-Japanese interactions the two countries were probably farthest apart during the Berlin-Tokyo Axis.¹⁰⁷ The history of bilateral voluntary associations in Germany bears out her observation.

Er wird aber von namhaften japanischen Professoren unterstützt und zur Mitarbeit herangezogen. Da Ueberschaar einer der wenigen deutschen Japanologen ist, wäre es von grossem Wert, wenn seine Fähigkeiten und Kenntnisse der Japanologie in Deutschland wieder zugeführt werden könnten. Mit Rücksicht auf seine hohen Qualitäten ist es zu bedauern, dass diese Kraft zur Zeit nicht entsprechend genützt werden kann,“ in letter from Foerster to Dahncke, in BAK, R64IV/241, DJG, 29 July 1942. It was written in pencil in the margins that Professor Ramming of the Japan Institute also supported the proposal. Dr. Dahncke was an *Oberregierungsrat* within the overseas department of the Ministry of Education.

¹⁰⁴ „Da ich über den Ausgang des Verfahrens gegen ihn und den Inhalt der ihn belastenden Anklage nicht orientiert bin, wäre ich dankbar, wenn das Unterrichtsministerium feststellen könnte, wie die Angelegenheit Ueberschaar steht und welche Möglichkeiten zu einer Erledigung im Sinne meiner voranstehenden Ausführungen bestehen,“ in *ibid*.

¹⁰⁵ Letter from Rudolf Trömel on behalf of Foerster to Dahncke, in BAK, R64IV/241, DJG, 9 October 1942.

¹⁰⁶ As far as I am aware, the letter cited in the previous footnote marks the end of the archival trail for Ueberschaar, at least in the federal archives and the Leipzig University's archives, though it is possible that court documents from the criminal prosecution against him remain in the Saxon state archives. The list of Germans residing in Japan, compiled by the U.S. occupational authorities in 1946, did not contain an entry for Ueberschaar, since it only accounted for those who belonged to the Nazi Party as of the end of World War II. See BA, NS9/Box 4, *Auslandsorganisation der NSDAP*, 1946. Ueberschaar remained in the Osaka-Kobe area for the rest of his life and taught German in various universities in the area. He seemed not to have published anything during his residence in Japan, and it is rather difficult to locate more information on his life and activities there. I had, however, the good fortune of corresponding with Mr. Iwamoto Akira 岩本哲, one of Ueberschaar's students in the early 1950s, who shared with me his fond memories of the demanding teacher. Ueberschaar passed away in 1965 and was buried in the foreign cemetery in Kobe.

¹⁰⁷ Carol Gluck, “What a Difference 120 Years Make: Germany, Japan, the World” (lecture delivered at the conference “Von, über und mit Japan reden: 120 Jahre Japan-Forschung in Berlin” at the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin, 15 October 2007).

Nowadays the several German-Japanese Societies and similar groups resemble their pre-1945 predecessor—*not* ancestor—only in their broad geographical distribution across the country. While the branches of the centralized DJG were considered subordinates of the headquarters in Berlin, among the current associations scattered in various cities, each answers only to itself and its local members. They operate in the cultural, social, academic, and interpersonal spheres, with no ambition of political relevance and no agenda of self-aggrandizement, unlike the DJG. In essence they inherit their inspiration, spirit, and mission from the Wa Doku Kai and the Japan Institute. Seen from the long-term development of German-Japanese relations, then, the Nazified, hyper-political DJG, as well as the Axis that it helped to forge, amounted to an abnormal mutation, an evolutionary dead-end, with the unpredicted and unpredictable rise of Nazism as the carcinogen.

Much like today, for most of the interbellum period Germany and Japan nurtured formal, friendly, mutually-beneficial ties that nonetheless did not occupy a foreign-policy priority, much less serve as stepping stones toward a strategic partnership. Under this salutary neglect of sorts, civilian organizations in Germany (and in Japan too, as we shall see in Chapter Six) had much latitude to advance their goal of fostering cooperation and to mold public perceptions by mobilizing and organizing those individuals most knowledgeable about and experienced in the other country. In general the Japan Institute was satisfied with preaching to the choir and hosting smaller events, but the DJG desired more, as it sought ways to translate its exclusive claim to understand Japan into something concrete. When the Nazi regime instituted Gleichschaltung, some DJG members viewed it as not only an offer they could not refuse but also an opportunity they should not miss. In return for a shot at worldly power, the DJG opened the doors of its leadership structure to rank amateurs or even

ignoramus. To wit, the DJG struck a bargain with National Socialism like the one Doctor Faustus made with Mephistopheles.

The headlong rush to embrace, acquire, and exercise power indeed took the DJG to heights unmatched by other bi-national organizations in Germany. Its members powwowed with bigwigs in the bureaucracy, party, and military, and its tentacles touched areas of propaganda and public diplomacy such as films, lectures, exhibitions, essay competitions, personnel exchanges, and reception of Japanese visitors. It established branches across Greater Germany, and was acknowledged and accepted by other government agencies as a partner and counterparty in negotiations. Through its aggressive self-promotion by arguing relentlessly for the ascendancy of Japan as a “world power” that Germany would ignore at its peril, the DJG also introduced a political dimension to the image of Japan in Germany that did not exist before or since. In short, the DJG not only jumped on the Gleichschaltung bandwagon, it also rode on the coattails of expansionist, militarist Japan.

Unlike the devil in the Faustian pact, however, National Socialism demanded payment up front. One should not forget that the reconstituted DJG was founded through the “initiation rite” of the deposition of a Jewish chairman and another board member who helped start and run the club in the first place. Meanwhile Haber and Solf, who each contributed mightily to interwar German-Japanese reconciliation, were respectively driven into exile or shunned. Soon enough the contradiction of an organization laboring under a xenophobic ideology to promote an alien folk became unmistakable, as did the illusory nature of the power it strove so long and hard to acquire. When biracial Japanese-Germans trapped in a limbo under a system with no consideration for them appealed to the DJG for assistance, the association could do precious little beyond rephrasing their appeals in

bureaucratic prose on official-looking DJG letterheads. True, the DJG corresponded voluminously with government and party agencies responsible for the matter of race, but its intervention brought no appreciable results—the *content* of the replies to the DJG on equally formal stationery seldom contained good news or even a definitive but merciful rejection. Its other schemes, such as the instruction of Japanese to German officers, were also received with ambivalence, if not outright rejection. When the authorities went after one of its own prominent members who also happened to be one of Germany's top Japanologists, the DJG did not even seem to have been informed of the situation. In any case, given the speed and determination with which the movement sought to unmake Ueberschaar, the DJG, even had it been fully engaged in interceding for him, could probably have done little to deflect the eventual outcome. In the end, although the DJG itself fed off and thrived under Nazism, the ideology also inflicted irreparable harm to the overall creation of knowledge about Japan in Germany. After all, the DJG was not the same as Japanese studies, and in return for selling its soul it received the trappings of authority but little real influence. Even if the claim to knowledge did bring the DJG a semblance of power, the reverse of the maxim, namely power being knowledge, does not hold true, for the Nazi regime used its dominance to pursue several propagators of information about Japan in Germany.

CHAPTER FIVE

GERMANY AS FINE PRINT: GERMANY IN NEWSPAPERS

君側の權衰へて、政府に移り、政府の權衰へて、議會に移り、議會の權衰へて新聞紙に移る、古今天下を制馭する所以の大勢力を數ふるに、十六世紀以前にありては、君側也、十七世紀以後にありては政府也、十八世紀以後に至りては議會也、而して十九世紀の後半以後に至りては、¹「ち新聞紙にありと言はざるべからず。

—Introduction to *Journalism* (*Shinbungaku* 『新聞學』)¹

帝國政府として萬古不動の國體を擁護し、國家の安全を確保し、進んで東亞永遠の平和を維持するため、從來とも共²主義的活動に對しては明確なる方針を堅持して來た次第であるが、右の如きコミンテルンの脅威増大に鑑み、一層嚴重なる防衛措置を講ずるの必要に迫らるゝに至つた。...獨逸に於いては昭和八年ヒットラー政權の成立以來峻烈なる反共²主義的政策を實行し來つた。一方前述の如く客年のコミンテルン大會は、日本及び獨逸等を以て今後に於けるコミンテルン活動の主たる對象となしてゐるので、獨逸は對コミンテルン關係に於いて帝國と著るしく類似の立場に在るのである。よつて帝國政府に於いてはコミンテルンに對する防衛工作の第一²として、先づ獨逸と交²を重ねた結果、遂に本日協定の調印と了し、直ちに實施せられたのである。

—Press release by the Foreign Ministry, 26 November 1926²

¹ “As the monarch’s authority declined, power shifted to the government. As the government’s authority declined, power shifted to the parliament. As the parliament’s authority declines, power shifts to the newspapers. Looking at the great entities that wielded power in the world, before the sixteenth century it was the monarchy, and since the seventeenth century it was the government. Since the eighteenth century it was the parliament, and now since the second half of the nineteenth century, one would have to say it is the newspapers,” in Introduction by Takekoshi Yosaburō 竹越與三郎, in Matsumoto Kunpei 松本君平, *Shinbungaku Ōbei shinbun jigyo* 『新聞學 歐米新聞事業』 (Tokyo: Hakubunkan 博文館, 1899), Introduction 1.

² “Although the Imperial Government, in order to protect the national polity from time immemorial, to safeguard the nation, and to advance perpetual peace in East Asia, always maintained a clear stance against communist activities, it has determined that, in view of the growing threat of the Comintern, another layer of

For a people famous for some of the world's most iconic manufacturers of electronic gadgets, the Japanese remain avid consumers of newspapers—on newsprint too—well into the twenty-first century. As of 2010, of the ten newspapers with the highest circulation figures in the world, five were printed in Japanese, including the top three.³ To this day, if a major news story breaks midday, such as the (increasingly common, alas) replacement of a prime minister, one may still encounter the anachronistic sight of a lad distributing newspaper extras to passers-by near train stations. As technologically savvy as the Japanese may seem to be, one can often see in a commuter train in rush hours more people reading a newspaper than those staring into an electronic device. Looking forward, it certainly appears that newspapers in Japan will not only survive but also thrive for some time into the digital age.

Looking backward to the pre–World War II days, before the popularization of the internet, before the invention of satellite communication, before the commoditization of the television, and before the advent of the portable radio, newspapers would have and did exercise even more influence in molding public opinions and relaying information in Japan. A career in journalism frequently served as an entrance ticket into politics or the bureaucracy. For example, Matsumoto, author of the above-quoted *Journalism*, worked as a reporter before he was elected to the Lower House of the Diet and was later appointed to a high position in the navy. Even more prominently, the prime minister of the first party cabinet in

protection has become imperative... Since coming to power in 1933 the Hitler regime has implemented ferocious policies against communism. As Japan and Germany were identified as targets for Comintern activities in the Comintern Congress last year, the Imperial Government's relations vis-à-vis the Comintern had become markedly similar to that of Germany. Accordingly, the Imperial Government took the first step of erecting a defense against the Comintern by undertaking negotiations with Germany, and by signing [the Anti-Comintern] Pact today," in *Nichidoku bōkyō kyōtei ni tsuite* 『日獨防共協定に就て』 (Tokyo: Gaimushō jōhōbu 外務省情報部, 1937), 11–12.

³ The newspapers were, in order of decreasing circulation figures, Yomiuri Shinbun (ten million), Asahi Shinbun (eight million), Mainichi Shinbun (almost four million), Nikkei (about three million), and Chūnichi Shinbun (just below three million). See Christoph Riess, "World Press Trends 2011" (presentation, 63rd World Newspaper Congress, Vienna, 12–15 October 2011).

Japan, Hara Takashi 原敬, also began his professional life as a newsman and led a career in which he traversed journalism, government, and politics. That the fourth estate in interwar Japan constituted another source of power and influence beside the military, aristocracy, industry, and bureaucracy can hardly be denied. Newspapers, as a result, would have served as the first, broadest step of the step pyramid of knowledge acquisition about Germany.

Accordingly, this chapter examines the treatment of Germany in interwar Japanese newspapers and its implications for Japanese-German relations. How did the press depict Germany in the 1920s and 1930s? Why and how did happenings in Germany become news in faraway Japan? Which topics caught the attention of Japanese correspondents? How did the changes in the two countries in the early 1930s affect the appearance of Germany in the press? What role did journalism play in the making of bilateral rapprochement? The chapter presents the case that Germany attracted largely positive coverage in Japanese newspapers for its interesting ex-royalty, sophisticated culture, and advanced technology. Moreover, the plights of the German economy aroused some sympathy, but the German government's handling of the economic crisis in the early 1930s also rankled some in the press. At the same time, as Weimar Germany as part of the League of Nations condemned Japanese aggression in China, it along the rest of the West was uniformly excoriated by the newspapers. Yet when the republic was replaced by the Nazi dictatorship, Germany's image in the press did not immediately improve due to the regime's barbaric acts like book-burning and anti-Semitic violence. Eventually, however, as the flashpoints between Germany and Japan were removed or de-emphasized, some voices in the press also began promote the prospect of bilateral collaboration. The investigation of Germany's place on newsprint shall begin with an overview of what the press as a source of information and opinion meant in interwar Japan.

Newspapers in Interwar Japan

Newspapers arrived in Japan within the deluge of imports from overseas in the early 1860s as sheets rendered from Western languages for the eyes of only a few leaders in the Shogunate or as commercial bulletins composed by and for foreign residents.⁴ After the Meiji Restoration the press expanded greatly and rapidly, thanks to the breathtaking modernization campaign to eradicate illiteracy and to adopt the latest printing technology. In the 1870s and 1880s, newspapers became politicized and often functioned as unofficial party mouthpieces through adopting positions in contemporary political controversies. Yet as readership figures increased, the press also gained more independence because they could rely more on subscription and retail for revenues, and less on the editors' ability to raise funds from political circles.⁵

At times the newspapers' drive for profit by espousing populism pitted them against the government's proclaimed prerogative to monitor printed words. In addition to censorship, a libel law had been on the books since 1875, and since 1925 the Peace Preservation Law further limited the latitude in reporting.⁶ In practice, however, the censors' red ink ebbed and

⁴ For interwar works on English on Japanese newspapers, see, Hanazono Kanesada 花園兼定, *The Development of Japanese Journalism* (Osaka: The Osaka Mainichi, 1924); Suzuki Bunshirō 鈴木文四郎, *Japanese Journalism, Western Influences in Modern Japan* 10 (Tokyo: The Japanese Council Institute of Pacific Relations, 1929); Hayasaka Jirō 早坂次郎, *An Outline of the Japanese Press* (Tokyo: The Foreign Affairs Association of Japan, 1938). For a post-World War II view, see Itō Masanori, "History of the Japanese Press," in *The Japanese Press: Past and Present* (Tokyo: Nihon shinbun kyōkai 日本新聞協会, 1949), 4–15. For more current studies, see, James L. Huffman, *Creating a Public: People and Press in Meiji Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997); Susan J. Pharr and Ellis S. Krauss, eds., *Media and Politics in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996); Ejiri Susumu 江尻進, *Characteristics of the Japanese Press* (Tokyo: Nihon shinbun kyōkai, 1972); and, William de Lange, *A History of Japanese Journalism: Japan's Press Club as the Last Obstacle to a Mature Press* (Richmond, Surrey, UK: Japan Library, 1998).

⁵ See, Kawabé Kisaburō 川邊喜三郎, *The Press and Politics in Japan: A Study of the Relation between the Newspaper and the Political Development of Modern Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1921); and, Lee Jung Bock, *The Political Character of the Japanese Press* (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 1985).

⁶ See, Henry Emerson Wildes, "Press Freedom in Japan," *The American Journal of Sociology*, no. 4 (Jan. 1927): 601–14; and, Henry Emerson Wildes, "Censorship and Extra-legal Supervision," in *The Press and*

flowed with the level of domestic social tension. Whereas during the Great War officials terminated pro-German foreign newspapers and punished the *Asahi Shinbun* 『朝日新聞』 (*The Asahi Daily*) for criticizing Japan's military intervention in Siberia, much of the period of this chapter's concern, the 1920s and early 1930s, overlapped with the era known as Taisho Democracy that witnessed advanced in suffrage and parliamentary democracy, social stability, economic growth, and international peace—hence laxer restriction of the press.⁷

This chapter surveys five newspapers spanning the whole political spectrum. From the far left stemmed the *Akahata* 『赤旗』 (*Red Banner*), founded in 1928 as the organ of the Japanese Communist Party. Although estimating the circulation of the underground paper of an outlawed political party poses a tall challenge, the *Akahata* did show signs of better organization and presumably greater popularity after its inception. Its format evolved from handwritten leaflets to lithographs to proper newsprints by a press with movable types. In 1935, the *Akahata* published its last issue after the authorities' virtual extinguishment of the party, even as an underground organization.⁸

From the center left came the *Tōkyō Asahi Shinbun* 『東京朝日新聞』 (*The Tokyo Asahi Daily*), which had its origins in Osaka. According to one contemporary foreign commentator, the *Asahi* “prides itself on being the most liberal Japanese newspaper, mostly

Social Currents in Japan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), 104–34. The Newspaper Law of 1905 also toughened punishment for violations of existing press regulations.

⁷ See, Gregory J. Kasza, *The State and Mass Media in Japan, 1918–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); and, Richard H. Mitchell, *Censorship in Imperial Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983). Mitchell depicted a trend of relentlessly tightening censorship until 1945, but one cannot deny that press control in the 1920s paled in comparison to that during World War I and especially after outbreak of full hostilities with China in 1937.

⁸ Preface to the newspaper's 1954 reprinting, in *Akahata higōhō jidai no Nihon kyōsantō chūō kikanishi* 『赤旗 非合法時代の日本共産党中央機関紙』 . Hereafter *Akahata*. For more, see also the revived paper's website, *Shinbun Akahata* 『しんぶん赤旗』 , <<http://www.jcp.or.jp/akahata/>>.

read by intellectuals, members of the liberal professions and business men.”⁹ Despite this reputation and its willingness to challenge censors by breaking banned news such as the post-1918 Rice Riots and related social unrest, the *Asahi* also proved capable of profiting from jingoism by fueling enthusiasm for the Manchurian Incident.¹⁰ Partly due to its appeal to both the elite and ordinary readers, the *Asahi* reigned as the most popular newspaper until 1945, with circulation in the Tokyo metropolitan area approaching one million.¹¹

The *Yomiuri Shinbun* 『讀賣新聞』 (*The Daily Yomiuri*) was founded in 1874 in Tokyo as an “inconspicuous arts paper confined to literary and to cultural affairs,” and it reflected mostly viewpoints from the populist center right. In the late 1920s, one observer noted that the *Yomiuri* reported news in an “incidental” or “casual” style.¹² Yet, under a new, energetic management in the mid-1920s the paper began to transform itself in order to capture market share. It turned “somewhat more nationalistic, sensational and popular” than the more established *Asahi*.¹³ The *Yomiuri* also pioneered a women’s section and an advice column, in addition to establishing an extremely popular professional baseball team, the

⁹ Guenther Stein, “Through the Eyes of a Japanese Newspaper Reader,” *Pacific Affairs* 9, no. 2 (June 1936): 177.

¹⁰ For more on the media’s role in the crisis, see, Louise Young, “War Fever: Imperial Jingoism and the Mass Media,” in *Japan’s Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 55–114.

¹¹ For more on the *Asahi*, see, A. Morgan Young, “The Press and Japanese Thought,” *Pacific Affairs* 10, no. 4 (Dec. 1937): 414; Suzuki, 11–15; Wildes, *Press and Social Currents*, 38–40; Lee, 19–21; Hayasaka, 8–12; and, the newspaper’s website, *Asahi Daily* 『朝日新聞』, <<http://www.asahi.com/>>.

¹² Itō, 13; and, Wildes, *Press and Social Currents*, 33.

¹³ Stein, 177. For more on the *Yomiuri*, see A. Morgan Young, 413; Suzuki, 15–16; Lee, 24–7; Hayasaka, 14–16; and, the newspaper’s website, *Yomiuri Online* 『読売新聞』, <<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/>>. The catalyst of the transformation of the *Yomiuri* was the energetic Shōriki Matsutarō 正力松太郎, who tuned the *Yomiuri* from an obscure local Tokyo newspaper to the largest in the country. Shōriki was also instrumental in the development of professional baseball (the Yomiuri Giants) and television (Nippon Television Network) in Japan.

Yomiuri Giants.¹⁴ By 1938, the *Yomiuri* had grown its circulation phenomenally to 950,000.¹⁵

The *Kokumin Shinbun* 『國民新聞』 (*The Peoples' Newspaper*) appealed mainly to the nationalistic right. Following the ideological sojourn of its colorful founder, the social critic Tokutomi Sohō 徳富蘇峰, the newspaper abandoned liberalism and embraced populist nationalism and xenophobia. One observer recalled that Tokutomi “rants very heartily on such subjects as the White Peril.”¹⁶ After the Russo-Japanese War, the *Kokumin* aligned itself firmly with government but also alienated the public by defending unpopular policies like suppressing news of the post-1918 disturbance. Though still a major newspaper in the 1930s, its circulation dwindled to around 100,000.¹⁷

The political orientation of *The Japan Times and Mail*, a Japanese-edited paper in English, eludes simple generalization since it eclectically reproduced and translated Japanese editorials and foreign-language articles. Potential readers included Westerners in Japan and Japanese eager to improve their English or knowledge of international events, but under heavy competition—against newspapers run by native English speakers—for such a narrow market the *Times* could not have attracted enough subscribers to maintain financial buoyancy.

¹⁴ Edward Seidensticker, *Tokyo from Edo to Showa 1867–1989: The Emergence of the World's Greatest City* (Rutland, Vermont: Tuttle Publishing, 2010), 303.

¹⁵ Hayasaka, 6.

¹⁶ A. Morgan Young, 416.

¹⁷ For more on the *Kokumin*, see Leslie Russell Oates, *Populist Nationalism in Prewar Japan: A Biography of Nakano Seigō* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1985), 12; Itō, 6; Lee, 29–33; Wildes, *Press and Social Currents*, 42–4; Hayasaka, 18; and, John D. Pierson, *Tokutomi Sohō, 1863–1957: A Journalist for Modern Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

Indeed, telltale evidence suggests that the paper received government subsidies to help disseminate official viewpoints to foreign readers.¹⁸

Much like in Germany, the readiness of the Japanese authorities to censor the press only betrayed the influence that newspapers wielded in society. As a matter of fact, during much of the interwar era the papers functioned as powerful organizations capable of reaching the avidly literate Japanese public. Many families received deliveries of more than one paper, so that by 1927, the number of subscriptions in Tokyo exceeded the number of households by an astounding 130,000.¹⁹ Additionally, businesses, schools, government offices, and other public spaces often placed newspapers in reception areas and employee lounges, a practice still prevalent today. An American sociologist remarked in 1929 that “most Japanese... agree in stating that the press should be regarded as the influential factor working toward improvement in social and political conditions.”²⁰ The two largest press groups, the *Asahi* and the *Mainichi* 『 日 本 』, published newspapers in various cities, and each boasted a combined daily circulation of about two million. In turn these papers generated enough profits to enable their parent companies to perform myriad social functions beyond print journalism. For instance, the *Asahi* and the *Mainichi* groups each operated its own telephone and telegraph services, and even an airline to beat competitors in bringing home breaking news from the continent. They also organized fundraising drives to assist disaster victims or collect donations for naval construction.²¹ Considering the newspapers’ considerable reach

¹⁸ Wildes, *Press and Social Currents*, 374–5. He cites as proof conversations with government officials about the existence of the subsidies. For more on the *Japan Times*, see its website, *The Japan Times Online*, <<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/>>.

¹⁹ Huffman, 363.

²⁰ Wildes, *Press and Social Currents*, 53.

²¹ Suzuki, 15–17.

throughout society and impact on people's lives outside informing the public and molding opinion, we may depend on them as one medium to study Japan's perception of the world.

Germany in the Press

Overall the interwar Japan press presented Germany through a kaleidoscopic image ranging from a serious analysis of the Weimar Constitution to a casual discussion of the musical merit of the national anthem *Deutschland über Alles* (*Germany over Everything*).²² Still, recurring topics emerged out of this eclectic mosaic to highlight certain aspects: admiration for Germany's ex-monarch, advanced culture, science and economy, a perception of Germany as part of the West, and concern over potential German colonial aspirations in the Pacific, Nazi book-burning, and anti-Semitic measures.

A strong interest in the abdicated Kaiser Wilhelm II marked Japanese press coverage on Germany. In 1919, almost as soon as the Great War ended in an armistice some Japanese journalists began to worry that the Allies were contemplating trying Wilhelm for war crimes. Thus the *Yomiuri* praised the Netherlands for providing refuge to the ex-Kaiser and rejecting the Allied demand for extradition. The newspaper warned against setting a dangerous precedent of trying a “sacrosanct sovereign,”²³ and cited the “fierce opposition” of the Taisho Emperor to holding the exiled Hohenzollern responsible.²⁴ Japan had high stakes in the

²² Nagura Mon'ichi 名倉聞一, “Doitsu no shinkenpō” 「獨逸の新憲法」, *Tōkyō Asahi Shinbun*, 24–29 August 1920. Hereafter *Asahi*; and, “Kaikin ni natta Doitsu no kokka” 「解禁になつたドイツの國歌」, *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 27 July 1926. Hereafter *Yomiuri*. Nagura collected some of his articles and published them in book form in 1922 (see Chapter Seven).

²³ 「我國及米國代表者の如きは、神聖不可侵の君主を審問することは、國際法上に一新例を開くものなりとて、反對の意志を表示したりと云ふ」, in “Dokutei hikiwatashi mondai (Oranda no kyozeitsu seitō)” 獨帝引渡問題（和蘭の拒・正當）, *Yomiuri*, 28 January 1920.

²⁴ 「日本駐荷和蘭公使館員は・に前獨帝を審問せんとする企圖に對し日本皇帝陛下が猛烈に反對せられ日本政府は若し他國が引渡要求を撤回せば引渡要求を主張せざる旨誓言せり」, in “Nihon kōtei no

debate—if the ex-Kaiser could be tried for Germany’s actions, then Japan, with a constitution partly modeled on that of the Kaiserreich, might one day face the same charges.²⁵ Despite the Weimar Republic’s publication of Wilhelm’s old letters urging the Russian Czar to snatch Korea from Japan, the ex-Kaiser in the 1920s and 1930s enjoyed royal treatment by the Japanese newspapers. They meticulously reported as newsworthy events such as minor ailments or remarriage as if he were still in power.

Furthermore, the Japanese press repeatedly exaggerated the chance of his return to Germany to reclaim his throne, an expectation raised further still by the rise of conservatives such as Paul von Hindenburg to the presidency in 1925 and Franz von Papen to the chancellorship in 1932. When Papen took over the Prussian government in an administrative coup, the *Tōkyō Nichinichi Shinbun* 『東京日日新聞』 even speculated that the ex-crown prince would soon become Germany’s president.²⁶ Likewise, the *Asahi* interpreted Nazism in terms of monarchical restoration rather than revolution and called Hitler “head of a restoration faction” after his failed putsch in 1923.²⁷

Despite Hitler’s repeated proclamations of his plan to remake Germany into something hitherto unseen, the papers in Japan kept imagining Nazism as a restorationist

hantai zendokutei hikiwatashi mondai to kakkoku” 日本皇帝の反對 前獨帝引渡問題と各國, *Yomiuri*, 28 January 1920.

²⁵ 「帝國憲法第三條に曰く『天皇ハ神聖ニシテ侵スヘカラス』と明定すされば帝國政府並に國民は此心を以て常に他國の元首にも對する」, in “Kōwa shinsō (8) Dokutei shobun mondai” 講和真相 (八) 獨帝處分問題, *Yomiuri*, 9 July 1919. The *Kokumin* echoed this concern by calling any trial of the Kaiser a violation of international ethics and humanitarianism, see 「審問は國際道德及政治上人道上の見地より之を審問するに止め」, in “Zendokutei shinmon no keishiki” 前獨帝審問の形式, *Kokumin Shinbun*, 21 January 1920. Hereafter *Kokumin*.

²⁶ *Nichinichi* editorial translated as “Party or Despotic Government,” *The Japan Times and Mail*, 15 September 1932. Hereafter *Japan Times*. The *Nichinichi* was the Tokyo counterpart of the *Ōsaka Mainichi* and the major competitor with the *Asahi* for the Tokyo market.

²⁷ “Fukuhekiha kyotō taiho” 復辟派巨頭逮捕, *Asahi*, 11 November 1923.

movement. Instead of seeing the crown prince's membership in the Nazi Party as a submission to Hitler's appeal, the *Kokumin* rationalized that this royal-Nazi link could only facilitate the ex-Kaiser's return to power.²⁸ Perhaps something novel or nostalgic about a monarch's *restoration* touched Japanese reporters by reminding them of their own country's recent history and meteoric rise, but their myopic magnification of Wilhelm's importance distorted their grasp of German politics. Not only did the papers see republican Germany in the shadow of the ex-Kaiser, they also assumed that the rightist Nazi Party would automatically support restoration. The marriage of the Japanese press to a romantic, inaccurate preconception of the German political landscape caused it to miss the fundamentally revolutionary nature of the regime under Hitler and made correct analyses of Nazi ideologically-driven policies more difficult. We should also note that while the papers from the *Asahi* to the *Kokumin* all paid special attention to the ex-Kaiser, it was understandably the conservative paper that seemed more wedded to the expectation of Wilhelm's return. It appeared likely that the *Kokumin*'s own political worldview colored the lens through which it comprehended German politics.

In addition to its ex-monarch, Germany attracted the interest of the newspapers through various expressions of its culture. Soon after World War I, a literary critic predicted in the *Yomiuri* that German culture's "deep thought and powerful emotions" would soon propel it back to the core of world culture.²⁹ He also published a series in the *Kokumin* to

²⁸ 「獨逸の復辟は、ホーヘンツォルレン家とヒットラーの関係から見て可能性が多分にある。ヒットラー運動に関しては、獨逸舊皇室は非常に同情を持つて居る」, in Gorai Kinzō 五來欣造, "Dokutei futatabi kaeru ka—Doitsu no fukuheki ni tsuite—" 獨帝再び歸るか—獨逸の復辟について—, *Kokumin*, 17 March 1933.

²⁹ 「獨逸文明の特 ▪ は思想の深さと、感情の激烈さ...將來世界文化の中心となるのは、矢張り獨逸でなければならない」, in Yamagishi Mitsunobu 山岸光宣, "Doitsu bunka no shōrai" 獨逸文化の將來, *Yomiuri*,

compare German literature before and after the war.³⁰ The *Asahi* meanwhile discussed German culture by reviewing movies produced and exported by the German film powerhouse Ufa.³¹ It also introduced its readers to German performance arts through an exposition on a dramatic rendition of Gerhart Hauptmann's *Vor Sonnenaufgang* (*Before Sunrise*).³² For the centennial of Goethe's death, the *Asahi*, *Yomiuri*, and *Japan Times* all paid tribute to the literary giant.³³ In fact, the *Asahi* reported that on the day of the anniversary a Goethe festival took place in Tokyo featuring the German ambassador as the keynote speaker and performance of Goethe's dramatic works.³⁴

German music and scholarship too drew the interest of Japanese reporters. In addition to the aforementioned study of the national anthem's musical quality, the *Asahi* detailed in a long article the plight of German musicians during the world economic crisis.³⁵ The German language itself aroused so much interest that the front pages of newspapers frequently carried advertisements for German courses and books on topics such as lessons from Germany's

17 September 1919. Yamagishi was one of the most prominent Germanists in interwar Japan. His name will recur several times in the next chapters.

³⁰ Yamagishi Mitsunobu, "Senzen sengo no Doitsu bungaku" 戦前戦後の獨逸文學, *Kokumin*, 17–19 November 1920. We shall read more about Yamagishi in the following chapters.

³¹ "Shin eigahyō 'aikokusha' Doku Ufa eiga" 新映畫評「愛國者」獨ウファ映畫, *Asahi*, 3 March 1932.

³² Chino Shōshō 茅野蕭々, "Hauptoman sono sakuhin ni tsuite" ハウプトマン その作品について, *Asahi*, 15 November 1932. Chino was an important scholar on German literature.

³³ For example, see Okutsu Hikoshige 奥津彦重, "Gēte no me gēte hyakunensai wo kinen shite" ゲーテの眼 ゲーテ百年祭を記念して, *Asahi*, 14–16 March 1932.

³⁴ "Hyakunensai no 'gēte no yū'" 百年祭記念の「ゲーテの夕」, *Asahi*, 23 March 1932.

³⁵ Ishikawa Renji 石川鍊次, "Doitsu gakudan no genjō" ドイツ樂壇の現 状, *Asahi*, 29 October 1932, Evening Edition.

recovery, Hitlerism, and German economic theories.³⁶ Japanese scholars welcomed German membership in the League of Nations not just because of its beneficial impact on peace but also because it facilitated German research on Japan and academic exchange between the two nations.³⁷ A *Yomiuri* report on the Japanese government's acceptance of German books as valid reparations payments in lieu of cash revealed most tellingly this admiration of German culture and scholarship.³⁸ One could hardly imagine France or Belgium allowing Germany to bargain to replace coal shipments with copies of Goethe's *Faust*.

In addition to traditional culture, Germany's modern technology also drew the attention of the press. The newspapers celebrated as sensations the visits to Japan by the German Nobel physicist Albert Einstein in 1922 and chemist Fritz Haber in 1924. The press enthusiastically greeted Einstein on arrival and went so far as to publish his travel itinerary and scheduled lectures. More remarkably, a famous cartoonist for the *Asahi*, Okamoto Ippei 岡本一平, on his own initiative joined Einstein's entourage in Japan out of admiration in order to observe and document the scientist's actions up close. Afterwards he produced a short pamphlet with numerous drawings and caricatures to share with readers Einstein's amusing experiences in Japan, including experimenting with unfamiliar food and hearing a temple bell struck in his honor.³⁹ Haber, who journeyed to Japan at the invitation of a

³⁶ See for examples, advertisement, "Shin Doitsugo kōza" 新ドイツ語講座, *Asahi*, 27 September 1927; advertisement, "Hittorā to Hittorā undō" ヒットラアとヒットラア運動, *Yomiuri*, 4 February 1933; and, advertisement, "Doitsu keizai shisōshi" 獨逸經濟思想史, *Yomiuri*, 10 February 1933.

³⁷ Kanokogi Kazunobu 鹿子木員信, "Renmei no shinjin Doitsu no Nihon bunka kenkyūnetsu" 聯盟の新人ドイツの日本文化・究熱, *Yomiuri*, 14 September 1926. Kanokogi was discussed extensively in Chapter Four.

³⁸ "Baishōkin no kawari ni Doitsu kara shoseki wo monbu naimu no ryōshō de kotoshi wa rokumansen'yo en hodo" 賠償金の代りに獨逸から書籍を 文部内務の兩省で 今年は六万千餘圓ほど, *Yomiuri*, 10 October 1926.

³⁹ Okamoto Ippei 岡本一平, "Albert Einstein in Japan: 1922," trans. Koizumi Kenichiro, *American Journal of Physics* 10 (October 1981): 930–40. Okamoto was instrumental in bringing the art form of cartoon back to

Japanese entrepreneur and to visit the grave of his uncle, the first German consul in Hakodate, likewise received a warm welcome.⁴⁰ In fact, Haber became so enamored with Japan that upon returning to Germany he helped found the Japan Institute in the mid-1920s to foster cooperation between the two countries (see Chapter Four).⁴¹ Both Einstein and Haber wrote and spoke fondly of their trips to Japan, thereby providing ordinary Germans with another outlet to learn about the country.

When the airship *Graf Zeppelin* embarked on a circumnavigation flight in 1929, the press in Japan built up anticipatory excitement among the populace for its arrival in Japan by educating the public on aviation and tracked every leg of the dirigible's flight. Pioneering German aviators who made their way to Japan, such as the pilot Wolfgang von Gronau on his round-the-world flight, invariably received a hero's welcome.⁴² The newspapers even held the German navy in high regard despite the lackluster performance of its surface fleet during the Great War. Already in 1919, the *Kokumin* hailed German naval technology as "first rate."⁴³ Even in its drastically reduced post-Versailles condition, the German navy still intrigued reporter.⁴⁴ The *Japan Times* detailed in two articles in 1933 how Germany's new

Japanese newspapers, and, as we shall soon see, he produced a number of incisive political cartoons on Germany. He was married to the writer Okamoto Kanoko 岡本かの子.

⁴⁰ "Dokugasusen no sōsetsusha Hahakushi sanjū nichi ni raichō" 毒ガス戦の創設者 ハ博士三十日に來朝, *Yomiuri*, 29 October 1924.

⁴¹ For more on Fritz Haber and Japan, see Morris Herbert Goran, *The Story of Fritz Haber* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967).

⁴² See for example, "Enrai no Guronauki Kasumigaura ni anchakusu" 遠來のグロナウ機霞ヶ浦に安着す, *Asahi*, 5 September 1932. For more on Gronau, Chapter One.

⁴³ 「戦艦の如きは艦體主砲等凡て獨逸一流」, in "Dokukan bunpai ikan" 獨艦分配如何, *Kokumin*, 4 November 1919.

⁴⁴ The bulk of the Kaiser's High Seas Fleet survived World War I by being bottled up in the North and Baltic Seas but was practically eliminated as a fighting force after the terms of the Versailles Treaty became known on 20 June 1919. Rather than seeing their ships fall into the hands of the victorious Allies, the next day the sailors

“pocket battleships” brilliantly complied with restrictions in the Versailles Treaty and yet defied its intention to deny Germany a blue-water navy.⁴⁵ The *Kokumin* went as far as to commend the German navy as “still the model of the world” from whose spirit Japan had much to learn—lofty praises indeed from a country with one of the world’s most powerful navies in 1933.⁴⁶

In everyday settings too the press exposed readers to German science. For example, pharmaceutical companies like Bayer regularly advertised their products in the newspapers.⁴⁷ Also, Japanese trading houses peddling new panaceas without foreign connections often borrowed the names of German celebrities to help boost sales. The fame of Erwin von Bälz, a renowned physician for the Japanese royal family, was used to enhance the respectability and sale of “the cure” for syphilis.⁴⁸ Other celebrities, like Wilhelm II and Goethe, were said to have taken drugs that relieve the stomach ailment of the monarch during the war and cured the writer’s tuberculosis, and that were finally available in Japan.⁴⁹ No doubt, the Japanese companies selling these wonder drugs of dubious effectiveness invoked the “endorsements” by well-known Germans to attempt to bestow respectability to their potions. That the simple

scuttled the fleet at Scapa Flow where it was interned. Germany was allowed to keep a handful of old battleships and no submarines.

⁴⁵ “Germany’s New Navy,” *Japan Times*, 4 March 1933; and, “The German Navy: New Pocket Battleship,” *Japan Times*, 1 April 1933.

⁴⁶ 「大和魂を誇るわれ々も一應このドイツ魂に學んで見る必要はないでせうか」, in “Tsuyoi Doitsu no shinkaigun izen sekai no mohan kaigun” ■ い獨逸の新海軍 依然世界の模範海軍, *Kokumin*, 15 January 1933, Sunday Supplement.

⁴⁷ See for example, advertisement, “Doitsu Baieru sei novaruginjō” 獨逸バイエル製 ノワルギン錠, *Asahi*, 27 October 1932.

⁴⁸ Advertisement, “Baidoku no kata wa goyōshin ima ga ichiban hakkyōshi yasui” 梅毒の方は御用心 今が一番發狂し易い, *Asahi*, 16 April 1933. These “cures” were often just pills loaded with mercury.

⁴⁹ Advertisements, “Ichōbyō o naosu fushigina baikin” 胃腸病を治癒す不思議な黴菌, *Asahi*, 27 May 1932; and, “Doitsu no furōchōjyuyaku de kekkaku to ichōbyō ga ieru” 獨逸の不老長壽藥で結核と胃腸病が癒る, *Asahi*, 25 June 1932.

act of connecting notable Germans would make a product more attractive in a market illustrated the high esteem in which many Japanese held German scientific achievements.

Despite these compliments in the press, not everyone in Japan shared this cult-like admiration of German monarchy, culture, and science. Indeed, a palpable undercurrent lurked in the newspapers against blind respect for everything Japan. A writer who had lived in German prior to the Great War said that he had seen it at its most arrogant and even greeted the downfall of the Kaiserreich as “an advance for humanity.”⁵⁰ On Japan’s embrace of German culture, a *Yomiuri* editor actually expressed relief that World War I halted the flow of German know-how, since it liberated Japanese scholars from German tutelage and forced them to blaze their own trail.⁵¹ Even the vaunted German medicine attracted some criticism. One Japanese medical professor complained that not only did ignorant patients waste money on Western drugs that were no better than domestic counterparts, but also Japanese doctors “blindly worshipped Germany.”⁵² In spite, or perhaps because, of the widely shared acceptance of German culture and science, those who preferred a more independent Japan spoke out in unmistakable terms against following Germany without reservation.

The German economy also consistently made headlines in the newspapers, but reporters reacted with mixed sentiments to German economic strengths. Immediately after World War I, Japanese correspondents deplored the everyday material hardships in Germany

⁵⁰ 「獨逸帝國の滅亡は人類の進歩です」, in Hirano Banri 平野萬里, “Doitsu no inshō” 獨逸の印象, *Yomiuri*, 9 September 1921.

⁵¹ “Gakujutsu fūsa to hanpatsuriki” 學術封鎖と反撥力, *Yomiuri*, 30 January 1920.

⁵² 「お醫者様でもドイツ盲信」, in “Byōnin wa fumimayou baiyaku no konran jidai kokusanhin to gaikoku seihin no kōka kurabe” 病人はふみ迷ふ賣藥の混亂時代 國産品と外國製品の効果くらべ, *Asahi*, 8 May 1933.

and sympathized with ordinary Germans in their struggle for survival.⁵³ One journalist even penned a travelogue of his harrowing trip through the “hell of starvation” along the Rhine.⁵⁴ As Germany’s economy gradually rebounded, however, the newspapers’ sympathy hardened into alarm. Reports began to surface in the late 1920s concerning German economic penetration in the Asia-Pacific region to take advantage of the void left by periodic boycotts of Japanese goods in China and to expand trade with Manchuria, long considered and handled by Japan as its exclusive sphere of influence.⁵⁵ Ironically, since Germany had lost in Versailles its benefits of extraterritorial rights and unequal treaties in China, the Chinese government and businesses often favored Germany over other foreign powers as partners on equal terms.

After the outbreak of the world economic crisis, Germany alongside America and Europe reacted by hiking protectionist tariffs and stonewalling Japanese requests for lower import duties in international trade talks. The Japanese press thus came to perceive Germany as part of an antagonistic West threatening Japan’s vital interests in maintaining high export volumes. In protest the *Asahi* printed two cartoons to deride Western obstructions to free trade. In the first, drawn by the abovementioned Okamoto Ippei in October 1932, Japanese exporters struggle to scale the wall of “rising tariffs” in spite of favorable exchange rates and export subsidies from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. All the while Chancellor Papen hides behind a protectionist high wall with the rest of the West (Fig. 5.1). Seven

⁵³ XYZ, “Dokujin no seikatsu” 獨人の生活, *Asahi*, 26 February 1920.

⁵⁴ Hayashi Hisao 林久男, “Gakidō meguri” 餓鬼道めぐり, *Asahi*, 22–29 February 1924. In Buddhism, *gakidō*, literally “place for starving ghosts,” is one of six hells to which souls of gluttonous individuals are consigned after death as punishment for their indulgent lifestyle. The writer’s choice of *gakidō* to describe postwar German suffering might thus indicate that he deemed the hardship as at least somewhat deserved.

⁵⁵ “Doitsu semento ni Nanshi Nan’yō shinsaru” 獨逸セメントに南支南洋侵さる, *Yomiuri*, 16 August 1928; and, “Doitsu tai Shi shōsen ni shinkeizai teikei wo kibō” ドイツ對支商戰に新經濟提携を希望, *Yomiuri*, 24 September 1930.

months later the West remained unmoved as ever, and the *Asahi* devoted another drawing to demonstrate the folly of high tariffs. Once again Germany is portrayed as behaving in concert with other Western nations by trapping itself on its own island of high tariffs and thus stranding the ship of commerce (Fig. 5.2). Whatever sympathy the press had felt it could afford to entertain for the Germans' economic plight after World War I evaporated by the early 1930s.

The way the Japanese newspapers criticized Western protectionism highlighted another aspect of Germany's image in the press—as just a part of a Euro-American West. The internationalist, communist *Akahata* most effectively portrayed Germany as merely one member of the world community through visual means. For the “International Antiwar Day” on 1 August 1931, the *Akahata* printed a special flyer showing a global proletariat revolution that would drive international capitalists into scrambling for their lives. The colorful drawing depicted the communist party in Germany as only one of the world's many communist movements. In fact, the communist parties from Japan, China, Korea, and Taiwan occupied far more prominent places than that from Germany or any from Europe. On the plutocratic side, Chancellor Heinrich Brüning was shown as just one of many capitalists fleeing the rising Red tide alongside Herbert Hoover, Benito Mussolini, and Chiang Kai-shek (Fig. 5.3). Just as communism's internationalist worldview dictated, the paper granted no special treatment to the Bolshevik movement of any one country, even though the German Communist Party, the largest and most active outside the Soviet Union, could well have deserved a place of honor.

In a different context the communist paper again depicted Germany as an ordinary part of the West. As Germany's economy sank further during the world economic crisis,



Fig. 5.3 Cartoon in a special supplement of the *Akahata*, 1 August 1931. Communists around the world shield the Soviet Union from international capitalists. Brüning ブリュニング is seen dragging a cannon inconspicuously on the lower left, just on top of Mussolini. On the far right is Chiang, right behind a fleeing Hoover with a cannon under his arm.

dogmatic, ideological interpretation of news caused it to lump the nationalistic Hindenburg incongruously with Hoover and McDonald.

The less ideologically fixated newspapers also underlined Germany's connectedness to the rest the Euro-American bloc. In the 1920s and 1930s, both the *Asahi* and the *Yomiuri* wrote editorial after editorial on the impact of German domestic politics on Europe. They even celebrated elections with limited contemporary and historical import as turning points for European peace.⁵⁶ With the rise of Nazism in 1933, however, Germany emerged as the single most pressing issue in Western stability. As Germany made more bombastic territorial claims after Hitler came to power, the Japanese press began to realize the very real danger that Germany could pose. In a cartoon of the “European nursery” by Okamoto, Germany the problem child annoys France by bouncing on its blanket “Rhineland,” keeps Britain and Austria wide awake, and gives Italy the chance bully little Yugoslavia (Fig. 5.5). Despite its

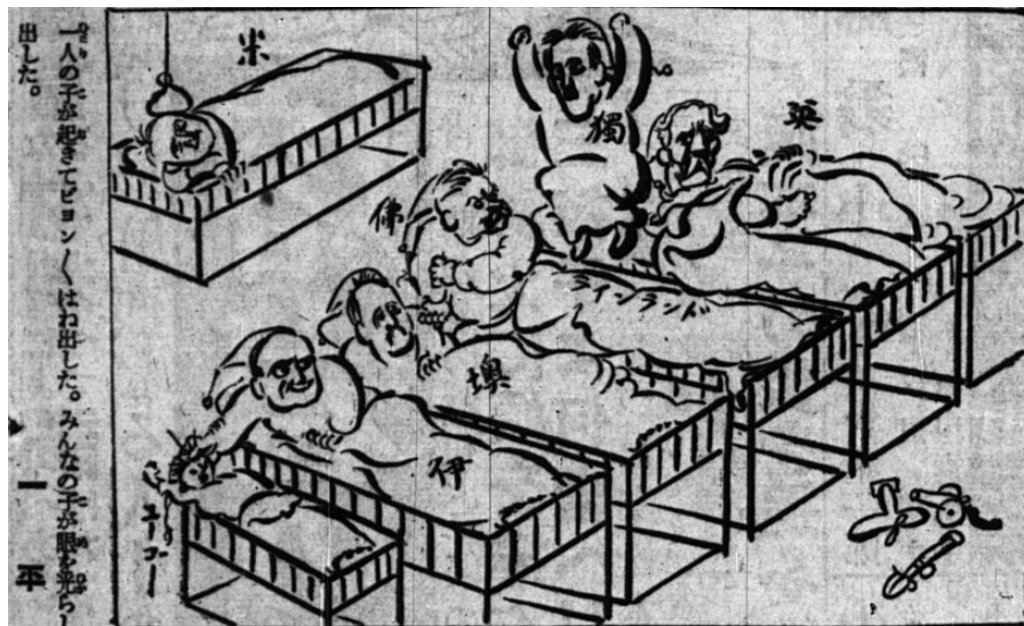


Fig. 5.5 Cartoon by Okamoto in the *Asahi*, 16 March 1933. Germany, personified by Hitler, keeps European nations like France, Austria, and Britain awake. Italy uses the chance to harass Yugoslavia. America, ill with economic woes, rests alone in the corner.

⁵⁶ “Rekishi wo kurikaeshite Doitsu sōsenkyo no kekka” ■ 史を繰り返して ドイツ総選挙の結果, *Yomiuri*, 10 December 1924.

more threatening stance, Germany in the Japanese newspapers still appeared as just one power in Europe, and a disruptive one too.

At the same time Germany's involvement in the League of Nations clashed with Japan's ambitions in East Asia. After the Manchurian Incident broke out, the League authorized the so-called Lytton Commission to investigate whether the conflict indeed stemmed from a genuine aspiration for Manchurian independence. The commission, including a German delegate, unanimously condemned Japan as the aggressor but recommended establishing an autonomous Manchuria under virtual Japanese suzerainty. Still unsatisfied, Japan announced its withdrawal from the League, an event the press celebrated widely as Japan's assertion of itself at long last in defiance of the West. Even the normally moderate *Asahi* carried a cartoon, titled "Great Power Japan Leaving the Bath," that showed a muscular Japan, personified by its representative to the League Matsuoka Yōsuke 松岡洋右, retreating from the "warm bath of the League" and leaving other Western nations, including Germany, shivering in the cold (Fig. 5.6). To emphasize Japan's autarkic independence from the world the newspaper also printed a cartoon depicting a Japanese husband cooperating with his Manchurian wife to construct a "Manchurian-Japanese bloc" while ignoring the jealous gaze and threatened economic sanctions of "various countries," which featured an unmistakable mustached caricature of Hitler (Fig. 5.7). Whatever relationship Germany had to the rest of Europe, the Japanese press viewed Germany as a component of the Western chain constricting Japan's right to look after its interests.

When Japan and Germany came into potential conflict over former German colonies now controlled by Japan, the newspapers loudly voiced their patriotism in unison. During World War I, Japan as a member of the Allies seized the German-held Palau, Marshall,



Fig. 5.6 Cartoon by Okamoto in the *Asahi*, 22 February 1933. Japan, in the form of Matsuoka, withdraws from the “warm bath” of the League and leaves the European powers (from the left: Italy, Germany, Britain, and France) in the cold.



Fig. 5.7 Cartoon by Okamoto in the *Asahi*, 23 February 1933. Japan the husband and Manchuria the wife work together, ignoring the jealous gaze of myriad Western powers, which include a caricature of Hitler in the back.

Caroline, and Mariana island groups in the Pacific. After the war Japan received a mandate from the League of Nations to administer these islands, but Japan's withdrawal from the League in 1933 led some nationalistic Germans to wonder aloud whether Japan could still legally hold the mandate. Japan tenaciously defended its "right" to the islands, but then the German Economic Minister Alfred Hugenberg scandalized world opinion by arguing at the London Economic Conference in July 1933 that Germany could best meet its reparations and debt obligations if only it could regain the productive capacity of its former colonies.

Although the colonies claimed by the nostalgic German imperialists were in Africa, the prospect of a revisionist Germany demanding the return of any of its former possessions greatly unnerved and outraged the Japanese papers across the political spectrum. When in 1932 certain American politicians suggested that Japan must relinquish its mandate should it leave the League, the *Asahi* derided such talk as "nonsense."⁵⁷ As Japan's anticipated withdrawal finally materialized, so too escalated the war of words over the mandate. In March 1933 the *Yomiuri* expressed its full agreement with the Imperial Navy that the islands belonged to Japan by right of its sacrifice in the Great War and not by the mandate, which merely confirmed and formalized Japanese administration.⁵⁸ Other newspapers also vociferously denied any legitimacy in Germany's demands. The *Ōsaka Asahi* put down any potential German claim as "illegal and irrational" and argued that "there is no reason why Japan should entertain such German overtures whatever her real motives or intentions."⁵⁹ Meanwhile, the *Nichinichi Shinbun*, the Tokyo sister of the *Mainichi*, regretted Germany's

⁵⁷ "Nihon no inintōjichi wo Doitsu e kaese Beikokunai ibbu no guro" 日本の委任統治地をドイツへ還せ 米國內一部の愚論, *Asahi*, 28 September 1932.

⁵⁸ "Nan'yō inintōjichi no mondai" 南洋委任統治地の問題, *Yomiuri*, 30 March 1933. Translated as "South Sea Islands Under Japanese Mandate," *Japan Times*, 31 March 1933.

⁵⁹ Translation of *Osaka Asahi* editorial, "Japan's Mandates," *Japan Times*, 28 March 1933.

“poor” diplomacy in sending “absurd” feelers for discussions concerning the islands,⁶⁰ and even hinted sinisterly that “Japan should be prepared for the possible worst to come... for justice is not always upheld for everybody.”⁶¹ Mobilizing more altruistic ideals, the *Hōchi Shinbun* 報知新聞 argued that Japanese control of the islands would only safeguard peace and open sea lanes in the Pacific and the East China Sea.⁶²

As the controversy raged on, the papers pressed into service even more creative and graphic rationales to justify Japan’s claim, though the central theme remained that Germany harbored no legitimate grievance. Okamoto of the *Asahi* devoted three drawings to the cause, each arguing for Japan’s rightful ownership of the islands for a different reason. In the first, a drooling Hitler, backed ominously by the Western gang, looks longingly at a blooming tree representing the disputed islands that a sullen gardener personifying Japan has nurtured with care under the authority from the mandate (Fig. 5.8). The underlying message rang loud and clear—Japan had taken the pain to cultivate the islands and now the West coveted the harvest. The cartoon thus set aside the question of legal ownership or control. Instead it deplored Germany for immorality in trying to steal the fruits of another country.

The second cartoon developed the theme of righteousness further still. In the illustration Hitler encourages his underlings to harass a lady representing Japan while leaving himself out of the fray. She complains about the “annoying” (うるさい) little Nazis bothering her and scolds them for lacking “propriety” in laying their hands on the bananas symbolizing the Pacific Islands (Fig. 5.9). The third cartoon shows Hitler selfishly preventing

⁶⁰ Translation of *Nichinichi* editorial, “Japan’s Mandates and Germany,” *Japan Times*, 28 March 1933.

⁶¹ Translation of *Nichinichi* editorial, “Mandate Problem,” *Japan Times*, 1 April 1933.

⁶² Translation of *Hōchi* editorial, “Mandate and Germany,” *Japan Times*, 2 April 1933. The *Hōchi* reigned as the most popular newspaper in Tokyo at the end of the Meiji era. After the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923 the *Nichinichi* and *Asahi* slowly eroded support for the *Hōchi*.



Fig. 5.8 Cartoon by Okamoto in the *Asahi*, 26 March 1933. Hitler is portrayed as a drooling figure looking longing at a blossoming tree cultivated by Japan. Note that Hitler is perceived to be backed by other countries of the West, which was not the case.



Fig. 5.9 Cartoon by Okamoto in the *Asahi*, 30 March 1933. Hitler is seen to be sending his underlings to harass Japan and steal the bananas symbolizing the islands.



Fig. 5.10 Cartoon by Okamoto in the *Asahi*, 18 June 1933. Hitler is portrayed as stinking up the economic conference by insisting on the return of former colonies, thereby preventing the world from solving the crisis.

other powers from getting together to tackle the world economic crisis by insisting on resolving the issue of Germany's former colonies—an act symbolized by Hitler passing obnoxious gas over an abacus (Fig. 5.10). Thus the newspaper now articulated Japan's position in terms of international cooperation rather than Japan's self-centered interests in holding on to the islands. Even the *Kokumin*, normally partial to Germany and supportive of nationalism, felt compelled to warn other nations controlling former German colonies to be on guard against rising *German* nationalism.⁶³ In the early 1930s, the Japanese press saw little need for Japan to sacrifice its own material interests to appease Germany.

The Nazi regime's suppression of freedom of the press—a frontal assault on the journalistic profession—and the burning of books elicited a chorus of criticisms from the

⁶³ 「今後機會ある・にドイツ代表はこの主張を次第に露骨に・調するものと予想され舊獨領たる委任統治地を有する諸國は何れも警戒している」, in “Doitsu daihyō keizai kaigi ni kyūryōdo kaifuku o mochidasu” 獨逸代表經濟會議に舊領土回復を持出す, *Kokumin*, 18 June 1933, Evening Edition.

newspapers. The *Yomiuri* reported that after the Reichstag Fire the Hitler government seized the convenient opportunity to shut down the leftist press.⁶⁴ While the *Yomiuri* neutrally rendered into Japanese the Fire Decrees giving Hitler broad power as “emergency presidential law” (緊急大統領令),⁶⁵ the *Asahi* minced no words and denounced them as “martial law in essence” (實質的戒嚴令) under a “police state” (警察政治).⁶⁶ Both the *Asahi* and *Japan Times* called attention to Nazi intimidation of foreign correspondents in Germany who dared file unflattering articles. The former urged readers to pay attention to the regime’s suppression of journalists.⁶⁷ The latter even published a commentary cosigned by the editor and publisher to denounce censorship under Hitler, “As night follows day, such censorship follows dictatorship... Under the censorship the German people will live in darkness... Germany, by the sweep of a pen held by one who has gained power by the meanest tricks of propaganda and mob organization, is left stripped of the fundamental human right to read and reason.”⁶⁸ The denunciations by the press against thought control in Germany showed that, whatever the politics of the individual newspapers, the professionals working in the press saw themselves first and foremost as journalists who understood

⁶⁴ “Saha kikanshi hakkō teishi” 左派機關紙發行停止, *Yomiuri*, 1 March 1933.

⁶⁵ “Doitsu mizōyū no kiki kinkyū daitōryōrei happu” ドイツ未曾有の危機 緊急大統領令發布, *Yomiuri*, 2 March 1933, Evening Edition.

⁶⁶ 「『人民保護令』は事實上警察の下に戒嚴令を施行するもので右大統領の下において人民の自由權を完全に無視して警察政治が出現するに至るものと見られる」, in “Zen Doitsu wo tsutsumu kakumei irai no henchō, jinmin hogorei (jitsushitsuteki kaigenrei) naru” 全ドイツを包む 革命以來の變調 人民保護令 (實質的戒嚴令) 成る, *Asahi*, 1 March 1933. The “revolution” in question was that in 1918 that ushered in the Weimar Republic. The *Japan Times* also describes in conditions in Germany as under “virtually martial law” in “Drastic Measures to End Communism Taken by Germany,” *Japan Times*, 2 March 1933.

⁶⁷ “Reich Government out to Eradicate Communism in Toto,” *Japan Times*, 4 March 1933, and 「ナチス政府と外國新聞記者團との正面衝突の形勢となり成行は注視されてゐる」, in “Hitorā seifu kondo wa gaijin kishadan to shōtotsu” ヒトラー政府今度は外人記者團と衝突, *Asahi*, 7 April 1933.

⁶⁸ “Hitler Censorship,” *Japan Times*, 11 March 1933.

firsthand the damaging effects of censorship. When they saw Germany, previously a land of free experimentation with ideas, sink into the darkness of information control, they rose up in one voice against the deplorable development.

An even more shocking event, the torching of books, further alienated the Japanese newspapers. In May 1933 the Nazi regime began burning books deemed “indecent” or written by leftists or non-Aryans. The *Asahi* lamented that the Germans, under the guise of “protecting German women,” incinerated irreplaceable works of erotic art, including a number dating from Tokugawa Japan.⁶⁹ A few days later the newspaper ruefully compiled a list of “famous works” the Nazis “cremated” (火葬), including those by Karl Marx, Upton Sinclair, and Erich Maria Remarque. The destruction of Remarque’s *Im Westen nichts Neues* (*All Quiet on the Western Front*) in particular hit a sympathetic chord because the movie based on the novel had caused quite a sensation in Japan for its realistic depiction of combat.⁷⁰ Newspapers that had reviewed the movie favorably a few years ago now had to report on Germans burning the book. While the typically bombastic *Kokumin* managed to call the book-burning “daring,” it still regretted the fate of certain “great works,” especially *All Quiet*, which was “also victimized” (も槍玉に).⁷¹ The descriptive, personifying phrases chosen by these papers, such as “cremated” and “victimized,” denoted the importance the newspapers attached to the books and underscored their shock at the Nazi outrage against literature and journalism.

⁶⁹ 「性科學に關する限りに於いて世界に現・せる圖書館兼性具收集館として専門家の間の知られたのであり、我國の歌麿、春信、豐國の繪も少なからずここに藏せられてゐる」, in “‘Dokukoku no onna o mamore’ sei no hon ya e wo issō” 『獨國の女を護れ』 性の本や繪を一掃, *Asahi*, 7 May 1933.

⁷⁰ 「世界的名著を惜し氣もなく焼却してゆく」, in “Marukusu ya sei no shomotsu taigunshū no mae de kasō” マルクスや性の書物大群衆の前で火葬, *Asahi*, 12 May 1933.

⁷¹ “Yūkanna funsho sekaiteki taisaku bosshūsaru seibu sensen mo yaridama ni” 勇敢な焚書 世界的大作沒收さる西部戦線も槍玉に, *Kokumin*, 8 May 1933.

The Japanese society at large perceived Nazi book-burning in an equally negative light, and the press made a point to publicize actions by individuals and groups to voice their disapproval. A few days after the book-burning, the *Asahi* reported that prominent literati had founded a group to protest what the *Asahi* termed “destruction of culture” (文化の破壊) in Germany.⁷² The organizers intended to collect signatures on a letter to Hitler and expressed surprise that Japanese scholars acted ahead of their European and American colleagues to show their disgust.⁷³ Although the newspapers did not mention whether the scholars believed their letter would actually persuade the Führer to spare copies of Marx’s *Das Kapital*, the fact remained that Japanese intellectuals felt close enough to the German cultural scene to protest the situation under the Nazis. Even more remarkably, the Japanese press deemed academic opinions on Germany newsworthy enough to report. The coverage shows that while the Japanese paid close attention to German culture, this focus did not necessarily translate into automatic approval of the direction of Germany’s political actions. Particularly in the realm of the freedom of expression and the press, Japanese writers, journalists, and editors spoke out in no uncertain terms to protest Nazi Germany’s violent suppression of free speech.

Nazi persecution of Jews fundamentally confounded the Japanese press, though the newspapers’ protests and disapproval lacked the unanimity shown in the dispute over the Pacific Islands or the criticism of book-burning. German Jews rarely made news in Japan

⁷² “Jinrui bunka e no bōkyō nachisu ni dōdō chōsen” 人類文化への暴舉ナチスに堂々挑戦, *Yomiuri*, 3 June 1933.

⁷³ 「ナチスの文化破壊に對する反動の第一陣が歐米諸國を尻目に掛けて我が國において結成されたことは奇現象」, in “Wa ga bunrondanjin kara Nachisu ni kōgi funsho wa ‘bunka no hakai’” わが文論壇人からナチス抗議 焚書は『文化の破壊』, *Asahi*, 14 May 1933. Later on the intellectuals, artists and thinkers joined leftist labor organizations to form an “alliance for freedom” (自由同盟), which demonstrated outside the German embassy when it hoisted the black-red-white imperial flag and sent a letter to the Japanese Ministry of Education and Culture to criticize the government’s silence in the face of Nazi barbarity. See “Nachisu e kōgibun hoko wo itten monbushō e” ナチスへ抗議文 鋒を一轉文部省へ, *Asahi*, 3 June 1933.

until the first act of persecution by the Nazi regime, namely the boycott against Jewish businesses in April 1933.⁷⁴ The conservative *Kokumin* actually commended the action against Jewry, whose “evil hands” (魔の手) supposedly played a role in Japan’s withdrawal from the League of Nations and its consequent international isolation.⁷⁵ A reporter for the same paper accepted at face value the regime’s excuse to boycott Jewish firms as “retaliation for Jewish boycotts against German good” without asking why Jews needed to push back against the Hitler dictatorship in the first place.⁷⁶ The *Yomiuri* meanwhile switched over time from criticism to approval of anti-Semitic policies in Germany. As Einstein visited Japan in 1922, the newspaper recalled the attempts by Tohoku Imperial University to recruit the physicist, musing that the Japanese could not comprehend anti-Jewish prejudice and implying that Tohoku should have succeeded since among Europeans the Germans were the most intolerant of Jews.⁷⁷ In 1933, however, the paper sensationally warned that Jews had even infiltrated Japanese society, as manifested by the allegations that Jews held the most

⁷⁴ In a *Yomiuri* article in 1928 the writer claimed that “the Jews prospered while Germany declined” (獨逸は衰へたが彼等は儲く). Other accusations against Jews sounded so similar to those leveled by radical rightists in Europe that quite likely the Japanese writer simply copied them. In any case such a sensational statement would not be entirely out of line with the paper’s drive to draw readers outside the elites. See “Yudayajin mondai to sekai kakumei no nagare” ユダヤ人問題と世界革命の流れ, *Yomiuri*, 22 August 1928.

⁷⁵ 「日本・退を遂に決意せしめに國際連盟の背後に躍るユダヤ系の魔の手とは！…遂に世界的孤立に陥らすに至った裏面には、ユダヤ人の奇怪なる陰謀のあつた事が白日の下に暴露された」, in “Zensekai ni an’yaku suru Yudayajin no inbō” 全世界に暗躍するユダヤ人の陰謀, *Kokumin*, 23 February 1933.

⁷⁶ “Doitsu zendo ni watatte Yudayajin boikotto” 獨逸全土に互つて猶太人ボイコット, *Kokumin*, 30 March 1933.

⁷⁷ 「『歐羅巴の人達がユダヤ人を迫害することは吾々の想像さへ及ばぬ所である』…ユダヤ人といへば眼の仇きにして嫌ふ歐洲人、殊にこんなことに掛けては人一倍狭量なドイツ人に容れられず」, in “Kyō kuru Ahakushi ni Nihon no ikan” 今日来るア博士に日本の遺憾, *Yomiuri*, 17 November 1922.

shares in electric companies, bought the most government bonds, and controlled some public opinion through its control of the newspaper *Japan Advertiser*.⁷⁸

On the left side of the political spectrum the newspapers condemned Nazi persecution of Jews outright. The *Asahi*, never in any mood to condone anti-Semitism, printed a scathing commentary by its senior correspondent in Berlin. The author expressed utter incomprehension of the persecution of the Jews and pointed out that only Germany, “an immature civilization,” did not treat its Jews as social equals. He criticized Nazi “punctiliousness” (潔癖) for categorizing people as “half” and “quarter” Jews, and labeled Hitlerism “the other half of Metternich’s medieval regressivism.”⁷⁹ When the Nazis began harassing Jewish intellectuals and artists, the *Asahi* reported that Germany was now expelling some “maestros” (巨匠) in arts and literature.⁸⁰ The persecution of scholars prompted even the *Yomiuri* to lament the resignation of Fritz Haber. Haber, who as a young man converted to Christianity, was staunch enough of a patriot to supervise Germany’s gas warfare in World War I and to stoop to alchemy after the war to try to extract gold from seawater to help pay his country’s reparations. His reputation and value for the German war industry saved Haber

⁷⁸ 「例へば日本に於ける電燈會社の株は誰が多く持つてゐるか。その最も多くを有する者はユダヤ人である。日本の外債の持主は英米人と云はるるが、その大部分はユダヤ人である…東京におけるジャパン・アドヴァタイザーの社長フライシャー氏の如きもユダヤ人である」, in Nakata Shigeharu 中田重治, “Doitsu wo chūshin to suru Han’yudayajin undō” ドイツを中心とする反ユダヤ人運動, *Yomiuri*, 5 April 1933.

⁷⁹ 「今頃何のユダヤ人排斥問題だ？世人は齊しく怪げんな顔をする…ほとんどドイツだけであるといつてもいい、それだけドイツ人の國民的文明は若いのだ、イギリスではユダヤ人がもう貴族となつてイギリス人になりきつてゐる…それに『半』ユダヤ人、『四分ノ一』ユダヤ人を加へて居ると潔癖なナチスの人々でさへ相互に相手の姓名が怪しかつたり…元來ヒトレリズムはナポレオン戦争後のメツテルニヒの反動主義に瓜二つの中世式復古主義ではある」, in Kuroda Reiji 黒田禮二, “Haiyudaya shugi Hitorā no buki” 排ユダヤ主義 ヒトラーの武器, *Asahi*, 2 April 1933. As we shall see in the following chapters, Kuroda would soon reverse himself and become one of the loudest boosters of Hitler and Nazism.

⁸⁰ “Nachisu wa areru kanrin’in dan’atsu Yudayakei kyoshō oidashi” ナチスはある翰林院彈壓ユダヤ系巨匠追出し, *Asahi*, 8 May 1933.

himself from persecution, but he left when he could not save his Jewish colleagues from the same fate.⁸¹ Haber's brainchild for improving Japanese-German cooperation, the Japan Institute, also became eclipsed by the more ideologically correct and strident German-Japanese Society (see Chapter Four).

Indeed, the *Asahi* deemed the persecution of Jews so irrational that it printed a sarcastic cartoon to highlight the absurdity of anti-Semitism. In the drawing, an SA member arrests a Jew's pet and turns it over to Hitler, at the head of some overeager Nazis, saying, "Look! I got this damn one, it is a cat owned by the Jews!" (Fig. 5.11). The *Asahi* did not merely speak out against anti-Semitism, in June 1933 it appealed to businesses and institutions of higher learning to hire Jewish scholars and scientists fleeing Nazi Germany.⁸²



Fig. 5.11 Cartoon by Kishi Takeo 岸丈夫 in the *Asahi*, 21 May 1933. The Nazis are shown to be so absurd that they even arrest a “Jewish” cat.

⁸¹ “Nōberu jushōsha no ryōshi mo hisōna intai – Hāberu kyōju to Man shi” ノーベル受賞者の両氏も悲壯な引退—ハーベル教授とマン氏, *Yomiuri*, 5 May 1933.

⁸² “‘Shin’ ai naru Nihon yo Doitsu gakusha no hone wo hirohe’ yūmeina Yudayakei no gakusha kara hisōna shūshoku undō” 「親愛なる日本よドイツ學者の骨を拾へ」 有名なユダヤ系の學者から 悲壯な就職運動, *Asahi*, 29 June 1933.

As Nazi anti-Semitic measures turned increasingly stringent and violent, however, all Japanese newspapers showed less ambivalence in criticizing Germany's actions. The *Yomiuri* attacked Nazi tactics as “the age of terror” (テロ時代) and reported that all German Jews lived in “terror.”⁸³ Even the *Kokumin* showed some discomfort that anti-Semitism was becoming increasingly “blatant” (露骨), as Germany barred Jewish players from the national tennis team.⁸⁴ A *Kokumin* editorial theorized that although the Jews might be a “tumor” (腫物) much like the Koreans pained Japan, Germany should leave the Jews alone, who “are by themselves unharmed (*sic*), although they have power sufficient to resist undue oppression and to burst into revolutionary movements.”⁸⁵ While anti-Semitism in and of itself did not incite protest from all Japanese newspapers, the brutality involved in Nazi repression of the Jews clearly crossed a boundary and aroused criticism from the press across the political spectrum. Moreover, at this point the Japanese press seemed not to have grasped the true nature of Nazi racism as targeting not only Jews but all non-Aryans. In the interwar period it was American discrimination against Japanese immigrants that exercised the newspapers far more than any perceived German racial arrogance.⁸⁶ Indeed, the Japanese press even cited

⁸³ 「議事堂放火事件以来ユダヤ人に對するヒットラー政府の迫害と壓迫とはテロリズム」, in “Hittorā shushō iyoio dokusai e Nachisu Berurin daigaku wo shūgeki Doitsu ni tero jidai” ヒットラー首相愈々獨裁へ ナチス伯林大學襲撃 ドイツにテロ時代, *Yomiuri*, 11 March 1933, Evening Edition; and “Zendoku no Yudayajin kyōfu no ichinichi” 全獨のユダヤ人恐怖の一日, *Yomiuri*, 2 April 1933.

⁸⁴ 「ドイツヒットラー政府のユダヤ人排斥は愈々露骨となりドイツ庭球協會はデビス・カップ戦を犠牲にしてもユダヤ人選手と代表として出場さす事を禁止する」, in “Yudayajin no shutsujō wo seishiki ni kinshi” ユダヤ人の出場を正式に禁止, *Kokumin*, 26 April 1933.

⁸⁵ “Doitsu no Yudayajin haiseki” 獨逸のユダヤ人排斥, *Kokumin*, 30 March 1933. Translation appeared as “Germany’s Exclusion of Jews,” *Japan Times*, 31 March 1933. Oddly enough, despite some of the inflammatory language, the author was trying to make the point that Japan should be generous in Manchuria to prevent insurrections.

⁸⁶ In the period surveyed the press mentioned German prejudice against colored races only once. In February 1933, as Germans debated the merits of hosting the 1936 Olympiad, some radical rightists argued that the

German newspapers' criticisms of the 1924 Immigration Exclusion Act in the United States as proof of a global outcry against American racism.⁸⁷ This fixation with American prejudice against Japanese probably also deflected the attention of journalists from examining closely Nazi racism against all non-Aryans.

Means of Depiction

In addition to the mosaic image of Germany ranging from respect for tradition culture to condemnation of Nazi destruction of culture, the pattern of Japanese press coverage on Germany reveals three main approaches that the newspapers used to help readers make sense of developments in Germany: a trial-and-error learning process, ideological interpretation of news, and visualization. An in-depth analysis of these means of depiction shows that the Japanese reporters quite frequently made errors in their stories on Germany. These inaccuracies, compounded by an inevitable ideological rendering of news-making events, oftentimes resulted in a misleading image of Germany in the Japanese press.

As the Japanese reporting on Nazi anti-Semitism demonstrated, the newspapers' handling of German events did not remain static. Instead, their knowledge of Germany evolved with new developments and depended on the resources at the papers' disposal. As the datelines revealed, immediately after World War I Japanese journalists had to file stories on the ex-enemy Germany from other European countries. This likely meant that Japanese

Games should bar colored peoples from participating. The *Asahi* brushed aside such talks as marginal and comical, see "Doitsu kyokuyū jin'ei no Orimupikku haigeki yūshokujin jogai ni tobidasu chinron ippan wa isshō ni fusu" ドイツ極右陣營のオリムピック排撃 有色人除外に飛び出す珍論 一般は一笑に付す, *Asahi*, 14 February 1933, Evening Edition.

⁸⁷ See "Doitsu shinbun mo beikoku kōgeki hainichi mondai de" 獨逸新聞も米國攻撃 排日問題で, *Yomiuri*, 18 April 1924; and "Osorerubeshi Taiheiyo no shōrai Nichibei gaikō wa masu ken'aku to Doitsu shinbun no Beikoku kōgeki" 恐れるべし太平洋の將來 日米外交は益す險惡と獨逸新聞の米國攻撃, *Asahi*, 20 April 1924, Evening Edition.

correspondents had to re-translate reports already rendered from German into another language. No doubt this detour in transmission increased the chance for inaccuracy and contributed to some of the misconceptions about Germany. It was not until the 1920s that even a well-financed and organized newspaper like the *Asahi* could place its own correspondent in Berlin, thereby improving markedly its quality and quantity of news items on Germany. Yet news is by definition unprecedented, and even the *Asahi*'s seasoned Germany watchers could not have immediately grasped the meaning of developments there. For example, the reporters' obsession with the ex-Kaiser misdirected them to seeing every rightwing movement and government, including the millenarian Nazism, as restorationist. Only after the passage of the Enabling Act guaranteeing a Hitler dictatorship did the papers finally stop suggesting the possibility of a return to monarchy.

This learning process that the press used to try to digest new information appeared most clearly in the verbal and visual representations the newspapers deployed to make sense of Hitler. Few in Germany, not to mention Japan, had ever heard of Hitler before his 1923 failed Beer Hall Putsch. In its aftermath an article in the *Yomiuri* falsely promoted the former private first class Hitler to "General Hittoreru" (ヒットレル將軍).⁸⁸ Meanwhile a contemporaneous report in the *Ōsaka Mainichi* reported the arrest of a certain "von Hitler" (フォン・ヒットラー, literally "Fon Hittorā").⁸⁹ In a German family name "von" denotes aristocratic lineage, yet of course there was nothing noble about the commoner Hitler. The journalists eventually came to accept the transliteration of "Hitler" into Japanese to be the

⁸⁸ "Bavaria fukuheki tonza ka Rūdendorufu Hittoreru ryōshōgun seikinsaru" 巴威復辟頓挫か ルーデンドルフ・ヒットレル兩將軍生擒さる, *Yomiuri*, 11 November 1923.

⁸⁹ *Ōsaka Mainichi* article reprinted in *Taishō nyūsu jiten* 『大正ニュース事典』 (Tokyo: Mainichi Communications, 1988), 566.

more accurate “Hittorā” (ヒットラー). Then in 1930, they finally switched to the most accurate “Hitorā” (ヒトラー), the rendition still in use today. Yet the old spellings “Hittorā” and “Hittoreru” lingered on, and often two or more versions appeared in the same article. While this phenomenon may not convey any connotation outside orthography, it does suggest a refinement of the understanding of Hitler from ambiguity to clarity and consensus.

The evolution in the visual representation of Hitler and the appreciation of his character appears even more clearly. On 28 January 1933, the *Asahi* carried an article on rumors of Hitler being chosen to form a cabinet. The reporter attached an abstract drawing of Hitler composed mainly of lines and blots of black next to the article (Fig. 5.12). The abstraction likely stemmed from the uncertainty over whether Hitler would head a government, and, if he did, what policies he would pursue. On 22 March, one day before the assured passage of the Enabling Act giving the chancellor “absolute dictatorial authority” (絶対獨裁權), the article breaking the news included an image of a grim-looking Hitler (Fig. 5.13). By this time, the Nazis had forced passage of the Reichstag Fire Decrees, silenced the socialists, beaten the communists out of existence or into exile, and cowed the centrists into subservience. No doubt could remain over what further power to Hitler would bring to Germany, and the caricature of Hitler reflected the seriousness of the situation. Finally, on 18 June, when Germany dropped a bombshell at the London Economic Conference by demanding the return of its former colonies, the *Asahi* headline stood next to an unambiguously demonic portrayal of Hitler (Fig. 5.14). By now the world had seen the German clamor for the Pacific Islands, anti-Semitic boycott, book-burning, expulsion of Jewish scholars, and suppression of all opposition. Small wonder the portrayal of Hitler turned decidedly negative.



Figs. 5.12, 5.13, 5.14 The evolution of the artistic portrayals of Hitler in the *Asahi* in the first half of 1933. The image on the left just preceded Hitler's appointment as chancellor. The middle image appeared when Hitler was on the cusp of dictatorial power. The one on the right emerged around the time when Germany floated demands for the return of its colonies.

This evolution of the representation of Hitler shows that the Japanese press did not approach Hitler or Germany with a predetermined positive or negative slant. Instead it absorbed knowledge as events unfolded and refined its positions and reactions much as any news organ striving to be objective and unbiased should. Although the images studied here all come from the *Asahi*, even the *Kokumin*, as noted previously, could not give a positive spin to violent anti-Semitism, the destruction of literary masterpieces, and revival of German ambitions in the Pacific. The *Kokumin* too came to realize that a revival of German colonialism might threaten Japan's security.

The relationship between ideology and politics in Japanese reporting on Germany also merits attention. While the newspapers at times adopted a similar stance on issues, they often diverged on the aspects they chose to emphasize. The most political paper of all, the *Akahata*, filtered news liberally. On the occasion of the approval of the debt moratorium for Germany, the paper stressed that the German Communist Party opposed any payment, since the proletariat bore the cost of imperialist wars and the payments merely exploited what little

the poor had to prop up the failing capitalist system.⁹⁰ The *Akahata*, however, uttered not a word on the real headline news, namely the legitimization of Nazism through its cooperation with the Nationalists and other conservative groups to oppose all reparations.⁹¹ Yet it was the newspaper's election coverage that revealed most clearly its filtering of news. For the election in July 1932, it printed the headline "The party of proletarian dictatorship garners 5.3 million votes!!"⁹² That the Nazis doubled their votes and became the largest party in the Reichstag was explained away as the result of "connivance of the Papen cabinet, policies of bloody terrorism against communism, and clever manipulation of xenophobia."⁹³ For the election in November 1932, the *Akahata* again dwelled on the gains of the KPD: "Votes for German Communist Party increased by 700,000," while ignoring the real significant development that the Nazis lost two million votes.⁹⁴ For the election in March 1933, when the Nazis obtained enough votes to form a majority coalition government, the *Akahata* celebrated the performance of the KPD in preserving 80 seats and reasoned that Hitler merely won votes from "various small parties, backward agitators from the worker camp, and new

⁹⁰ 「ドイツの被圧迫大衆を永久にかかる搾取と圧制とから解放する方法プロレタリア独才のみであると主張し、その為に斗争したのはドイツ共産党であった」、in "Doitsu ni okeru kaikyū tōsō no gekka" 独乙に於ける階級斗争の激化, *Akahata*, 12 August 1931.

⁹¹ The *Akahata* explained that since the "bourgeois press" was not giving the KPD any coverage, the Japanese paper would have to take up the task: 「ブルジョア新聞はドイツに起っているプロレタリアートの進出に関して殆んど黙・している」、in *ibid.*

⁹² "Puroretaria dokusai no tō ni atsumaru gohyaku sanjūman hyō!!" プロレタリアの獨裁の黨に集る五百三十萬票！！, *Akahata*, 5 August 1932.

⁹³ 「ヒトラー・ファシストの國粹社會黨はパーペン現内閣の援助を得、共・主義に對する流血のテロル政策に防衛され、そして巧妙な排外主義的使喚で二百十九の議席を獲得し」、in *ibid.*

⁹⁴ "Doitsu kyōsantō tokuhyō nanajūman hyō zōdai" ドイツ共・黨得票 七十萬票増大, *Akahata*, 15 November 1932.

petit bourgeois voters with no prior political self-awareness.”⁹⁵ If one read only the *Akahata*, one might believe that the KPD stood on the verge of some major electoral breakthrough before Hitler came to power and would make a comeback despite relentless suppression. Without fabricating any facts, a newspaper could create misleading impressions simply by shifting its emphasis.

Perhaps we can excuse the sensational *Akahata* for its selective coverage, yet ideological tainting of news affected other less political papers. After all, the party organ preached only to the choir, as no non-communist would want to be caught with an issue of the illegal paper. The driving force behind the *Kokumin*, the nationalist Tokutomi, chided the Germans in 1920 for “the lack of a national essence” that led to internal feuds and their defeat in World War I.⁹⁶ The same criticism of the Germans as given to infighting resurfaced in 1932, when an editorial called for the “iron and blood” of a “second Bismarck” to sweep aside splinter parties while another writer urged the Germans to come to their senses and see the need for a dictator.⁹⁷ When that potential dictator’s party lost votes in November 1932, the *Kokumin* proved itself not above ideological partiality and copied the *Akahata* by rationalizing that Nazi electoral decline signaled a shift of voter support to other rightwing

⁹⁵ 「國粹社會黨（ヒトラー黨）は諸小黨の散票、労働者陣營の後れた動搖分子の投票、これまで全く政治的自覺を持たなかつた新たな小ブル的投票者層を ▪ 制的に動員して」, in “Daidan’atsu no Doitsu kokkai senkyo ni giseki hachijū wo mamoru!” 大弾壓のドイツ國會選舉に議席八十をまもる！, *Akahata*, 15 March 1933.

⁹⁶ Tokutomi Sohō, “Doitsu kokuminsei no kekkan” 獨逸國民性の缺陷, *Kokumin*, 26 March 1920.

⁹⁷ 「ドイツは再びビスマルクの鐵血を必要とし、ドイツ國民は熱烈にビスマルクの ▪ 力に憧憬してゐる。小黨分立の現 ▪ にいつては、第二のビスマルク出ざる限り、解散また解散、内閣の更迭また更迭を免かれざるべし」, in “Doitsu no sōsenkyo to tōhei bakurō” 獨逸の總選舉と黨弊暴露, *Kokumin*, 20 September 1932; and 「ドイツ人は分裂分爭を好む傾向を有し... ドイツ人は如何にしても獨裁政治の必要があるやうである」, in Gorai Kinzō, “Hittorātō no bunretsu?” ヒットラー黨の分裂?, *Kokumin*, 16 December 1932.

parties rather than the left.⁹⁸ When the Nazis finally established a one-party dictatorship, the *Kokumin* commented that Hitler had cured the Germans of their “addiction to internecine conflicts.”⁹⁹ The nationalistic *Kokumin* appeared quite consistent in its support for the nationalistic Nazi movement, at least until German expansionism potentially threatened Japanese interests in the Pacific.

Even the two moderate papers, the *Asahi* and *Yomiuri*, clearly favored certain issues. The *Yomiuri*, retaining an interest in scholarship, noted what rising German nationalism brought to schools and education. Responding to rumors that the German education ministry ordered school children to memorize the Versailles Treaty, the *Yomiuri* became concerned with the revival of militarism.¹⁰⁰ The paper also made a point to report the re-legalization of student dueling, sarcastically calling it a “masterpiece” of Nazi legislation.¹⁰¹ Meanwhile the *Asahi* focused on the legal aspect of Nazism. After another indecisive election in November 1932, it commented that prolonged deadlock meant the continued exercise of the presidential decree and that political instability in Germany deserved “regret and sympathy.”¹⁰² On the Fire Decrees, translated as “decree for the protection of people from the communist threat” (共・禍に對する人民保護令), the *Asahi* explained that they contradicted Article 2 of the

⁹⁸ 「従つてヒトラー派の減少はその票數を左翼から食はれたものではなくて、右翼から食はれたものである」, in Gorai Kinzō, “Nankyoku ni tatsu Hitorā” 難局に立つヒトラー, *Kokumin*, 10 November 1932.

⁹⁹ 「實際は、ヒトラーが、獨逸國民の紛争僻の缺點を根治する爲めに、大手術を施したのである」, in “Doitsu no ikkoku ittō shugi” 獨逸の一國一黨主義, *Kokumin*, 30 June 1933.

¹⁰⁰ “Gunkoku Doitsu no saigen?” 軍國獨逸の再現?, *Yomiuri*, 29 January 1933.

¹⁰¹ “Gakusei kettō oyurushi Nachisu hōreichū no ‘kessaku’” 學生決闘お許し ナチス法令中の「傑作」, *Yomiuri*, 7 April 1933, Evening Edition.

¹⁰² “Doitsu seikyoku fuan” ドイツ政局不安, *Asahi*, 8 November 1933. Translated as “Political Instability Growing,” *Japan Times*, 9 November 1933.

constitution ensuring the people's freedoms.¹⁰³ Even before the Enabling Act ("trust in government act," 政府信賴法) granting Hitler "dictatorial authority" (獨裁的權能), the paper had concluded that the abolition of the federal system and persecution of the republic's supporters meant that the Weimar constitution, though never officially renounced by the Nazis, was in effect not worth the paper on which it was printed.¹⁰⁴ Even German violation of international law concerned the *Asahi*. When Storm Troopers crossed the Rhine to take over the municipal government of Cologne, the paper presented the act as noncompliance of Versailles's ban on German soldiers west of the Rhine.¹⁰⁵ Considering that the troopers likely carried only clubs or pistols, the report reveals that the *Asahi* stretched its analysis and went out of its way to hold Germany responsible for any possible infraction of the treaty.

Looking at the events the newspapers chose to report, a trend emerged to show that the papers' depiction of Germany differed according to the eyes of the beholder and that at least in part they saw a Germany that they wanted to see. The *Akahata* supported the German Communist Party not because of its German but its communist quality. Likewise the *Kokumin* saw something admirable in the National Socialist Party not for its Germanness but for its nationalism and authoritarianism. Also, the *Yomiuri* and *Asahi* both lamented the demise of the republic more because it represented the demise of democracy, liberalism, and

¹⁰³ "Doitsu saiken yo'nen keikaku to sayoku dan'atsusaku wo suikō Hinaikaku kokumin shiji no na no shita ni" ドイツ再建四年計畫と左翼彈壓策を遂行 ヒ内閣、國民支持の名の下に, *Asahi*, 7 March 1933.

¹⁰⁴ "Renpōsei o haishite chūō shūkensei hitorā seifu no ito" 連邦制を廢して中央集權制 ヒトラー政府の意圖, *Asahi*, 11 March 1933; "Hitorā itten kyōwaha dan'atsu Bavāria no dantai no kinshi" ヒトラー一轉共和派彈壓 バヴァリアの團體を禁止, *ibid.*, 12 March 1933; and 「極右ヒトラー・パーペン内閣成立と共に共和國の根本法たるワイマール憲法ほとんど全く空文化し」, in "Doku teisei jidai no kokki fukkatsu wo hatsurei" 獨帝政時代の國旗復活を發令, *ibid.*, 13 March 1933, p. 2; and "Hitorā naikaku 'seifu shinraiho' teishutsu" ヒトラー内閣「政府信賴法」提出, *Asahi*, 17 March 1933.

¹⁰⁵ "Doku kokusui shakai tōin heiwa jōyaku wo mushisu hibusō chitai Rain sagan ni shinnyū" 獨國粹社會黨員平和條約を無視す 非武裝地帶ライン左岸に侵入, *Asahi*, 14 March 1933.

internationalism than some abstract notion of Germany. Ideology and politics mattered much more than any preconceived positive image of Germany.

Lastly the Japanese papers deployed cartoons to help readers visualize their messages. Most noticeably, the illustrations discussed in this chapter all used a prominent politician to represent Germany as a whole, such as Papen in Fig. 5.1, Brüning in Fig. 5.3, Hindenburg in Fig. 5.4, and Hitler in the rest. This feature contrasts sharply with cartoons in the German papers, which relied on stereotypical, nameless figures in uniforms or wearing horn-rimmed glasses to caricature Japan. The Japanese press appeared to know more about Germany than its German counterpart about Japan and it expected its readers to be conversant enough to recognize Hitler even if the image constituted only lines and blots of black. This gulf in mutual familiarity reflected the unequal interaction of knowledge and impact between Japan and Germany. Japan made liberal use of German innovation, and this technological flow remained a strong one-way current.¹⁰⁶ Whereas a reversion of the Pacific Islands to German control would drastically shrink Japan's defensive perimeter, for Germany ownership or loss of the archipelagos translated to negligible material or strategic difference, as World War I amply demonstrated. In other words, the islands meant much more to Japan than to Germany, and it paid Japan to monitor closely German political developments. The prominence of individuals in the cartoons, particularly Hitler, mirrored the personal, charismatic nature of politics in later Weimar and Nazi Germany. Despite the heavy attention paid to Hitler, many Japanese caricatures showed him as misbehaving, drooling, and passing gas, indicating that the press, especially the papers of a leftist persuasion, did not always treat the Führer with respect.

¹⁰⁶ See Kudō Akira, *Japanese-German Business Relations: Cooperation and Rivalry in the Inter-war Period* (New York: Routledge 1998).

This Too Shall Pass

In the few years after World War I, when some Westerners suggested that Japan, as the last holdout of militarism, imperialism, and authoritarianism, would become a “second Germany” or “Germany in the East,” the *Yomiuri* strongly denounced such talks as “fantasy” (謬想) and “biased” (色眼鏡論).¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, when a disgruntled Korean spread rumors in Rome of a Japanese-German-Russian alliance, the paper made sure to make a point to deny such a false accusation (誣妄).¹⁰⁸

A little more than a decade later, in March 1933, the *Japan Times* saw the relations between Japan and Germany rather differently. Times had changed since the Great War, when the interests of Japan aligned with those of the other Western powers. In the early 1930s, a new danger had arisen and seemingly threatened both Japan and Germany, and thus there emerged a starting point and common ground for rapprochement. As an editorial in the *Japan Times* had it:

There was a day when political developments in distant lands were of but passing interest to the public of Japan. That such keen interest should be manifested in the recent Nationalist landslide which marked the German elections of March 5 is evidence of the ever increasing interdependence of nations on the one hand, and, on the other, of the vicarious interest which one people have in the political tribulations, and experiments of another. Thus, in Japan as in Germany, there are the forces of nationalism on the one hand and on the other those of communism—the latter to a very less degree to be sure, yet still manifested, if not politically, at least in police activities. Hence it is with close attention that Japan witnesses the conflict of these divergent forces in Germany.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ “Nihon wa daini no Doitsu nariya (Beijin no byūsō)” 日本は第二の獨逸なりや (米人の謬想), *Yomiuri*, 28 March 1920; and “Nihon wa tōhō no doitsu de iru tohō mo nai shinbunō no shokumegane ron” 日本は東方の獨逸である 途方もない新聞王の色眼鏡論, *Yomiuri*, 21 May 1922.

¹⁰⁸ “Nichidokurō dōmei no setsu senjin no fumō Rōma wo sawagasu” 日獨露同盟の ▪ 鮮人の誣妄羅馬を騒がす, *Yomiuri*, 25 September 1919.

¹⁰⁹ “Germany supports parliamentarism,” *Japan Times*, 10 March 1933.

Even more remarkably, about a year later, in May 1934, the *Japan Times* published a supplement called “Japan and Germany Linked in Friendship” to trumpet improving bilateral relations (Fig. 5.15). The special issue contained mostly superficial contents such as photographs of scenes from the two countries, advertisements by trading firms, and propagandistic statements by Japanese and German political leaders. Another two and a half years later, Japan and Germany would indeed conclude a pact of collaboration, one purportedly targeting the common danger of the Comintern.

How did voices in the newspapers switch from firm denials of rumors of Japanese-German cooperation to a celebration of bilateral friendship a few years before the regimes finally caught up with some of the opinion makers? First, throughout most of the interwar years aspects of Germany appeared positively in the newspapers. Especially Germany’s culture and technology garnered high compliments in the newspapers. The ex-Kaiser too, so notorious a critic of Japan as the Yellow Peril, attracted positive coverage in the newspapers, even though he no longer exercised any influence in Germany under either the Weimar Republic or the Nazi Dictatorship. Crucially, this respect for German civilization remained constant throughout, unlike the ebb and flow of political sentiments. Even in the dark days just after World War I and even in the heated moments after the Nazi ascension, few in Japan would dispute the material and intellectual achievements of Germany. The sympathy for the ex-Kaiser also betrayed a rightist, nostalgic leaning in the newspapers and neglect of the left, so much so that no stories were written about the fascinating biography of Friedrich Ebert, the first president of the Weimar Republic who rose from the factory floor to the head of state. In some ways, then, the constant chatter about the restoration of the monarchy readied the newspapers to expect and accept a return of rule by the conservative right in Germany.

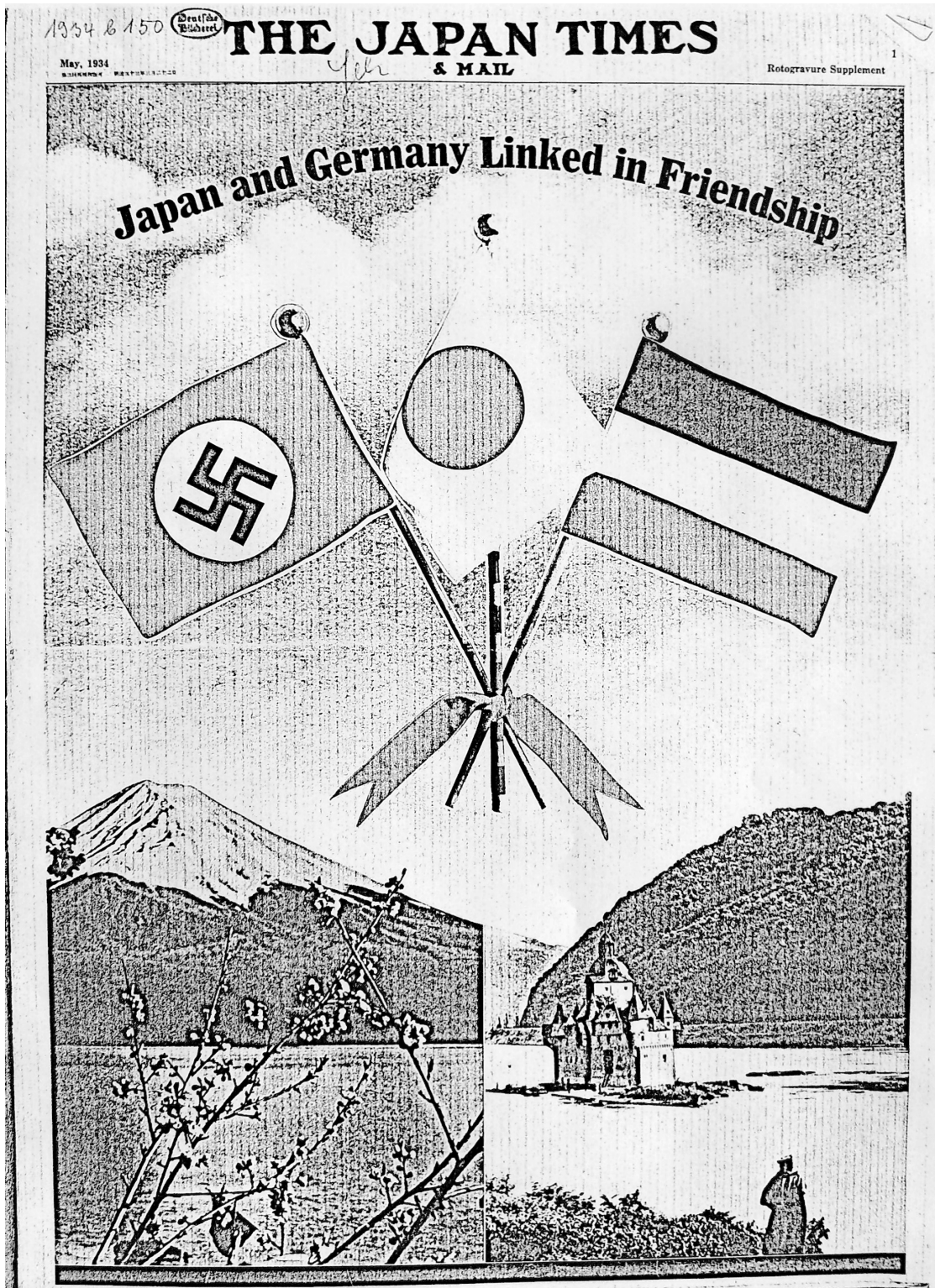


Fig. 5.15 The front page of a special supplement “Japan and Germany Linked in Friendship” of *The Japan Times*, May 1934. The issue contained sixteen pages, mostly photographs of personalities and sceneries from both countries, in addition to several mutually congratulatory articles by Japanese and German political leaders. The flag on the left is the Nazi banner, the middle that of the rising sun, and the right is that of Imperial Germany.

Second, and far more importantly, many of the flashpoints between Japan and Germany that so exercised the journalists would soon subside, decline in irrelevance, or disappear altogether. The burning of books, for example, lasted but a night, and the boycott of Jewish businesses, only a day. The suppression of the communists also did not take long, precisely because it was brutally successful. Even the issue the most inflamed emotions in Japan—the call by some Germans for the return of old colonies—went away quickly. Hugenberg, who dropped the bombshell about colonies at an international conference, was subsequently sacked by Hitler, partly as a result of the fallout and also as a part of the Nazi consolidation of power. True, traditional conservatives in Germany like Hugenberg did clamor for the return of former colonies, but the Nazis were not a traditional bunch. The Third Reich did see its imperialistic future in the East—Eastern Europe, that is, but not the Far East. Overseas colonies were but a distant afterthought in the Nazi worldview, especially some islands in the Pacific. The archipelagoes meant of course far more for Japan and its defense, but it meant little to Nazi Germany. A traditional conservative government in Germany might have insisted on their return, but the unconventional Nazis did not insist on it and thus removed the issue as a major stumbling block preventing rapprochement.

Third, notwithstanding the criticisms by some in the Japanese press of Nazi violence, the underlying goals for which the violence was trying to achieve did not necessarily arouse opposition from the newspapers. On the one hand, the moderate, centrist papers reacted strongly to the violent tactics of the regime in arresting communists and boycotting the Jews. The competitive nature of newspaper publishing in Japan, where the major papers appeared daily or even twice daily, might have sharpened the already disapproving rhetoric against German state violence among the papers to see who could outdo the other in outrage. On the

other, the rightwing *Kokumin*, the *Japan Times*, and occasionally the *Yomiuri* too approved of the anticommunism and anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany that led to the bloodshed. As Germany abandoned or no longer needed the brutal suppression of its victims and switched to legal or legislative persecution, the papers would also find it easier to accommodate Nazism. We shall see far more of this process of rationalization and adaptation in the Japanese mass media in the next few chapters.

CHAPTER SIX

GERMANY AS SOUND: GERMANY IN LECTURES AND PAMPHLETS

At 20:00 local time (GMT+4) on 8 December 1920, a crew of Japanese found themselves idling in the Arabian Sea roughly halfway between India and Somalia, at precisely nine degrees forty-five minutes north latitude, sixty-four degrees fifteen minutes east longitude. Having set sail together on 13 November from London to Kobe on the fifty-fifth voyage of the mail ship *Kaga Maru* 加賀丸, the nineteen Japanese passengers in the first and second classes constituted a veritable league of extraordinary gentlemen. There was a professor of medicine from Niigata, the police commissioner of Kanagawa Prefecture, a city councilman from Osaka, two painters, a secretary at an embassy, an overseas attaché of the Finance Ministry, an immunologist, three naval officers, two executives of the x-ray manufacturer Shimadzu, and the head of the central research department of the South Manchurian Railway. Eight graduated from universities (one even from an American college), and two held a doctorate degree. As such, the assembled talents had decided to make the most of their remaining time on board by inaugurating a weeklong series of talks to entertain and educate one another. This seminar at sea began with a pharmacologist's speech on poison gas warfare during the Great War,¹ followed by the attaché's on the problem of Germany's war indemnity—he had recently represented Japan at an international conference

¹ He was Keimatsu Shōzaemon 慶松勝左衛門. At the time he managed the central research department of the South Manchurian Railway, responsible for exploiting the resources of Manchuria. Later he taught pharmacology at Tokyo Imperial University and after World War II was elected to the Diet's Lower House.

in Brussels for tackling the postwar economic crisis.² Other sojourners spoke on subjects as varied as British naval architecture, the Internationale in Europe, the nose, labor problems in Britain, venereal disease, Buddhism, and x-ray technology.³ Three months after the journey the Shimadzu director printed and distributed the speeches at his own expense in the volume *Lectures in the Indian Ocean* (*Indoyō kōenshū* 『印度洋講演集』).⁴

Thanks to the publication of the collection, what happened at sea did not stay at sea. Printed words captured uttered sounds so that even those Japanese not rich or powerful enough to have sailed on *Kaga Maru*—and on board too only the first and second classes took part in the “course”—could also benefit from the revelations and musings disseminated by the specialists. Indeed, in his address opening the lecture series, the captain of the ship declared that the Yamato race enjoyed reputations overseas for persevering to advance and for self-improvement. Especially now that Japan ranked among the five great powers, its

² He was Aoki Kazuo 青木一男. Rising from a humble background, Aoki graduated with a bachelor's degree in law from Tokyo Imperial University and then entered government service in the Finance Ministry. Born in 1889, he was not even thirty when he took part in representing Japan in Europe. He rose through the ranks and became Finance Minister in 1939. In 1942 he served as the first Minister of Greater East Asia. After the war he was arrested as a Class A war criminal but was released eventually. Later he was elected to the Upper House of the Diet.

³ To say that the passengers made up a league of extraordinary gentlemen is no exaggeration. Besides Keimatsu and Aoki, who each would achieve prominence and high office, several others would also play unusually large roles in their fields. For example, the naval architect who spoke on the evolution of British warships, Fujimoto Kikuo 藤本喜久雄, was instrumental in the design of Japanese warships in the interwar era. The secretary at an embassy who discussed the Internationale in Europe was Amō Eiji 天羽英二, who would become Chief of Intelligence Section of the Foreign Ministry, and be “credited” for articulating an Asian Monroe Doctrine and charged subsequently as a Class A war criminal. Hoshino Sadaji 星野貞次 gave the talk on the nose and would found a research institute for tuberculosis at Kyoto Imperial University. Ōtsuka Isei 大塚惟精 lectured on British labor problems and would serve as governor of a few prefectures; he was killed in Hiroshima by the atomic bomb on his job as coordinator of homeland defense in the Chūgoku region. The watercolor artist Miyake Kokki 三宅克己 spoke about European painting and drew some scenes on board the ship that appeared as illustrations for the volume of speeches. Miyake would win numerous awards for his works. In some ways, of course, one should not be surprised that individuals well-connected and privileged enough to travel internationally in 1919 would go on to do great things in their areas of specialty, but it is rather remarkable that this group, drawn together by sheer chance, would exercise such influence in Japanese politics, society and culture. If nothing else, there were two future Class A war criminals in the group (Aoki and Amō).

⁴ Shimazu Tsunesaburō 島津常三郎, ed., *Indoyō kōenshū* (Kyoto: Shimazu Tsunesaburō, 1921).

citizens had a duty to comport themselves correspondingly by learning about the world and keeping abreast of postwar reform movements. This zeitgeist inspired the passengers to seize the dull moments at sea to teach and learn from one another. He conjectured that if similar gatherings took place in the saloons of the myriad Japanese ships crisscrossing the oceans, the future of the Yamato race would brighten tremendously.⁵ For the experts on board, then, the talks meant far more than a diversion merely to kill time but also a vehicle for enlightening an entire nation.

As a matter of fact, in interwar Japan information trickled down from the elite experts to the populace at large via words in their incarnation as lectures delivered to select audiences and subsequent reincarnation as pamphlets for the reading masses. To those Japanese, privileged or pedestrian, climbing the step pyramid of knowledge acquisition to discover more about Germany, these presentations and booklets would come across as the most logical and convenient sources after newspapers. Accordingly this chapter studies the Japanese ideation of Germany in these channels and its significance for facilitating

⁵ 「人間到る處に青山ありとは能く我が大和民族の向上奮闘の操守を謳ひたる句と考へますが青山はをろか一莖の青艸だになき四面森々の印度洋上に於て（一二月八日午後八時北緯九度四五分東經六四度一五分）我が加賀丸第五五航の復航に際し皆様方の御企により爰に前古類例を耳にせざる洋上講演會が・夜引續て催され皆様が歐米各地に於て御・鑽になつた新進の智識を御披露になつて我々共に之を拜聴する機會を得ましたことは誠に幸慶とする所であります。今や歐米諸國は世界大戰の後を承けて上下改造運動に多忙なるの時我が日本帝國は曩にヴェルサイユ平和會議に際しまして表面丈けは所謂五大・國の御仲間入りを致しましたが翻て徐かに我が國情と其實力とに就て考へます時には何となく腋下冷汗を覺ゆる心地が致しまして向後世界の舞臺に立ちて眞實に押しも押されもせざる五大・國として活躍し現今の改造運動にも決して後れを取らない様にして國運を進めて行くのには大和民族各自が舊にも倍して奮勵することを要することゝ考へます。是等のことが皆様の心の中に以心傳心的に感應しまして此講演會が生れましたか如何かは存じませんが兎も角も此講演會が船上生活の無聊を醫すると共に相互の智識を啓發する上に多大の裨益あることは爰に管々しく申し述ぶる必要はありません。而して此洋上講演會が嚆矢となりて萬一歐米其他の海洋を横ぎる我が幾多の船舶のサルーンに於て此種の集りが頻々催さるゝ様になつたならば啻に我が加賀丸の講演會が現在に於て利益する所があるばかりでなく延ひては我が大和民族の自覺の上に於ても利する所が尠くないだらうと考へます。洋上一たび眸を放てば青山なくとも碧波あり千重萬疊の濤の彼方に輝き上る朝暎は臆て我が大和民族の將來を語るものでありませう。」 in Nojiri Momoki 野尻百熙, “Kaikai no ji” 開會の辭, *ibid.*, 1–3. The pronunciation of the first name is unmarked and could be transliterated differently from the one given here.

rapprochement.⁶ How did lectures and pamphlets depict Germany, and how did they react to and reflect the changes Germany and Japan underwent in the interbellum years? Who created these works, and what motivated them to choose Germany as a topic? How did the essence of lectures and pamphlets as media influence their content? This chapter argues that the portrayals of Germany in these media evolved in three stages between 1919 and 1937, and that public opinion makers in Japanese civil society took advantage of freedoms of speech and association to create an atmosphere that enabled closer Japanese-German relations. During the 1920s, the experts were interested mainly in rediscovering Germany after war, revolution, democratization, and hyperinflation. Then, beginning in 1930 and coinciding with Hitler's electoral breakthrough, many became enthralled with his ideology and pronounced vociferous support for its transformation of the country. Lastly, between 1936 and 1937, as diplomacy finally caught up with their advocacy in the popular realm, they aligned themselves with officialdom and assumed the role of cheerleaders for and interpreters of the Japanese-German alliance in the form of the Anti-Comintern Pact.

Lectures and Pamphlets as Media and Sources

Although differences distinguish lectures and pamphlets as carriers of information and as historical sources, they share enough substantial similarities and connections to warrant common treatment in one chapter. To begin with, as *Lectures in the Indian Ocean*

⁶ Naturally, this chapter is meant to serve as a counterpart to Chapter Two, on Japan in German films. Although an apples-to-apples comparison would call for the present chapter to examine the depictions of Germany in Japanese motion pictures, the obstacles in using such media as sources render a thorough account difficult. It is my understanding that in general the state of preservation of period Japanese films is poor, which consequently makes the surviving specimens more precious and less accessible for use. Several well-known feature films from the 1920s and 1930s are restored and widely available, but the more obscure documentaries and newsreels are stowed away in vaults. In any case, a survey of the titles of interwar movies indicates an apparent absence of Germany as a regular theme, and that the Japanese likely did not rely on the silver screen as a major fount of information on Germany besides the occasional imported German newsreel. As a result of these factors, I decided to replace films in this chapter with lectures and pamphlets.

demonstrated, the identical content could assume spoken as well as printed form.⁷ Both formats exuded an ephemeral aura and were not intended to preoccupy their consumers' time or attention. Speech literally fades into the air at the speed of sound, and a talk typically lasted an hour or two at most. Booklets could naturally survive longer, but their thin sheets of pulp and flimsy binding rendered them vulnerable to wear and the passage of time; not to mention their periodical or serial nature that favored discard over preservation. Individual lectures, and to a lesser extent pamphlets, seldom appeared in self-standing pieces but belonged instead to collections or series containing works on disparate topics that competed for listeners' or readers' interest. In print, a speech or an article took up no more than a few scores of pages and could be read in one sitting even by busy people during a lunch break or commute.

Regarding their content, both lectures and pamphlets purported to convey facts—not just any facts, but relevant, interesting, and up-to-date facts. Newspapers, a few of which as mentioned delivered stories via airplanes, could undoubtedly claim greater currency, but speeches and booklets compensated with more depth of coverage on any particular issue. Usually they did not delve into scholarly themes deemed overly academic or abstruse, as their recipients were expected not to command much, if any, expertise on the subject. For example, on *Kaga Maru* the talks on the nose, venereal disease and x-ray technology did not indulge in medical or technological arcana. Instead they sought to engage listeners by offering trivial but practical information—insights that the attendees could perchance use to improve their lives. Likewise, even the talks on such impersonal matters as the Internationale, German reparations, and poison gas warfare were supposed to benefit the passengers by

⁷ It is possible, and even likely, that scripts of talks underwent some editing before becoming texts in pamphlets, but the wholesale inclusion of salutations and other remarks pertinent only to a speech suggests relatively light-handed tempering of the content.

helping them make sense of the postwar world order. Since that knowledge might quickly lose applicability in the rapidly shifting and chaotic world, the Shimadzu director likely felt compelled to publish the speeches soon after the vessel docked. In a more extreme and therefore telling case, in 1929 the Japanese Associated Press (Shinbun Rengōsha 新聞聯合社) rushed to Japan pamphlets on the latest intelligence about Germany's economy through a Zeppelin—quite appropriately, not as rapid as an aircraft, but a ship certainly sailed faster in air than on water.⁸

These similarities aside, lectures and pamphlets each featured their own peculiarities. Unsurprisingly, a speech sounded more conversational and personal than any booklet. Not all booklets originated as talks. Many, in all likelihood the vast majority of, speeches did not find a second life in print (at the National Diet Library more and more of these are fortunately entering a third, presumably immortal, afterlife in a digital nirvana). Most importantly for our purpose, each lecture mentioned in this chapter had been preserved as a pamphlet in order to remain to this day, for as far as can be established there existed no mechanism meant for or capable of recording even a portion of the lecture circuits prevalent in interwar Japan. There simply could not have been any, since talks could be held, often casually and spontaneously, whenever and wherever a group of interested individuals gathered. A glance at a list of just a few lectures-turned-pamphlets reveals that they took place in venues as diverse as the saloon of a mail ship, Buddhist temples, private clubs, a

⁸ 「ドイツの最新の・業・態、經濟事情を・究するには先づ以て大體の輪廓を知つて置く必要がある。此のパンフレットは此の目的に書いたもので、各位の御一讀を願へれば幸甚である...ドイツから飛行船が飛んで來た...其の趣旨は經濟的見地から仔細にドイツの近情を・究するためであつた。そして其の最初の通信はツエツペリン飛行船によつて齎された。」 in Tsukamoto Yoshitaka 塚本義隆, *Saishin no Doitsu wo hōzu Tsepperin hikōsen ni takushite* 『最新のドイツを報ず ツエツペリン飛行船に托して』 (Osaka: Shinbun Rengōsha Ōsaka Shisha 新聞聯合社大阪支社, 1929), Introduction 1.

veteran's association, a radio studio, and universities. One can only imagine the full variety of locales of all the orations that left no trace on paper.

In general, lectures aimed at small audiences. If nothing else, laws of physics limited crowd size—only so many people could sit within earshot of the speaker, and only so many people could fit into a certain hall. Technology such as microphones and loudspeakers could bend but not break these rules through amplification. Radio did have the potential to replicate and transmit sound to every corner of the country, though it remained out of reach for most of the population for much of the interwar period. Receiver sets, pricey and cumbersome, had yet to become a common household appliance, let alone handheld device. For example, in 1931 a three-vacuum-tube radio manufactured by Matsushita would set one back forty-five Yen, equivalent to the monthly salary of an elementary school teacher.⁹ Moreover, in the early days of radio in the mid-1920s only residents in Tokyo, Osaka, or Nagoya enjoyed coverage. Still, for these urbanites lessons over the airwaves offered a novel and modern outlet for their informal education, since speeches constituted a pillar of the programming schedule from the very outset of radio.¹⁰ As a matter of fact, a lecture, alongside Beethoven and traditional Japanese music, made up part of the inaugural broadcast in Japan by the Tokyo Broadcasting Bureau (Tōkyō Hōsōkyoku 東京放送局) on 22 March 1925.¹¹ By the

⁹ Morinaga Takurō 森永卓郎, *Bukka no bunkashi jiten Meiji Taishō Shōwa Heisei* 『物価の文化史事典明治/大正/昭和/平成』 (Tokyo: Tenbōsha 展望社, 2009), 214, 398.

¹⁰ See Chapter Eight for a more detailed discussion on the instruction of foreign languages, specifically German, through radio programs.

¹¹ For more on the groundbreaking transmission, see Edward Seidensticker, *Tokyo from Edo to Showa 1867–1989: The Emergence of the World's Greatest City* (Rutland, Vermont: Tuttle Publishing, 2010), 349. The evidence for a lecture making up part of the first broadcast is found naturally in the pamphlet anthologizing the earliest speeches over airwaves, 「本書は、大正十四年三月二十二日より同年四月三十日まで、東京放送局に於て、放送せられたものである。」 in Tōkyō hōsōkyoku, ed., *Rajio kōenshū 1* 『ラヂオ講演集 第一輯』 (Tokyo: Nihon Rajio Kyōkai 日本ラヂオ協會, 1925), Explanatory Notes 1. The topics of these talks ranged from reconstruction of Tokyo after the earthquake to cultural rivalry between East and West, cooking,

early 1930s listeners could expect to hear regularly talks on various subjects by luminaries or public intellectuals.¹²

Of course, most Japanese could ill afford to become listeners, and most lectures were not transmitted through the air but delivered in situ by the speakers to their spectators. These talks frequently took place in private social, interest, or professional associations. For example, in early 1933 members of the National Association for Education (Teikoku Kyōikukai 帝國教育會) were invited to watch a presentation titled “Japan’s Diplomacy in Emergency” by the diplomat and Diet Lower House member Ashida Hitoshi 芦田均,¹³ while those belonging to the Franco-Japanese Association in Tokyo could go to a lecture meeting in their club building.¹⁴ Unaffiliated individuals might attend as guests, though they likely had to purchase tickets for the events.

The Economic Club (Keizai Kurabu 經濟俱樂部) ranked as one of the most prominent of such associations. Modeled on the Political Economy Club in London, it was

literature, general election, and education, etc. A year later, the radio companies in Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya were merged to create the NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation); respectively the stations received the call signs JOAK, JOBK and JOCK.

¹² For example, in the evening of 2 September 1931 the Tokyo branch of NHK played a speech by Tokutomi Sohō 徳富蘇峰 at 6pm, an English lesson at 6:30pm, and at 7:30pm lectures by the President of the Takasaki Educational Society and the Mayor of Nagaoka. See “JOAK Program,” *The Japan Times and Mail*, 3 September 1931.

¹³ Here I translate *teikoku* as “national” rather than the conventional “imperial.” Although “imperial” is closer to the phrase’s literal meaning (*tei* means emperor and *koku* means country), in practical and common usage it was often appended to objects or concepts with nothing to do with the empire or even the government, such as Teikoku gekijō 帝國劇場 (“imperial” theater) or Teikoku hōteru 帝國ホテル (“imperial” hotel). Especially in the cases of the theater and the association for education, *teikoku* merely denotes their prominence or dominance within Japan and not any colonial ambitions. The overuse of *teikoku* as “imperial” might give a distorted impression of interwar Japan as one drunk with empire-building. It is best reserved for truly imperial institutions like the army or navy or the emperor’s household. The German *Reich* carries similar nuances; it is often rendered as “empire” or “kingdom” when in fact “domain” or “country” is closer to the meaning. For truly imperial institutions, the adjective *kaiserlich* or prefix *Kaiser-* would be used, as in *Kaiserreich*, which indisputably should be translated as “empire.”

¹⁴ “Coming Events and Amusements,” *The Japan Times and Mail*, 2 April 1933; and “Coming Events and Amusements,” *The Japan Times and Mail*, 14 February 1933.

founded in 1931 by the liberal newsman Ishibashi Tanzan 石橋湛山 and several likeminded gentlemen as a forum for them to exchange ideas, relax, and socialize.¹⁵ Albeit not quite an exclusionary fellowship, the club nevertheless adopted rather exclusive conditions for initiation. Prospective applicants must be nominated by two current members and then approved by the standing committee. Upon joining, he—implicitly but invariably so, as all two-hundred-eighteen founding members were male—would pay a one-time fee of thirty Yen, a sum enough to sustain a household of four for a month, and thereafter monthly dues of three Yen. What is more, a lecture customarily took place at the club's weekly luncheon or supper, on which members would spend another Yen or so per meal.¹⁶ Small wonder, then, that only the well heeled or connected could gain entrance to and participate in the club.¹⁷

In any case, the Economic Club represented but one unusually high-profile association among countless others in interwar Japan. Most catered to specific audiences, operated in particular regions, or focused on narrow issues. Some could call on the support of thousands of members, but others stayed relevant only through the willpower of a few leaders. A handful, like the Economic Club, continued to thrive for decades into the present

¹⁵ The Political Economy Club was founded in 1821 by the economist James Mill (father of John Stuart Mill) with David Ricardo, Thomas Malthus and other colleagues as a venue for developing the fledgling subject.

¹⁶ At the founding of the club the weekly luncheon took place on Thursdays, but seemed to have been moved to Fridays soon after, a custom that remains to this day. For more on the history of the Economic Club, see *Keizai kurabu 50nen* 『経済倶楽部五〇年』 (Tokyo: Keizai Kurabu, 1981).

¹⁷ A partial list of new members in early 1933, though by no means representative, sheds light on the identities of those joining the club. It included two Lower House members, several chief executives or directors of banks and other corporations, and two university professors. See Kada Tetsuji 加田哲二, *Fasshizumu ni tsuite* 『ファシズムに就て』, *Keizai kurabu kōen* 21 経済倶楽部講演 第二十一輯 (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shuppanbu 東洋経済出版部, 1933), Appendix 15–16.

day, yet many more seemed to appear overnight and disappear just as quickly. This chapter will introduce several of these clubs when the appropriate context arises.¹⁸

That the vast majority of Japanese could hardly splurge their remuneration on a receiver set or leisure time on an active club life would have confined the lectures to very limited audiences and rendered them lost to posterity, had they not been printed and

¹⁸ Although this chapter, not to mention this footnote, has neither the space nor the aspiration to treat adequately the subject of civil society organizations in interwar Japan, a proper appreciation of their significance is indispensable to understanding the crux of this dissertation, namely the influence of civilian intellectuals in shaping public attitude and official policy. In an ideal world I would simply recommend a few standard works to readers interested in the topic, but, alas, it has lamentably and rather shockingly received relatively scant scholarly scrutiny, especially among literature in English. On the one hand, there are excellent works on the impact of the state in society, such as Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); and Elise K. Tipton, ed., *Society and the State in Interwar Japan* (New York: Routledge, 1997). On the other, there are outstanding studies on individual opinion-makers, such as Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); J. Thomas Rimer, ed., *Culture and Identity: Japanese Intellectuals during the Interwar Years* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); and Sharon Minichiello, *Retreat from Reform: Patterns of Political Behavior in Interwar Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986). William Miles Fletcher III's *The Search for a New Order: Intellectuals and Fascism in Prewar Japan* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1982) does explore a group, namely the Shōwa Research Association (Shōwa kenkyūkai 昭和・研究会), but its function as a think tank cozy with government leaders hardly qualifies it for a genuine civil society organization. A few publications in Japanese are topical and relevant, see for example, Inoki Takenori 猪木武徳, ed., *Senkanki Nihon no shakai shudan to nettowāku demokurashī to chūkan dantai* 『戦間期日本の社会集団とネットワーク デモクラシーと中間団体』 (Tokyo: NTT Shuppan Kabushiki Kaisha NTT 出版株式会社, 2008); and Hashizume Shin'ya 橋爪紳也, *Kurabu to Nihonjin hito ga atsumaru kūkan no bunkashi* 『倶楽部と日本人 人が集まる空間の文化史』 (Tokyo: Gakugei Shuppansha 学芸出版社, 1989). It is partly the goal of this dissertation to raise awareness of this lacuna in our understanding of Japanese history by demonstrating the impact of non-governmental groups, though far more research is needed to paint a complete picture of the relations between civil society and state.

The skewed academic attention lavished on the state creates the impression that the government dominated public life in Japan in the 1920s and 1930s, which fits into the *longue durée* narrative of modern Japan as developing from “feudal” Tokugawa to “authoritarian” Meiji to (proto-)“fascist” Showa and shortchanges the ill-fitting but concrete Taisho Democracy. As the best financed, most organized entity, the state naturally played a prominent role in the country—one needs to look no further than the rapid consolidation of the three local radio companies into the centrally controlled NHK. Yet the outbreak of social unrest and extra-political violence in parts of the interwar years exposed significant structural weaknesses of the government. If nothing else, the proliferation in the 1930s of rightwing, conspiratorial cabals bent on overthrowing the government showcased certain civic activism among groups outside official sanction and belied imaginations of a strong Japanese state. By one count, there were 569 such ultranationalist groups in Japan in 1935, see *Wa ga kuni ni okeru kokkashugi dantai—kokusui kōdō nihonkokka nōhonshugi wo hyōbō suru shuyō dantai no meishō oyobi kōryō ippan* 『我が國に於ける國家主義團體—國粹・皇道・日本國家・農本主義を標榜する主要團體の名稱及び綱領一般』, *Shakai kyōiku panfuretto* 231 社會教育パンフレット 第二百三十一輯 (Tokyo: Shakai Kyōiku Kyōkai 社會教育協會, 1935), Appendix.

In any case, one should probably not see ideological agitation as a major motivational force behind civil organizations. That no doubt held true for a good number, such as labor unions or the notorious Black Dragon Society (Kokuryūkai 黒龍會), but many associations, perhaps most, like the Economic Club, though made up largely of the rich and powerful, had little ambition beyond hosting a weekly luncheon and the concomitant lecture, and publishing the speeches as pamphlets.

fossilized as pamphlets. Indeed, even the pioneers behind the first radio broadcast recognized the timeless potential of spoken words captured on paper and saw themselves fulfilling a civilizing mission in society by publishing the speeches.¹⁹ Likewise, the Economic Club from its founding anthologized and distributed the lectures delivered at its weekly gatherings.²⁰ Priced respectively at one Yen and twenty Sen (1 Yen = 100 Sen), the collections of orations on radio and at the club would strike even poor readers as affordable. In other words, if expensive equipment or membership barred most of the population from learning on air or on site, then booklets provided a cheap backdoor into this wonderland of knowledge.

In fact, most pamphlets sold for even less, at ten Sen each or the cost of just a few days' newspapers.²¹ Whereas neither the Tokyo Broadcasting Bureau nor the Economic Club sought to sustain itself through selling speeches, pamphleteers profited by paddling piles and piles of their products. Pamphlets could be found in any bookstore remotely matching that description and at newsstands across the country. Alternatively, readers could subscribe to a series like they would a magazine, so that, for instance, followers of the Publisher of Contemporary Problems (Kyō no Mondaisha 今日の問題社) could have three issues delivered to their homes every month. As the firm's title suggested, its publications delved into current events of pertinence and import to the public. Understandably, then, in the early

¹⁹ 「放送された講演を、何等かの形式で保存したいと云ふことは人情であらう。蒞蓄と思索とを傾倒した名士の講演を、永久に、確實に印刻し置くことは、更に意義あることであらう。斯うした止み難い、切實な要求が、遂にラヂオ講演集として刊行せらるゝに至つたのである。内容の豊富なことゝ、多方面なことは、本書の特色として、誇り得る一つである。ユニヴァシテイ、エクステンションと見ることもできやう。公民教育又は成人教育としての効果を齎すことにもなるであらう。斯くしてラヂオが、一々文化使命を、社會に貢獻し行くのである。」 in *Rajio kōenshū 1*, Explanatory Notes 1.

²⁰ 「経済倶楽部の講演をポケット形のパンフレットにして配布するということは、会員から大いに歓迎されたところである。第一号から第一〇号までは『経済倶楽部会報』として刊行された。」 in *Keizai kurabu 50nen*, 12.

²¹ Tellingly, *The Japan Times* cost ¥0.10, but most dailies in Japanese cost about ¥0.02. The higher price of the *Times* indicated the relative affluence of its readers.

interwar years Germany usually made its way into speeches and booklets in Japan as a developing situation worthy of exploration.

Years of Acquaintance

Among histories of Japanese-German relations from the late nineteenth century to 1940, World War I is often dismissed as a mere detour in a long march toward convergence, or even an episode of intercultural bonding due to Japan's humane treatment of its German prisoners of war.²² As discussed in Chapters Three and Four, several of these ex-captives would indeed go on to help foster rapprochement by crafting a positive image of Japan in books and interest clubs, but the war did impose a real caesura in bilateral ties. Not only were communication and transportation severed by hostilities, but both countries—Germany more so than Japan—also underwent fundamental and lasting changes during and after the war that influenced their interactions. The Germany after 1919 differed so much from that before 1914 in politics, society, economy, technology, culture, demography, and territory that much of the knowledge of antebellum Germany which Japan had accumulated no longer applied. Consequently there arose a need in the immediate postwar years to rediscover this new Germany, understand its transformations, and extract lessons for Japan.

As already seen in the speeches on *Kaga Maru* about poison gas and reparations, the Great War and its repercussions loomed large in any discussion on Germany in Japan—Germany had played a pioneering role in developing and waging chemical warfare, and

²² See for example, Muneta Hiroshi 棟田博, *Nihonjin to Doitsujin ningen Matue to Bandō furyoshi* 『日本人とドイツ人 人間マツエと板東俘虜誌』 (Tokyo: Kōjinsha 光人社, 1997). The personal friendships between the Japanese captors and their German inmates are the stuff of legend in popular culture in Japan. An orchestra made up of German POWs in the camp at Bandō 板東 in Tokushima is credited with the first performance in Japan of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. A 2006 movie, *Baruto no gakuen* 『バールの楽園』 *Ode an die Freude*, starring Bruno Ganz, tells their story.

Japan as an Allied power was entitled to receive indemnity payments from Germany. In fact, not long after the guns fell silent in Europe some Japanese commentators began to try to expound the causes for Germany's defeat (interestingly enough, the Allied victory was apparently deemed so obvious that it needed little explanation). In August 1919, the Association for Promoting Domestic Production (Kokusan Shōreikai 國 ▪ 獎勵會) administered its second summer lecture circuit to educate the public.²³ A naval captain lectured on the moral of Germany's failure for the future of Japanese defense. In his opinion, Germany lost the war because it lacked manpower and materials to replenish battlefield attrition, and foolishly brought unrest to its own populace when it attempted to undermine Russia by inserting radical ideologues into the country.²⁴ Thereafter an army lieutenant, speaking in a forum hosted by Honganji Temple 本願寺, cited clumsy diplomacy and a dearth of resources as factors leading to Germany's downfall. Similarly, he faulted the spread of extremism within the ranks of the German army for melting its will to fight.²⁵

²³ 「大正八年八月一日ヨリ七日迄宮城縣松嶋海岸瑞巖寺内陽徳院ニ於テ第二回夏期講習會ヲ開催セリ本講習會ハ學者及實業家ノ講演ヲ請ヒ學理ト實驗ト兩々相待テ ▪ 業開發ノ資ニ供セムコトヲ期セリ」 in Kozai Sutetarō 小財捨太郎, ed., *Matsushima kōenshū* 『松島講演集』 (Tokyo: Kokusan Shōreikai, 1919), Preface 1. The Association for Promoting Domestic Production was founded in October 1914, shortly after the outbreak of war in Europe, with the explicit mission to boost domestic economic activities by urging companies to take advantage of the vacuum and disruption created by the conflict. The key founding members were bureaucrats and businessmen like Shibusawa Eiichi 澁澤榮一, Nakano Takenaka 中野武營 and Takei Morimasa 武井守正. Though certainly autarkic in essence, the association was at pains to stress its rejection of xenophobia or a closed economy.

²⁴ 「従つて國民の思想の動搖と云ふことになつたのです、加之獨逸が露西亞を破る爲に、露西亞の過激派を利用したと云ふことが一大失策で露西亞の過激派の懷いて居る、過激思想が段々獨逸にも入つて來まして、さうでなくとも非常に意思が動搖して居る所へ、其過激思想が入つて來たから非常に民心に悪い影響を來して、遂に獨逸が瓦解するやうになつたのであります」 Hitaka Kinji 日高謹爾, “Doitsu haisen no kyōkun to waga kokubō no shōrai” 獨逸敗戰の教訓と我國防の將來, *ibid.*, 180–1. Naturally, the naval officer also argued strenuously for the necessity of a strong navy in safeguarding Japan.

²⁵ 「...隣邦と ▪ 交し人道を無視したり、その外軍需品の缺乏、思想界の變動等は獨逸戰敗の最大原因たらずんばあらざるなり。」 Saitō Seijirō 齋藤晴次郎, “Ōshū senran ni okeru Doitsu haisen no riyū” 歐洲戰亂に於ける獨逸敗戰の理由, *Fukyō kenkyūkai kōenshū* 9 『布教 ▪ 究會講演集 第9回』 (Kyoto: Honganji Kyōmubu 本願寺教務部, 1920), 203–4. Curiously, both these lectures took place in a Buddhist

By “radical” or “extreme” thoughts, of course, both officers referred to Bolshevism. At the time they delivered their talks, not only was Germany gripped by revolutionary and counterrevolutionary turmoil, but Japan too experienced rising popular discontent and a spread of subversive ideas. As a result, Japanese opinion-makers and intellectuals, many of whom by definition were aligned with or sympathetic to the establishment, saw Germany as a test case of sorts for the global struggle between the left and the right. Thus, correctly interpreting or even anticipating events in Germany assumed greater urgency and relevance for Japan, and retrospective curiosity in debating the reasons for Germany’s wartime failure quickly gave way to purposeful fact-finding of developments “on the ground.”

Indeed, throughout the 1920s and up to late 1931, a number of speakers returned from Europe to relate the latest news and trends in politics, society, culture, or the economy from Germany. One association alone, the Enlightenment Society (Keimeikai 啓明會),²⁶ sponsored three talks on the topic on separate occasions within a decade.²⁷ Already in April 1920, the club hosted a presentation by Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 on his recent visit to

temple. It is my understanding that at that time some temples and sects sought to broaden their relevance in society by participating in events not directly pertinent to religion.

²⁶ The Enlightenment Society was founded in August 1918 with an endowment of one million yen provided by Barons Makino Nobuaki 牧野伸顯 and Hirayama Narinobu 平山成信. Its first head was Akaboshi Tetsuma 赤星鐵馬, a banker who today is (in)famous for having introduced the non-native black bass to Japan. The society was purportedly the first learned society in Japan, and its main mission was to encourage domestic research and scholarship, and sharing knowledge acquired abroad through its public lectures. Each year it hosted three to six such meetings, which usually took place on a Saturday at the Industry Club of Japan (日本工業俱樂部). See 「財團法人啓明會は、特殊の・究、調査、著作を助成し、發明發見を獎勵し、又會自ら専門家に囑託して此等の事業を行ひ、其の他外國に於ける同種の事業を紹介し、又は著作を反譯し、或は必要なる出版を爲す等の外に、時々特に有益と認むる講演を開いて、其の速記は順次之を講演集として廣く一般に頒布して居るのである。」 in Nagaoka Harukazu 長岡春一, *Saikin no Doitsu* 『最近の獨逸』, Zaidan hōjin keimeikai kōenshū 37 財團法人啓明會講演集 第三十七回 (Tokyo: Keimeikai, 1930), Copyright page. Literally speaking, *keimei* refers to the morning star in its role to introduce (*kei*) brightness (*mei*) to the day. Here I translate it figuratively as “enlightenment” because it fits better with the society’s goal to bring knowledge to the public.

²⁷ Between 1920 and 1930 the Enlightenment Society held thirty-eight meetings, never once repeating any topic of discussion, save those on Germany. That in that period it invited three speakers to lecture on conditions in Germany showed the importance in Japan attributed to understanding Germany.

Europe and Germany late the previous year.²⁸ Remarkably, Takakusu the private individual managed to enter Germany and stay there for seven days and thereby did something few Japanese government officials could, since the two countries had yet to resume diplomatic relations. He spoke of the misery of the “new poor” who used to be the middle class, counting his host, a trade consultant of the city of Leipzig, who could only “treat” his guest from faraway with a small slice of smoked fish.²⁹ From what he witnessed and experienced in Germany—shortages of food and fuel, a weak currency, the yoke of treaty obligations, runaway radicalism, and dearth of leadership—he conjectured that it would take the nation at least fifty years before it could hope to mount any sort of campaign of retribution.³⁰

Takakusu by no means stood alone in voicing his worry regarding the threat of leftist ideologies in Germany fanned by economic hardship. On *Kaga Maru*, Aoki, the attaché of the Finance Ministry, had already advised against burdening Germany with an unreasonable

²⁸ Takakusu Junjirō, *Doitsu no kinkyō* 『獨逸の近況』, Zaidan hōjin keimeikai kōenshū 2 財團法人啓明會講演集 第二回 (Tokyo: Keimeikai, 1920). Takakusu was an acclaimed scholar on Buddhism and Sanskrit and taught at the time at Tokyo Imperial University. He studied in Berlin and Leipzig (1895–1896), as well as Britain and France. In 1924 he founded the Musashino Elementary and Middle Schools for Girls (武蔵野女子學院).

²⁹ 「中・階級は今は貧乏になつて居るので、是は「新しい貧乏人」、成金に對して見ると是が新しい「成貧」であります。...遙か日本から來たのに餘り氣の毒であるからといふので、小さい燻製の魚一片を加へて出さるゝのは一段の御馳走である、それも家の人は食ひはしないで、私に特別に出してゐれる。...ライプツヒ市の商業顧問ブースマン氏の内に七日間泊つて居つたのであります。」 in *ibid.*, 20–1. In addition, Takakusu described the severe lack of fuel in Germany, so much so that during his weeklong stay in winter he did not get to use hot water even once, 「私が七日逗留して居つた家でも、七日居つて一遍も湯を使つたことはない。風呂ばかりでない、朝の顔を洗ひ、鬚を剃るにも、冬期の雪の降り積む非常に寒い時でありましたけれども、一度も湯を使つたことはない。」 in *ibid.*, 23. Of course, there could be a certain degree of exaggeration in Takakusu’s account, but it does agree broadly with press reports from the period examined in Chapter Five.

³⁰ 「食料の缺乏、燃料の缺乏、爲換の低落、條約の履行、過激派の跳梁など難關を眼前に控へて、而して人物の缺乏と云ふ大難關に逢着して居るのであります。...更に大軍を起して復讐戦とやるとか何とかいふことは、なかなか五十年や百年の後でも望みがないだらうと思はれます。」 in *ibid.*, 40.

indemnity lest extremism gain a wider foothold and present an even greater danger.³¹

Somewhat later, a business journalist echoed the same sentiment in a speech on Europe's economy at the Economic Association of Kobe (Kōbe Keizaikai 神・經濟會) by stating that Germany had been reduced to meeting its obligations in reparations through printing money. In turn the diving and then worthless Mark hemorrhaged the country of goods through facilitating exports, further hurting the hard-pressed middle class, who, should it radicalize, would rapidly plunge Germany into critical condition.³²

Remarkably, none of the orators mentioned had shown an inordinate interest in Germany hitherto in their careers. Only one, Takakusu, had definitely visited the country, and in his speech he made sure to quash even an appearance of preference for Germany.³³

Why then did they suddenly care so much whether it succumbed to revolution? In all

³¹ 「若し過大の償金を課せられ...其結果は或は獨逸の過激派を招致し聯合國は獨り賠償金の圓損をする許りでなく過激派の勢力擴大より生ずる非常の危険に遭遇することがないとも限りません。」 in “Doitsu no baishō mondai ni tsuite” 獨逸の賠償問題に就て, *Indoyō kōenshū*, 69–70.

³² 「現今歐羅巴の中心問題は獨逸を中心とする賠償問題であります。如何となれば獨逸に賠償を命ずる時は獨逸は印刷機械を以て之に應ずると云ふのであります。...次に獨逸は馬克の下落により國內の貨物が風の如く外に飛び出して居ります。之は恰も人體の大出血の如きもので努力して止めねば死んでしまひます。...獨逸で一番困つて居るのは中・階級であります。...労働者と農民は比較的樂で伯林にては労働者の運動がないではありませんが之とても非常に過激的なものではありません。併し中・者の示威運動は時々ある様子です。如斯獨逸の・態は急速に回復せられるであらうとは豫測せられません。或は最早危篤・態であると云へましませう。」 in Oka Minoru 岡實, *Saikin Ōbei keizaikai to wa ga kuni* 『最近歐米經濟界と我國』, Kōbe keizaikai kōenshū 5 神・經濟會講演集 第五號 (Kobe: Kōbe Keizaikai, 1923), 1, 3–4. Not much information is available about the Economic Association of Kobe, except that it predated and was unrelated to the Economic Club. It held its first lecture meeting in 1914. Among other roles, Oka worked as a writer for *The Economist*, then the editor-in-chief of *Tōkyō Nichinichi Shinbun* and its president. Earlier in his life he worked in a few government ministries.

³³ He assured his listeners of his neutrality by stating that although he received half of his education in Germany, he was by no means blindly smitten with the country and considered it responsible for its own current suffering, 「是から御話しますことは非常に獨逸人に同情を寄せたやうなことになるのもありますけれども、私は獨逸に心酔した人とは違ひます。私は半分は獨逸で育つたものでありますけれども、獨逸の今日のやうな・態になつたのは全然獨逸に責任があると考へて居ります。」 in Takakusu, 6–7. He also explained that Japan's lenient treatment of the German POWs, which gave Japan a pro-German reputation, was merely the gesture of a gentlemanly nation. See 「斯んなことを聞いたときは獨逸の人は實に非常な驚きを以て迎へるのであります。斯ういふ紳士的の國ならばそれは青島位取られても仕方がないと思ふ、實に其點では感謝して居るのであります。又日本はそれが爲めに「プロジヤーマン」である、日本は恆に獨逸最良であるとまで言はれたのであります。」, 38–9.

likelihood they were concerned less with Germany than with the spread of Bolshevism worldwide. At the time of their lectures, not all was well in Japan. Although Japan had grown in reputation, territory, and economy as a result of World War I, the concomitant Wilsonian and Leninist ideals shook Japanese complacency at home and abroad, as evidenced by Chinese popular anger toward Japan and an independence campaign in Korea. Most worrisome for these elite speakers—officers, bureaucrats, businessmen, and academics—unrest in the forms of the nationwide Rice Riots in 1918 and the rise of organized labor movement rocked Japan itself. As one can expect, after highlighting in his talk the role of radicalism in demoralizing the German army, the army lieutenant recommended vigilance against the same contagion within the Japanese ranks.³⁴

Moreover, the stabilization of the Soviet Union meanwhile threatened to push Bolshevism right up to the shores of the Sea of Japan, a prospect that Japan fought to avert (however nominally) through the Siberian Intervention.³⁵ Tellingly, for a while in 1919 rightwing German soldiers in Freikorps units in the west and Japanese troops in the east fought in an unintended partnership against a common enemy in the Red Army. Indeed, animosity toward the Soviet Union and communism would serve as way stations on the twisted road to the eventual Japanese-German alliance, which would first actualize as the peculiar Anti-Comintern Pact.

³⁴ 「惟ふに今日の吾國は、獨帝が日露戦後を評せしと同様なる・態にあらずか、而して過激派の者は曰く『日本を瓦解せしむるには労働者と軍隊に過激思想と宣傳するにあり』と。然るに我が軍隊には、未だ斯かる思想を發見せず。たゞ昨年これに類似せる思想のものよりと思はしき無名の端書、東京仙臺金澤の軍隊へ配布せられたることあり。」 in Saitō, 204. To combat the spread of radical ideas within the population and thus also within the army, he recommended the maintenance and strengthening of the system centering on the emperor.

³⁵ The Siberian Intervention began in 1918 as part of an effort by the Allied powers to bolster the White anti-bolsheviks after the October Revolution in Russia. Japan took part by eventually sending up to 70,000 troops to occupy parts of the Russian Pacific provinces. While the western Allies withdrew in 1920 in the face of the Red Army's success, Japan held on to the occupied territories until 1922 and northern Sakhalin until 1925.

That would have to wait, of course. Back in the early 1920s the experts were still struggling to make sense of the situation in Germany. Takakusu's prediction of a recovery taking decades did not quite bear out; by 1924 the Weimar Republic had righted the ship of state by floating a new currency, adopting a payment plan for reparations and suppressing leftist and rightist coup attempts. The return of a modicum of normalcy, coupled with the resumption of formal ties, created room for a renaissance of sorts in Japanese-German exchange. In particular the effort by the Nobel-winning chemist Fritz Haber (see Chapter Four) and the new ambassador Wilhelm Solf proved pivotal in engendering Japanese goodwill toward Germany. Haber visited Japan in 1924, and upon his return he delivered an oration in Berlin arguing for the necessity of closer bilateral economic collaboration.³⁶ About five months afterward the Industry and Politics Association (Kōseikai 工政會) published the text of the speech as a pamphlet, so that, just as with the lectures in the Indian Ocean, what took place overseas did not stay overseas.³⁷

³⁶ The enthusiasm in Japan that greeted Haber, a Nobel laureate, should not be understated. One reason he traveled to Japan was to visit the grave of his uncle Ludwig Haber, who was assassinated by a young samurai in 1874 while serving as the first German consul to Hakodate. To commemorate the special occasion of Fritz's visit, the local library published—what else?—a pamphlet narrating the history of the murder and lauding Fritz's generosity and friendliness, which set him apart from the usual “stubborn, narrow-minded German scholars.” See 「然れども博士は人も知る如く總ての人に對して最も親切であり、人の爲めに厚意を盡すことを楽しみとなしをる點は、獨逸一般の頑固偏狹な學者氣質と全くその撰を異にし一異彩を放つ所にして博士が非凡なる學才を有する點を度外視しても、最も優れたる人格者として優に人の師表たるべき資格を有す。」 in Okada Kenzō 岡田健藏, *Hakodate chūtō Doitsu ryōji Hābashi sōnanki* 『函館駐割獨逸領事ハアバア氏遭難記』, Hakodate sōsho 4 函館叢書 第4冊 (Hakodate: Hakodate Hābā Kinenkai 函館ハアバア記念會, 1924), 29.

³⁷ Fritz Haber フリッツ・ハーバー, *Nichidoku keizai teikei no hitsuyōnaru yuen* 『日獨經濟提携の必要なる所以』 (Tokyo: Kōseikai Shuppanbu 工政會出版部, 1925). This speech was given on 30 April 1925 in Berlin, and was probably the same as the one Haber delivered at a general conference of the German chemical industry in Frankfurt on 11 June. See Fritz Haber, “Wirtschaftlicher Zusammenhang zwischen Deutschland und Japan.” The Industry and Politics Association was founded in 1918. Its focus was apparently industrial technology, and in 1944 it merged with two other organizations with similar interests to form a federation, which became the Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers (Nihon Kagaku Gijutsu Renmei 日本科学技術連盟) of today.

More importantly, the normalization of relations finally anointed dealings with Germany with an aura of respectability by removing the stain, if any remained, of cavorting with a former enemy. In this atmosphere Solf and some likeminded Japanese reconstituted the Japanese-German Cultural Society (Nichidoku Bunka Kyōkai 日獨文化協會) in 1927, with the statesman Gotō Shinpei 後藤新平, who studied medicine in Germany, as chairman.³⁸ As another demonstration of the influence lectures and pamphlets were perceived to exercise in society, the association chose these venues as its primary means of raising Germany's profile in Japan and thereby affecting mutual understanding.³⁹ Accordingly, at the inaugural meeting Ambassador Solf himself delivered a speech on Mahāyāna Buddhism.⁴⁰

Ironically, the high profile that the society commanded also seemed to have *limited* its effectiveness in carrying out its mission. Although the organization's publication left no direct evidence revealing the make-up of its membership, one can safely assume that the barrier to entry could only have exceeded that to the Economic Club. After all, few Japanese

³⁸ The Japanese-German Cultural Society was a successor to the defunct Japanese-German Society, which was founded in 1911 but soon folded due to the Great War. Its president and vice-president were respectively Prince Kuni Kuniyoshi 久邇宮邦彦王 and ex-premier Katsura Tarō 桂太郎, both having studied military science in Germany. It is unclear whether Kuni and Katsura in 1911 and Gotō in 1927 became leaders of the associations because they were genuinely enthusiastic about nurturing bilateral relations or merely on honorary grounds; I suspect it was the latter case. On the one hand, the societies needed prominent individuals to be their heads and sought out those with some experience with Germany. On the other, the statesmen probably did not mind adding another title without obligation to their resumes. Moreover, their other, weightier duties most likely kept them from actively participating in the associations, not to mention that Katsura and Gotō were quite old at the times and died not long after the societies' founding.

³⁹ 「本協會はその設立の趣旨に随ひ諸種の事業を計畫しようとして居るのでありまするが、公開講演に於ては或は・史或は哲學或は文學、藝術、科學などあらゆる方面に・り或は理論的に或は實際的に日獨兩國の文化の交換宣傳を志すものであります。」 in Gotō Shinpei, “Kaikai no ji 開會の辭,” *Nichidoku bunka kōenshū 1* 『日獨文化講演集 第一輯』 (Tokyo: Zaidan Hōjin Nichidoku Bunka Kyōkai, 1927), 2.

⁴⁰ See Solf, “Daijō bukyō no shimei” 大乘佛教の使命, *ibid.* Solf studied Sanskrit and Indology as a student in university. In 1925, Solf was elected to succeed outgoing British ambassador to Japan Charles Eliot as president of the Asiatic Society of Japan, the most significant scientific organization in East Asia. For more on Solf, see Peter J. Hempenstall and Paula Tanaka Mochida, *The Lost Man: Wilhelm Solf in German History* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2005); and Eberhard von Vietsch, *Wilhelm Solf: Botschafter zwischen den Zeiten* (Tübingen: Wunderlich Verlag, 1961).

could claim the resources or connection to roam in social circles that featured Solf and Gotō. Even if neither Excellency was expected to attend meetings regularly (in fact they could not have, since Solf returned to Germany in 1928 and Gotō died a year later), the association could still mobilize presenters of impeccable qualifications. Within merely the first few years of its inception, it managed to summon recognized leaders in philosophy, history, law, economics, literature, and physical science to lecture on their specialties to its members.⁴¹ The very excellence of these speakers, however, might well have intimidated laypeople only casually curious in Germany. In addition, the lectures took place at prestigious universities or clubhouses that the general public had little business frequenting. Most damningly, the talks often indulged in pedantic topics such as the “the current state of Germany’s intellectual world” (獨逸思想界の現 状) or “peculiarities of German literature” (獨逸文學の特色) that could excite only rarefied audiences already knowledgeable about Germany. To wit, the Japanese-German Cultural Society was preaching to the choir.

Understandably, the rest of the Japanese, to the extent that they paid attention to Germany, did so only when happenings there might affect them. As Germany stabilized politically and economically, Japanese observers turned their focus to these changes by abandoning the earlier rhetoric of doom and gloom, and speaking expectantly of new opportunities. Thus, in 1926 a foreign correspondent could deliver a speech on a “resurgent Germany” at the Information Society for Lectures on Scholarship and the Arts (Gakugei

⁴¹ The philosopher was Kuwaki Gen'yoku 桑木嚴翼, a specialist on Immanuel Kant and professor at the Imperial Universities in Kyoto and Tokyo. The historian was Sakaguchi Takashi 坂口昂, an expert on Leopold von Ranke and chair of the college of letters at Kyoto Imperial University. The legal scholar was Minobe Tatsukichi 美濃部達吉, an authority on constitutional law. The economist was Shiozawa Masasada 鹽澤昌貞, who represented Japan at the League of Nations. The philologist was Yamagishi Mitsunobu 山岸光宣, likely the most influential Germanist at the time. The scientist was Nagaoka Hantarō 長岡半太郎, a giant in physics in Japan.

Kōen Tsūshinsha 學藝講演通信社).⁴² He declared that witnessing the rebirth of Germany from its nadir should inspire certain “divine awe” in the Japanese and shake them from their own malaise.⁴³

In the same spirit, though in a less-dramatic tone, a small chorus of lecturers or pamphleteers emerged in the mid-1920s to marvel at Germany’s regeneration, a sentiment that, in all fairness, one did not necessarily have to harbor preexisting pro-German feelings to express. In 1928, for instance, a private individual was so moved by what he saw in Germany that he self-published a booklet about the lessons on organization, meticulousness, and discipline that he learned there.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, at the Enlightenment Society an expert who lived in Germany for twenty-three years returned to Japan to share his insights on the latest events. He concluded that Germany, should it manage to temper the peace treaty, would

⁴² Takarada Tsūgen 寶田通元, *Shinkō Doitsu no genjō* 『新興ドイツの現・』, Gakugei kōen tsūshinsha panfuretto 32 學藝講演通信社パンフレット 第32 (Tokyo: Gakugei Kōen Tsūshinsha, 1926). Takarada was the vice-editor of the foreign bureau of *Kokumin Shinbun*. Little information is available on the Information Society for Lectures on Scholarship and the Arts. It was based in Tokyo and probably founded in the early to mid-1920s. Unlike other similar associations, the agency did not offer its pamphlets for sale to the public but instead mailed three pamphlets per month only to dues-paying members, who could also attend the lecture in person for no extra charge. The annual membership fee was six yen and should be affordable to any employed adult. Speakers were not paid in order to keep operating cost low, in accordance with the society’s mission to disseminate knowledge, 「學藝講演通信社の使命—あらゆる文化を、一部の人に専有させずに、廣く一般國民に普及する事が、私達の年來の運動であります。如何なる階級の人々たるを問はず、都市と山間僻地の區別なく、少々の費用と少々の時間で、文化の中心地に於ける名士の講演を、居ながらにして聞く事が出来、然もそれが永久的に印象せられ、保存せらるゝと云ふのがこの講演通信の使命であります。」, Foreword 1.

⁴³ 「世界のあらゆる民族の中で、ドイツ民族程其生命力の根・いものはない、あれだけの戦敗國としての痛手を蒙りつゝも、着々と戦前のドイツ復興しつゝある・態を見る時、私達は一種の神々しい驚異さへ感ずる。…目覺しい復興のドイツを見る時、私達は遅々として復興苦に悩む日本を反省せねばならぬ。世界に於ける日本の現・と、日本民族の一大使命を三省せねばならぬ。」 in *ibid.*, front cover. True to the conservative bearing of his newspaper, Takarada warned at the end of the pamphlet against “cowardly socialism” (臆病な社會主義) and alleged that all communists were controlled by Moscow.

⁴⁴ 「獨乙人は組織的で、且緻密なる頭を持つて、秩序的に粘り・く仕事をなし、事柄の大小に拘らず渾身の努力を惜まぬ國民である。」 in Koide Jōyū 小出錠雄, *Doitsu wa nani wo watakushi ni oshieshiya* 『獨逸は何を私に教へしや』 (n.p.: Koide Jōyū, 1928), 2. He was particularly impressed by the scientific and rational means of manufacturing he saw in German businesses. There is virtually no information to be found about Koide, except that apparently in the late Meiji years he went overseas to study the shipping industry.

surely regain its strength thanks to its hard-working, frugal, and earnest people.⁴⁵ At yet another talk on the German phoenix, the society's director opened the meeting by reminding the audience that this story of rebirth from defeat might well serve as a roadmap for Japan to break out of its present doldrums.⁴⁶ Indeed, the confidence and optimism these commentators felt in Germany's near future coalesced into and materialized as the first pamphlet in a series on business and industry expedited back to Japan on a Zeppelin in late August 1929—time, after all, is money.⁴⁷

Ever since the end of World War I and throughout the 1920s Japanese maintained a persistent and growing interest in the new Germany, justifiably so. The war had whetted the Japanese appetite by depriving them of information from Germany for four years, and the rapid, breathtaking vicissitudes up till 1924 rightfully captivated spectators in Japan. In other words, the Japanese reading and listening publics had much to catch up on, and they chose

⁴⁵ 「要するに獨逸は最早馬克的にも又政治的にも安定致しまして國民は一般に勤儉力行眞劍味國力の恢復に努力致して居りますから、今後の死活は獨り平和條約實施の手加減如何にあるのであります」 in Oikawa Shigenobu 老川茂信, *Doitsu no kinkyō* 『獨逸の近況』, Zaidan hōjin keimeikai kōenshū 22 財團法人啓明會講演集 第二十二回 (Tokyo: Keimeikai, 1927), 54. There is not much information available about Oikawa, who was probably a specialist on finance since he wrote a book on the destruction of Germany's currency (『獨逸貨幣沒落物語』, 1931). He was better known for continuing the publication of the journal *Ostasien* in Germany after its founder Tamai Kisaku 玉井喜作, an adventurer who traveled to Germany through Siberia, passed away in 1906. Tamai was instrumental in the Wa Doku Kai 和獨會 (Japanese-German Society) in Berlin, which folded in 1913 (see Chapter Four).

⁴⁶ 「わが國の現・に於きましては政治上、經濟上、財政上或は思想、教育總ての方面に亘りまして行詰りを生じて、こゝにどうでも、致して打開策を講じまして、わが國の隆盛を圖つて行かなければならぬ・態になつて居ることは、これ亦諸君の御存知の通りであります。ドイツが戦後嘗めましたところの苦痛、これに對してドイツ國民が如何なることをしたか、如何なる方法に依つて甦生をしたかといふことは、わが國人の聽かむとするところでありまして、今日の・態に於ては、最も吾々の參考になる事柄であると信ずるのであります。」 in Nagaoka, Introduction by Tsurumi Sakio 鶴見左吉雄 2. Nagaoka was the ambassador to Germany from 1926 to 1930. After World War I he took part in the negotiations at Versailles, and then served as ambassador to Czechoslovakia and the Netherlands before being sent to Berlin.

⁴⁷ 「銀行家に意見を叩けば必ず面白くない話ばかり聞かせる。又商工業家は金融の梗塞といふ點から頻りと悲觀の聲を擧げる、實際困つてゐる點も多々あるに違ひはないのである。然しドイツ全體に就て大局から見れば決してそんな悲觀的な・態にはない。それ所か徐々に回復し發展しつつあると言ふて差支へない。」 in Tsukamoto, 54.

lectures and pamphlets as the appropriate vehicle for the combination of currency and depth. In this period speakers and writers worked mostly to reacquaint Japan with the changed and changing Germany. None held a grudge against the former enemy; all articulated sympathy for its postwar hardship, but several also took pains to adopt a neutral tone and to dispel any appearance of bias for Germany. Many cheered on Germany's economic and political comeback, though one would err to interpret this attitude as any inherent "pro-Germanness." At the time Germany, and relations therewith, did not yet polarize Japanese public opinion into "for" or "against," since few disputed that Japan would gain from a strengthening Germany, through trade, exchange, and not least learning from its suffering and rehabilitation.

Verily, as demonstrated, the creators of these speeches and booklets eagerly mined lessons from Germany's experiences in war, economic crisis, political upheaval, or cultural revival. This inexplicable enthusiasm, however, must also confound the posterior historian: just what exactly could a nation that lost a world war, territories and colonies, the flower of its youth, its cumulative savings, and its system of government teach another that launched itself on the path of a meteoric rise? In fact, Japan arguably fared best among all combatants in the Great War, as it had suffered few casualties and no physical devastation, and in the 1920s it became more powerful, populous, and prosperous than it had ever been. To be sure, the Rice Riots, Great Kanto Earthquake, death of the Taisho Emperor, and Showa Panic of 1927 should and did dampen any excessive self-congratulatory mood, but these events hardly legitimized the pundits' harping on stagnation and decline, much less comparisons to the putsches, reparations, disintegration, humiliation, hyperinflation, and foreign occupation burdening Germany. One may be tempted to dismiss the foreboding and dread as collective hypochondria, which, however, if feverish enough, did amount to an ailment in its own right.

One should also not forget that all the lecturers and pamphleteers mentioned thus far belonged to various degrees to society's elites and had every reason to fear any disruption to the system that had benefited them.

Moreover, it seemed quite plausible that the worry among the Japanese chattering class stemmed not as a response to any actual ill in the country but from a fear of the unknown. In some ways, leaders of Meiji Japan meeting challenges from the West faced clear if painful choices—imitation or inundation. By the end of World War I, however, Taisho Japan found itself in a transformed and more complex world. Europe lay exhausted, America retreated behind its oceans, and Bolshevism became a reality. The anchor for Japanese diplomacy for two decades, the Anglo-Japanese alliance, dissolved into the untested entity of the League of Nations. Meiji's formula for success, namely industrialization based on low wages and aggressive imperialism, was now rejected by disgruntled workers at home and a new internationalist environment abroad. The way forward then looked far less straightforward and rightfully caused some anxiety and insecurity in society, especially those with something to lose from changes to the state of things. Thus, the experts called for learning from Germany ways to make Japan more productive, such as its "national character," rationalization of manufacturing, and scientific management, but not the means to liberalize society such as the Weimar constitution and republican government.

Years of Advocacy

While *Graf Zeppelin* sailed gracefully from Friedrichshafen to Tokyo in mid-August 1929, the global economy was hurtling toward a precipice. Two months after the pamphlet on the "latest intelligence on Germany's industry and economy" was published, it was

rendered useless by the Wall Street Crash felt around the world. Now that Japan and Germany encountered, or at least were perceived to encounter, the same problems, the purportedly applicable teachings from Germany assumed a heightened sense of urgency and relevance. The rhetoric in the media would become shriller, and some new entrants into opinion-making would feel less constrained in challenging or even upturning the status quo in order to help Japan break out of the long-anticipated and now-actualized crisis.

As expected, the economy reprised its role as topics of speeches and booklets. In 1930, a publication on—of all things—the temperament of German university students somehow managed to connect it to Germany's financial straits by proclaiming that Japan had much to learn from the heart Germans exhibited in tackling the new economic emergency.⁴⁸ In the same year, the Research Institute for Economics and Business Administration at the Kobe University alone hosted two lectures on the ghost of the reparations, supposedly exorcised in the mid-1920s, returning with a vengeance.⁴⁹ Both speakers suggested a pragmatic solution of lowering payments and debt forgiveness, a reasonable compromise that could only come from a disinterested party like Japan. Even the stodgy Japanese-German Cultural Society, which tended to indulge in academic minutiae and avoided controversies,

⁴⁸ 「往年世界大戦の國難に當面せる、獨逸國民の活躍と、戦後の經濟國難に、逸早く難局を打開しつゝある獨逸魂が如何にして培はれたるかの根柢を知るは、他山の石また我を磨くの一助たるべきを信じ」 in Saitō Yoichirō 齋藤與一郎, *Doitsu gakusei kishitsu* 『獨逸學生氣質』, Hakodate toshokan sōsho 10 函館圖書館叢書 第十篇 (Hakodate: Shiritsu Hakodate Toshokan 市立函館圖書館, 1930), Foreword 2. The foreword was not written by Saitō, who studied medicine in Germany. In 1938 Saitō was elected mayor of Hakodate, its sixth.

⁴⁹ Ikushima Hirojirō 生島廣治郎, *Doitsu baishokin shiharai riron no kōsatsu* 『獨逸賠償金支拂理論の考察』, Shōgyō kenkyūjo kōenshū 50 商業 ▪ 究所講演集 第 50 冊 (Kobe: Kōbe Shōgyō Daigaku Shōgyō Kenkyūjo 神 ▪ 商業大學商業 ▪ 究所, 1931); and Masui Mitsuzō 増井光藏, *Doitsu no gaishi shunyū to baisho shiharai no shōrai* 『獨乙の外資輸入と賠償支拂の將來』, Shōgyō kenkyūjo kōenshū 51 (Kobe: Kōbe Shōgyō Daigaku Shōgyō Kenkyūjo, 1931). Both speakers appeared to be experts on finance and economy.

waded into the debate by sponsoring two presentations on reparations, one from Japan's perspective, the other from Germany's.⁵⁰

Less predictably, however, domestic developments in Germany began to stir heated discussions in Japan. While Nazis and communists battled in the streets of Germany for political dominance, their Japanese supporters clashed by proxy in orations and leaflets. One must find it remarkable that events in Germany with little immediate, ostensible consequences for Japan managed to elicit such emotions so far away, as if the stakes involved not just the soul of Germany, but that of Japan as well.

Some of the first partisan commentaries on German politics surfaced in the early 1930s. Writing in Berlin in October 1930, or just one month after the Nazis' electoral breakout, Suzuki Tōmin 鈴木東民, a correspondent for the Japan Telegraphic Communication News Agency (Nihon Denpō Tsūshinsha 日本電報通信社), shared his reactions to and disapproval of the rise of "German fascism" in a series on social science, which at the time meant something akin to socialist science. Albeit no fan of Nazism, Suzuki took the trouble to familiarize himself and thereby his readers with the tenets of Hitler's party by consulting its program. In his criticism of the ideology, however, he merely fell back upon Marxist orthodoxy by lumping National Socialism with generic fascism. Also in line with the dogma, he proclaimed that the "inevitability of history" would ultimately expose the Hitler movement's lie of representing workers and sweep it aside as the last gasp of German

⁵⁰ Ōtake Torao 大竹虎雄, "Taidoku baisho mondai ni tsuite" 對獨賠償問題に就て; and Karl Knorr カール・クノル, "Doitsugawa yori mitaru baishokin mondai" 獨逸側より觀たる賠償金問題, *Nichidoku bunka kōenshū* 7 (Tokyo: Zaidan Hōjin Nichidoku Bunka Kyōkai, 1931). Ōtake was a bureaucrat in the finance ministry, and Knorr was a trade officer in the embassy to Tokyo. Knorr dutifully advocated Berlin's position of accepting the Young Plan, 「獨逸の國民性は非常に忍耐 〆く、さうして樂觀的でありますから、ヤング案の改訂により支拂を減額することが出來ましたなら、必ず喜ぶべき結果を得ることゝ思ひます。」, 48.

capitalism.⁵¹ Likewise, in the same issue, a social democrat toed the party line by expressing concern for the proletariat in Germany amidst the radicalization in both the left and right.⁵²

Beginning in 1932, when the Nazis went from strength to strength at the polls, not only did voters in Germany jump onto the Hitler bandwagon, in Japan too various speakers emerged to take advantage of the moment by claiming the role of opinion-makers. Gorai Kinzō 五來欣造, a prolific authority on fascism, returned from Europe in August 1932 to discuss at the Japanese Agency for Lectures (Nihon Kōen Tsūshinsha 日本講演通信社) the tectonic shifts in politics he witnessed.⁵³ During his eight-month stay in Germany he

⁵¹ 「私のヒトラーその者について、及び彼の率ゆる國家社會主義獨逸労働者黨なる一團のファツシステン運動について出来るだけ忠實に紹介し、そして、それによつて如何に彼等の運動が・史發達の必然性に逆行するものであるかを、また彼等が労働階級の前衛の假面をつけながら如何に隨所に資本家に飼はれた、犬の尻尾を露出させてゐるかを示さうと試みたのである。彼等の運動を一貫するものは排外思想、反猶太主義、特權階級の擁護、暴力による無・階級の抑壓等々である。…伊太利に、ポーランドに、スペインに無・階級■■■■は高まりつゝある。現在の諸國の情勢はファツシズムのより以上の進展を否定する。獨逸も亦その例に洩れるものではない。ヒトラー及びその一黨の擡頭はやがて来るべき没落の前の獨逸資本主義最後の光芒である。」 in Suzuki Tōmin, “Doitsu fasshisuten to sono undō” 獨逸ファツシステンとその運動, *Shakai kagaku kōza 4* 『社會科學講座 4』 (Tokyo: Seibundō 誠文堂, 1931), 10–12. As can be seen in the quotation, a government censor had left his mark on the text. We shall hear from Suzuki in more depth in the next chapter.

⁵² 「ドイツが極右派と共・黨との兩極端の擡頭を見、その角逐舞臺となりつゝあるのはこの故である。世界恐慌の打撃を受けることの最も甚しいドイツの前途はこの意味に於て世界プロレタリア運動の將來にとつて、最も注目すべきものであらうと信ずる。」 in Kōno Mitsu 河野密, “Sekai kakkoku fukeiki taisaku 2” 世界各國不景氣對策 二, *ibid.*, 24. Like several other Japanese intellectuals and politicians, Kōno began his career by joining and participating in leftist parties. In 1936 he was elected into the Lower House of the Diet, but then during World War II he joined the statist, nationalist Imperial Rule Assistance Association (Taisei Yokusankai 大政翼贊會).

⁵³ The Japanese Agency for Lectures was probably founded in 1928. Its self-professed mission was “to provide the people with spiritual nourishment, be they in cities or the countryside,” by publishing three speeches per month. The series was likely quite a popular publication for the masses, though regrettably no complete collection seems to have survived. At the National Diet Library the pamphlets of the early years are missing. See 「我が社の使命 本通信は「國民に精神の糧を供給する國民讀本」を標榜全日本に類のない文化通信で一黨一派に偏せず取材廣汎、常識涵養の好伴侶、都會にありながもも、聴講の機會を得ざる人々、又は山間の爐邊に農村青年の田畔に日本國津々浦々隨所に直接名士の講演に接するの思ひあらしめんとするものであります。江湖の・大なる御後援を祈る。」, in Gorai Kinzō, *Hittorā to Mussorīni* 『ヒットラーとムツソリーニ』, Nihon kōen tsūshin 158 日本講演通信 第百五十八號 (Tokyo: Nihon Kōen Tsūshinsha 日本講演通信社, 1932), back of front cover. At the time the agency printed a few other lectures on Germany, for examples, No. 151 on Germany’s emergency economic policies (ドイツ非常時局の經濟對策) and No. 169 exploring Berlin’s attitude toward Japan (ベルリンは日本の恩人か). None survived.

experienced three national elections in which the Nazis gained successively more adherents to become the largest party. Gorai credited Hitler with the organizational skill that made the success possible, and conjectured that just as Napoleon took over France ten years after the French Revolution, Weimar in its 13th year seemed ripe to meet a similar end through the rise of Hitler.⁵⁴ A few months after this lecture, he gave an expanded version at the Economic Club, where he became even more effusive by marveling at the “godlike power” Hitler wielded over the masses through orations.⁵⁵

Gorai’s words and deeds deserve some attention, as his attitudes toward Germany and Nazism would evolve from interest to knowledge to politicization to action, a pattern of behavior that many of his intellectual colleagues—several even with roots in the left—would exhibit between 1932 and 1936. At this time Gorai was not yet an unqualified admirer of the Führer, in part because he esteemed the Duce more highly. He even thought Mussolini looked the part of a heroic leader, while Hitler seemed to resemble but a small-business owner.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, Gorai’s defense of fascism’s use of violence as only a last resort to overcome self-serving class division constituted a gross misrepresentation of the situation in

⁵⁴ 「當時のフランス憲法停止で法律は行はれず、泥棒は横行して旅行さへ出来なかつた非常な無政府・態に陥りました。誰か出で來つて秩序の恢復を圖ることを要望して居つたのであるが、それに應じて起つたのが・チナポレオンであり今日のドイツはそれと全く同じである、ドイツももう・に革命後十三年であるナポレオンは革命後十年にしてやつたのであります。ドイツは革命後十三年でありますからぼつぼつ獨裁政治の始まるときになつて居る。」 in *ibid.*, 36.

⁵⁵ 「ヒットラーの運動の概況をみますと、選舉の演・會場に行きますと伯林のスポーツの大きな競技場でやりますと、其處に一杯になります、それからもう一つテニスをする大きな所があります、そこで二つの會場が一杯になつてテニスの方に出て、顔だけ見せて、それからスポーツの方に・つて演・をする、ラヂオで以てテニス場の方にもそれを聴かせる、其上に非常に熱狂の度が高いのであります、最後に聴いた演・の如きはヒットラーが此力は私の力ではありません、神の力であると云ふやうな言葉を放つて民衆を激勵して、群集心理を擱んだと云ふ一種の實感を得ました」 in Gorai Kinzō, *Ōshū seikyoku no zento to fasshizumu* 『歐洲政局の前途とフアツシズム』, Keizai kurabu kōen 14 (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizei Shuppanbu, 1932), 50.

⁵⁶ 「ヒットラーの特・は矢張り辯舌であります、容貌を見ますとどうも町人風で...決して英雄のやうな顔を持つて居ない、其點に於てはムツソリニーは全く違つた形を持つて居る。」 in *Hittorā to Mussorīni*, 40.

Germany.⁵⁷ In his eyes then, the battles and bloodshed he must have seen or heard in the streets of Berlin were justified because they all occurred on behalf of a good cause. Thus, word by word, sound by sound, the wall separating expertise from partisanship, that is, between objectivity and subjectivity, was being dismantled.

The installation of Hitler into power in January 1933 altered the courses of German history and Japanese history through the voluntary conversion of several opinion makers in Japan from secular observers to fervid advocates, from sympathizers of Germany to sympathizers of Nazism. At the outset, however, curiosity about the movement did not translate into accurate knowledge. A speaker at the Agency for Lectures who boasted of having intimate knowledge of Hitler could not even get some basic facts right, including most glaringly the pronunciation of the Führer's name, while at other times he merely repeated Nazi hagiography about Hitler's political epiphany.⁵⁸ As one might expect, it did not take long for a more enthusiastic Japanese booster of Hitler to ditch paraphrasing propaganda altogether and to publish in his own words "an oratorical tour de force of resurgent Germany's hero."⁵⁹ Penning the introduction, the journalist and Diet member Nakano Seigō 中野正剛, an ardent advocate of fascism in Japan, could hardly contain his

⁵⁷ 「ファツシヨは暴力であると云ふのは間違ひだる。ファツシヨは階級的利己主義を打破すると云ふその爲に暴力が必要かも知れないが併し國民がそれを自ら利己主義を棄てれば暴力を用ふる必要はないのであります。」 in *ibid.*, 37.

⁵⁸ On his supposed familiarity with the movement, see 「本講演は十一月二十五日、日本再建同盟の請ひを入れ、氏の滞歐請時、親しくヒートラーの事務所に出入せられて知悉せれて居るヒートラーの全貌を完膚なき迄に紹介せれたものであります。」 in Tabata Tamehiko 田畑爲彦, *Hitorā no jinbutsu kaibō* 『ヒートラーの人物解剖』, Nihon kōen tsūshin 170 (Tokyo: Nihon Kōen Tsūshinsha, 1932), 1. His rendition of Hitler's name sounded closer to "Heetler." One falsehood fabricated by Hitler that Tabata regurgitated was the myth of Hitler being the seventh member of the fledgling German Workers Party, a myth already disputed at the time. Tabata was otherwise a seemingly competent economist.

⁵⁹ Adolf Hitler, *Hitorā no shishiku shinkō Doitsu no ei'yū Adorufu Hitorā shushō enzetsushū* 『ヒートラーの獅子吼 新興獨逸の英雄アドルフ・ヒートラー首相演説集』 *Das junge Deutschland will Arbeit und Frieden*, ed. Joseph Goebbels, trans. Taki Kiyoshi 瀧清 (Tokyo: Nihon Kōensha 日本講演社, 1933). The literal translation of the book's title is "the lion's roar of Hitler."

excitement for the Hitler regime and its exemplary potential for Japan. He particularly appreciated the dictator's ruthlessness in cutting down obstacles to his agenda and excoriated Japanese politicians for their hesitancy and incompetence.⁶⁰ In the years to come Nakano would remain the most zealous supporter of Nazism and the Nazification of Japan, to the point of losing his life when the tradition-bound regime that he so despised finally tired of his provocations.⁶¹ Indeed, if anything, Nakano's career demonstrated that rapprochement with Germany had not always aligned with Japanese foreign policies.

Nakano, as an entrenched politician with strong ties to extra-governmental groups pursuing goals not compatible with or even in contradiction to those of officialdom, at once personified and bridged the gulf between the regime and civic organizations. Within civil society, too, attitudes regarding Germany and Hitler varied somewhat. As we have already seen, voices from the left denounced Nazism, though they belonged to an overwhelmed minority in a country under a government that abhorred leftist ideologies. The main differences, or nuances rather, in opinions existed among those who debated how much Japan should approach Germany philosophically and diplomatically.

⁶⁰ 「非常時日本の現下の・勢は、復興獨逸の目下の・勢と非常に好く似通ふた所がある、かの幣原外交の積弊に祟られ、國際聯盟や、九ヶ國條約や不戰條約やワシントン條約等、等の手械足械に纏はれ、身動きならぬ・態に呪縛されて居た日本が、漸くその本來の眞骨頭を發揮して國際聯盟を・退すると、間もなく獨逸も聯盟・退を斷行した...然るにヒトラー政權下に在る目下の獨逸には、そんな・氣な政治家は一人も居ない...彼れは書を焚き、デパートを敲き毀してまでも、國難獨逸の危機をその雙手に救済しやうと力んで居るのである、ユデヤ人排撃、圖書の焚刑、その一つ一つの政策に就いては勿論是非の議論は有り得る、だが彼れの熱意、彼れの氣魄、言を放つては死を恐れず、鎧袖一觸、人觸るれば人を斬り、馬觸るれば馬を斬る的の勇氣と自信とには、全く尊敬と同情の値すべきものがある、之を我が日本の・成政治家の不甲斐無さに比すれば、霄壤月鼈、その差實に三千里の嘆がある、此點に於て予は新興獨逸の國運を雙肩に荷うて起つアドルフ・ヒトラーの意氣を壯んなりとし、萬斛の同情を送るに吝なる者ではない。」 in *ibid.*, Introduction by Nakano 1, 3–4.

⁶¹ For more on Nakano, see Leslie Russell Oates, *Populist Nationalism in Prewar Japan: A Biography of Nakano Seigō* (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1985). It is regrettable that there is not a more thorough biography in English of such a colorful and influential figure in interwar and wartime Japanese politics.

The more affluent, patrician segment in Japan, as reflected in its main venue of fraternization—clubs charging membership dues—at first met National Socialism with some confusion and skepticism, mainly due to the movement’s early revolutionary rhetoric. For example, although the party had abandoned its leftist aspirations for quite some time, in 1933 a speaker at the Economic Club still felt compelled to mention its socialist roots.⁶² Several lectures continued to cite the twenty-five-point platform of the party, adopted in 1920 and containing provisions long since forgotten or de-emphasized by the Nazis themselves, as if it still mattered.⁶³ Others discussed figures belonging to the left wing of the movement, such as Gottfried Feder, and Otto and Gregor Strasser, even though they had been sidelined by Hitler in his bid to reassure industrialists and the middle class. To be fair, the nature of the sources consulted, namely the party’s program or *Mein Kampf*, contributed substantially to the skewed understanding of Nazism, but the responsibility of thinking critically still lay with the lecturers, several of whom abdicated the task and functioned as passive mouthpieces of the dictator and regime’s propaganda machine.

Others were put off by the Nazis’ boorishness. A literary scholar who resided in Germany from September 1930 to early 1934 and thus witnessed the party’s rise to power gave a speech at the Economic Club in which he characterized supporters of the movement as uneducated and ignorant.⁶⁴ In another talk at the club the constitutional expert Minobe

⁶² 「此ヒットラーのファツシズム運動を見ましても、初期に於ては著しく社會主義的であり後にそれが反動運動となつて居る。」 in Kada, 5. Kada was a sociologist and economist. At the time he was a professor at Keio University.

⁶³ For example, Tabata translated the entire program in his lecture, in Tabata, 33–6.

⁶⁴ 「獨逸では現在二十七、八萬以上三十四、五萬の人は、歐洲大戰當時碌々學校教育も受けないで戰爭をやつたので、大概無學無能……と言つては云ひ過ぎでせうが、とにかく非常に教養のない人が多い…そこに大きな社會的悲劇がありますが、とにかく是等の若い者が殆ど片端から、次第にヒットラー運動に投じて、その中心勢力となり、非常に元氣なのです。」 in Katsuki Seiichirō 勝木清一郎,

Tatsukichi related his unpleasant run-in with blue-collar Nazis, when he had stood out as the only passenger in the third-class wagon of a train not to greet a new rider with “Heil Hitler” and he thought the situation would come to blows.⁶⁵ Yet another speaker lamented the seepage of Nazi irrationality and mysticism into legal studies.⁶⁶

Despite the initial cold reception by some experts, Nazism must still have aroused significant interest among audiences. Otherwise the abovementioned literary scholar and Minobe would not have abandoned their areas of expertise and lectured instead on the political and economic situations in Germany, likely because the club members wanted to hear the latest information from those just returning from the country. In addition, as the Hitler regime consolidated its position in Germany it also became an unavoidable topic of discussion for Japanese academics, businessmen, and bureaucrats, for whom it made practical sense to discover more. Furthermore, once some orators convinced themselves that Nazism had shed its socialist or rogue elements—that is, it gained respectability—they became more amenable to the Führer and his version of new Germany. In fact, if some observers read too literally into the fossilized leftist remnants in Nazi orthodoxy, then a few did not take other parts seriously enough. For instance, in a speech in late 1933 at the

Nachisu shihaika ni okeru Doitsu no genjō wo chūshin toshite 『ナチス支配下に於ける獨逸の現・を中心として』, Keizai kurabu kōen 52 (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shuppanbu, 1934), 48–9.

⁶⁵ 「非常に澤山のハーゲンクロイドの巴里の旗が出て居りましたが...汽車になんか乗って居りますと、新しい御客が道入つて來ると、皆がハイルヒットラーをやる、私は三等に乗って居りましたが、労働者とか下級官吏と云ふやうなものが澤山乗って居りまして、新しい御客が来る・に、ハイルヒットラーをやるのに、私だけやらないで、毆らでもすると大變だと思ひまして、ハイルヒットラーと云ふ挨拶を無理矢理にさせられなければならないやうな有様であつたのであります」 in Minobe Tatsukichi, *Doitsu saikin no keizai jōsei* 『獨逸最近の經濟情勢』, Keizai kurabu kōen 69 (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shuppanbu, 1934), 38–9.

⁶⁶ 「殊に現在の獨逸に於てさうでありまして、科學的精神が非常に衰へて、非合理的、神祕的精神と云ふものが・く...一言にして言へば法律學の神學化傾向と云ふものは法律學が科學として成立しないことを意味するに外ならないと私は考へるのであります。」 in Miyazawa Toshiyoshi 宮澤俊義, *Doitsu kenpō no dokusaika* 『獨逸憲法の獨裁化』 (Tokyo: Tōkyō Chūō Kōenkai 東京中央講演會, 1934), 67. Miyazawa was a professor of constitutional law at the Tokyo Imperial University.

Economic Club a journalist-cum-politician expressed his view that Germany was not preparing for war, even though Hitler had never made terribly secret his desire to redress the injustices Germany suffered at Versailles and to conquer its rightful share of living space through military means.⁶⁷ He also depicted Germany's demand for equality in armaments as just and fantasized about the return of monarchy—never mind that no Nazi bigwig ever entertained any notion of restoration.⁶⁸ Stunningly, the lecturer, a Christian, even hailed Hitler as a “messiah” revered by Germans in their hour of desperation.⁶⁹ Nothing in the speaker's career thus far indicated that he would favor Nazism, yet like so many Germans who at the time joined the movement under the party's campaign to co-opt society to forge a “national community” (Volksgemeinschaft), he too jumped on the bandwagon to sing praises to the great dictator. What distinguished the Germans and those Japanese who chose to adhere to Nazism, however, was that the former did so under pressure or stood to gain tangibly, but the latter acted voluntarily and on purely ideological grounds.

If some lecturers in refined circles such as the Economic Club still maintained a measure of reservation toward Nazism, then in contrast pamphleteers catering to plebeian readers felt no such restraints, whether in rhetoric or content. Merely a few months into the Nazi regime a writer penned a booklet on “Hitler's national revolution” with glowing passages admiring the Führer for “charging like a tank” to realize ninety-nine percent of his

⁶⁷ 「第三にそれよりも獨逸に戦争の準備がないと思ひます。獨逸が如何に戦はうと思ひましても戦ひの仕様がなと思ひます。」 in Tagawa Daikichirō 田川大吉郎, *Doitsu no kokusai renmei dattai to sono kokusai seikyoku ni oyobosu eikyō* 『獨逸の國際聯盟 ▪ 退と其國際政局に及ぼす影響』, Keizai kurabu kōen 41 (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shuppanbu, 1933), 10.

⁶⁸ 「獨逸の軍縮平等の要求は當然...獨逸は帝政の復興か」 in *ibid.*, 21, 30.

⁶⁹ 「獨逸國民は失望を極めた後の最後の救世主としてヒットラーを仰いだ。そこでメシアか、メサイヤと云ふ言葉が彼に對して用ひられる。」 in *ibid.*, 28. Since the mid 1920s Tagawa was a councilor of the Union of Japanese Christians (日本基督教連盟), and served as chancellor of Meiji Gakuin University (明治學院大學), the oldest Christian missionary school in Japan.

“all or nothing dictatorial ideal” and advice for the “astonished world” to take heed of this “ferocious tiger.”⁷⁰ A pamphlet by the Social Education Society (Zaidan Hōjin Shakai Kyōiku Kyōkai 財團法人社會教育協會) called Hitler a “freak of nature” and a “star illuminating chaotic Germany,”⁷¹ while several reprinted the twenty-five-point program in its entirety to explore its virtues.⁷² The sentiment prevalent in these publications might best be summed up by the words of someone who visited Germany first in mid-1931 and again in late 1933. On both occasions he asked, “Whither Germany?”—the first time in utmost desperation, the second with bright anticipation for the future.⁷³

The proliferation of pamphlets lauding Germany gave glimpses of a certain vibrancy within interwar Japanese civil society that is often obscured by later scholars’ obsession with

⁷⁰ 「タンクの如く突進するヒットラーは年來の主張であつた「總てが然らざれば無か」の獨裁の理想を、いまや九分九厘まで完成した。ヒットラーの猛虎の如き動きに世界は驚異の目を見はつてゐる。「國民革命よ、どこまで進むか？」は今や世界的の疑問となつた。」 in Imasato Katsuo 今里勝雄, *Hittorā no kokumin kakumei* 『ヒットラーの國民革命』 (Tokyo: San'yōkaku 三陽閣, 1933), 25. Imasato was apparently involved in some peasants’ movements in the interwar period.

⁷¹ 「情熱の大衆的政治家として、現代ドイツの政界における惑星、異様の光鉦を放ちつゝ混亂ドイツの上に輝ける怪傑としてのヒットラーの生立ちとその人物」 in Takakura Shinobu 高倉忍, *Hittora to sono ittō* 『ヒットラーと其の一黨』, Minshū bunko 76 民衆文庫 第七十六篇 (Tokyo: Zaidan Hōjin Shakai Kyōiku Kyōkai, 1933), 2. Takakura was a commentator on politics for a publisher for merchants. The Social Education Society was founded in 1925, with a mission to educate adults, youth and women. In return for the very affordable dues of half a yen per month, members could attend the society’s lecture meetings and receive various biweekly and monthly pamphlets and journals. The use of furigana next to the main text indicated that it was meant for less learned readers.

⁷² For example, Matsunami Jirō 松波治郎, *Nachisu no ugoki* 『ナチスの動き』 (Tokyo: Nōgeisha 農藝社, 1934), 43–8; and, Akamatsu Kōta 赤松小寅, *Hittorā undō wo kataru* 『ヒットラー運動を語る』, Shakai kyōiku panfureto 189 社會教育パンフレット 第百八十九輯 (Tokyo: Zaidan Hōjin Shakai Kyōiku Kyōkai, 1934), 5–9.

⁷³ 「余が三年前の六月から七月にかけて獨逸を訪問した時の印象は、獨逸が世界大戰の慘敗と極端なるインフレーションとに悩み抜いて、國民の意氣最も沮喪の時であつた。さうして余は『獨逸よ爾は何處へ往くか』その問を心に發した。昨秋十月十六日再び獨逸に入り約半月を國內に銷し、審かにヒットラー治下の獨逸を觀て、その更生奮起の情を目撃して再び、『獨逸よ爾は何處へ往くか』との問を發した。しかし前の問は悲觀消極的であり、今の問は光明的期待的である。」 in Futara Yoshinori 二荒芳徳, *Nashisu Doitsu no seishōnen undō* 『ナチス獨逸の青少年運動』, Minshū bunko 86 (Tokyo: Zaidan Hōjin Shakai Kyōiku Kyōkai, 1934), Introduction 1.

unearthing fascism in Japan.⁷⁴ The government seemed willing to concede some freedom of speech and association for public debates on topics deemed not particularly sensitive or subversive, such as reactions to developments in faraway Germany. Under these circumstances the Association for Research on the Resurgent Germany (Shinkō Doitsu Kenkyūkai 新興獨逸・究會) was established around March 1934. It adopted a mission to relate the latest topics from the new Germany by publishing the biweekly series *Introduction to the Resurgent Germany* (Shinkō Doitsu no shōkai 新興獨逸の紹介) on the country's politics, economy, law, and culture.⁷⁵ Anyone could become members as long as they submitted dues of two Yen per month, to be prepaid in semiannual or annual installments.

Albeit impressive and authoritative sounding, the association in fact amounted to little more than a one-man club. The soul, indeed the only soul, behind the organization was one Masumoto Yoshirō 榑本芳郎. Hitherto Masumoto seemed not to have produced any work of note regarding Germany; as no book, essay, or lecture could be attributed to him. He did command some German, as the club's pamphlets consisted mainly of speeches and

⁷⁴ Although in recent years a few books have emerged to explore the culture and aesthetics of Japanese fascism, in my opinion fundamental questions over the “fascist” nature of prewar and wartime Japan are far from settled, and no work thus far has convincingly proved the existence of “fascist Japan.” There is, and understandably so, an active debate over the issue, but even this discussion risks being diverted by a red herring, for even if it could be demonstrated that fascism indeed existed in Japan, it still would not answer questions about social conformity and uniformity, and relations between government and population. Instead, the convenient shorthand of “fascist Japan” would merely introduce stereotypes and preconceptions not useful for explaining pre-1945 Japan. For comparison, one needs to look no further than the indisputably fascist Nazi Germany (let alone the “laxer” Fascist Italy), where there were still varying degrees of latitude by the populace to protest and limits to the regime's ability to exert totalitarian control. For more on the alleged fascism in Japan, see Alan Tansman, ed., *The Culture of Japanese Fascism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009); and, Alan Tansman, *The Aesthetics of Japanese Fascism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009). For more on nuances within the Nazi dictatorship, see Ian Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich: Bavaria 1933–1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); and, Detlev J. K. Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition, and Racism in Everyday Life*, trans. Richard Deveson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

⁷⁵ 「目的 本會は新興獨逸に於ける最近の諸問題を有りの儘い報導し、これが・究の資に供せんとするものである。」 in Masumoto Yoshirō, ed., *Shinkō Doitsu no shōkai* 2 『新興獨逸の紹介 第二輯』 (Koganei-mura 小金井村: Shinkō Doitsu Kenkyūkai, 1934), Back page.

newspaper articles translated by Masumoto himself. Quite probably very few people spent the money to join the association, which operated out of Masumoto's residence in a suburban village near Tokyo. The "single-handedness" plaguing the organization was evidenced by a delay, caused by Masumoto's illness, of the seventh volume in the series, which never did live up to the promised frequency of two volumes per month. In any case, the *Introduction* contained only one more volume, and then, at the end of 1934, it, the association, and Masumoto disappeared altogether from historical records as abruptly as they emerged.

Of course, Masumoto and his handiwork had no perceivable impact in improving Japanese-German relations or familiarizing Japanese with Germany. Nevertheless, he and his association illustrated the latitude an energetic, determined individual—an amateur too—enjoyed in promoting one's pet causes in public discourse, as long as they did not infringe on the prerogatives of the regime. As a matter of fact, the string of putsch attempts and assassinations in the early and mid-1930s exposed the Japanese government's weakness and helplessness in defending itself even from those violently contesting its legitimacy.

Masumoto's association might yet have survived and thrived despite its shortcomings had it been founded later, for the year 1935 witnessed a spike in interest in and enthusiasm for Nazi Germany among both high society and hoi polloi. Their vehicles of communication, respectively lectures and pamphlets, also began to converge in accentuating the country's positive aspects, though each in ways appropriate for the venues and expected audiences. For example, a bureaucrat in the Education and Culture Ministry penned a booklet for the National Youth Organization (Teikoku Shōnendan 帝國少年團) celebrating the exploits of

the Hitler Youth in Germany under Nazi overlordship and quoting profusely from propagandistic Nazi lyrics and pronouncements.⁷⁶

In the year the Economic Club hosted no fewer than seven lectures on happenings in Germany and their broader repercussions. In January alone it managed to mobilize three diplomatic officials to speak at the club, indicating an approaching agreement between the government's and society's attitudes toward Germany. The lecturers' tone remained cautious and their concern mostly economic, but they also expressed approval and optimism for the direction the country was taking. For example, in discussing the reintegration of Saarland into Germany (an event which had nary to do with Japan), the aforementioned diplomat Ashida Hitoshi concluded that the Germans' patriotism would enable them to overcome any material hardship.⁷⁷ Another representative from the Foreign Ministry warned that Japan would suffer the fate of pre-1914 Germany if it did not learn from contemporary Germany's effort in promoting its culture abroad.⁷⁸ The club even landed Nagai Matsuzō 永井松三, the fresh ex-ambassador to Germany, for a presentation on Germany under Nazism. Nagai

⁷⁶ 「アドルフ・ヒットラーの・大なる庇護の下に、無人の野を行く如くヒットラー・ユーゲンドはナチス獨逸を前進する！」 in Kondō Harubumi 近藤春文, *Nachisu Doitsu chika ni okeru seishōnen undō toshite no Hittorā Yūgendo ni tsuite* 『ナチス獨逸治下に於ける青少年運動としてのヒットラー・ユーゲンドに就て』, Teikoku shōnendan kyōkai 4 帝國少年團協會叢書 第四號 (Tokyo: Teikoku Shōnendan Kyōkai, 1935), 11.

⁷⁷ 「非常に愛國心の・い獨逸人のことでありますから少々物質的の損をしても本國に還らうと云ふのが今度の人民投票の示した結果であらうと考へて居ります。」 in Ashida Hitoshi, *Zāru kizoku mondai to Ōshū seikyoku no zento* 『ザール歸屬問題と歐洲政局の前途』, Keizai kurabu kōen 79 (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shuppanbu, 1935), 21. According to Ashida, Saarland saw its tax rate doubled as a part of Germany versus its previous status as a territory under the League of Nations.

⁷⁸ 「今尚ほ盛んにやつて居ります獨逸の國際文化事業なのであります。今日の日本を戦前の獨逸に比べることは世界の流行のやうであります、決して彼此同様だとは私は毛頭考へませぬ。然し今申上げた日本は餘りに經濟工作と國防工作とのみに努力を集注して此日本の眞の姿、日本の文化の尊敬に値ひすること、愛するの値ひのあることを十分に知らせる方面の工作と云ふものがで出来て居ないと云ふことだけは戦前の獨逸に似て居やしないかとひそかに思ふのであります此邊の點について特に我國朝野の反省を望む次第であります。」 in Yanagisawa Ken 柳澤健, *Bunka gaikō to kakkoku no bunka jigyō ni tsuite* 『文化外交と各國の文化事業に就て』, Keizai kurabu kōen 79 (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shuppanbu, 1935), 50. Unsurprisingly, Yanagisawa worked in the cultural department in the ministry.

explained that he had been asked repeatedly by other Japanese about the personality of Hitler, whom he perceived to be sharp, smart, and focused on practical common sense.⁷⁹

The audience's curiosity in the person of Hitler likely led the club to invite one special guest, Momo Minosuke 百々巳之助. As far as can be ascertained, this professor at Nihon University enjoyed the distinction as the only Japanese to have met Hitler before the Nazi ascension to power. The interview took place in late September 1930, two weeks or so after the Nazis' initial electoral triumph. Needless to say Momo already thought highly of the Führer, enough to make a pricey pilgrimage to Munich just for an uncertain chance to pay his respects in person. After the Nazis took over Germany in 1933, Momo capitalized on his unique experience by embarking on a lecture circuit and speaking on Hitler and Nazism for various audiences.⁸⁰ In his presentation at the Economic Club he added to the mystique of the Führer by dramatizing the difficulty of securing an audience; he had worried that Hitler would hold a grudge against Japan for having fought on the Allied side in World War I. He dismissed as "social democratic demagoguery" charges against Hitler for dodging the draft in Austria,⁸¹ as well as gossip about Hitler's possible Jewish ancestry based on his hair color

⁷⁹ 「私はヒットラー宰相と云ふ人は、どんな人であらうかと云ふ質問を屢受けるのでありますが、是はむづかしいことで、一つの人格を、さう詰めて手取早く話をするには出来ませぬ、殊に斯う云ふ短い時間に、諄々云ふことは出来ませぬが、直截簡單明瞭而して敏俊な頭を持つて居る人だと云ふことだけは、直に云へます、非常に物分りの良い人です...ヒットラー宰相は一口も無駄を云はない」 in Nagai Matsuzō, *Nachisu seikenka ni okeru Doitsu no genjō to shōrai* 『ナチス政權下に於ける獨逸の現・と將來』, Keizai kurabu kōen 79 (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shuppanbu, 1935), 51–2.

⁸⁰ For example, he gave a speech on Nazi Germany and the European political situation (ナチスと獨逸を繞る歐洲國際政局の動き) at the Japanese Agency for Lectures in around late 1933 or early 1934. Though no longer extant, its content quite likely mirrored that in his talk at the Economic Club.

⁸¹ 「所がそれから間もなく社會民衆黨の機關紙のフオアヴェルツが、ヒットラーの國籍問題を素破抜いてヒットラー派をして大いに憤怨せしめたものです。ナチスと社會民主黨及共・黨との間に、猛烈な戦がこんな事をかけにして大いに展開されたものです。此處彼處のビール屋、酒屋等でよく、やれヒットラーは・兵忌避者ぢやないかなどと云つて議論をして殴り合つたりするのを見受けたものがあります。どう云ふことが書いてあつたかと云ふと、ヒットラーの生れたは奧太利である。無論大戰前には國民皆兵主義でありましたから、壯丁として彼は勿論丁年に達するや兵役に服さなければならな

(“the Japanese too had black hair but were clearly not Jewish”).⁸² Instead, the combination of Hitler’s “dark brown hair” and pale skin exuded a certain unworldly aura and “uniquely Germanic intelligence.”⁸³

Momo’s effusive praise for Hitler at the exclusive club was matched by the bombastic adulation of Nazism in popular print. A biographical booklet claimed that Hitler’s “handsomeness” and “masculinity” attracted Germany’s women.⁸⁴ It explained Nazi anti-Semitism by saying that Jews achieved their success through sheer shamelessness and exploiting productive members of society.⁸⁵ Another pamphlet applauded Hitler’s “bombshell announcement” to resume conscription as a “lightning, unilateralist” move to destroy the Versailles Treaty.⁸⁶ It also held much confidence in Germany’s “excellent

かった。...それをナチスの方では社会民主党のデマだと云ふし」Momo Minosuke, *Hittorā to Nachisu wo kataru* 『ヒットラーとナチスを語る』, Keizai kurabu kōen 94 (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shuppanbu, 1935), 14–15.

⁸² 「ヒットラーは髪の毛が非常に黒い。我々の毛髪も黒味や褐色味を帯びたものもありますが、大體黒い。故に猶太人の毛は黒いので、外國では日本人を、猶太人の系統かなどと寄間を發する無智な人も決して尠くないといふ情態です。ヒットラーの毛髪は濃褐色と申しまするかまあ殆んど黒い。それでヒットラーの二代前のお母さんが猶太人であると云ふやうな事が一時流布されたのでありますが、是は結局社会民主党から放送したらしいデマであり、實際さう云ふ形跡はなさそうであります。」 in *ibid.*, 11–12.

⁸³ 「その極めて濃褐色な髪の毛に飽く迄白哲な顔面で短く刈り込んだ黒い髭がキリツト一字に結んだ薄く小さい唇に迫り、射る様な爛々たるまなざし、まあ清麗な才子、白哲な俊才といった感じであります。而も尚一抹の澁い凄味が男盛りの而もゲルマン民族特有の白哲な俊敏と聰明の輝きとに調和して、殊に幾らか過去の流轉闘争生活の面影すらも淡く泛はせて私には又限りなく男性的な魅惑的感

じを與へました。」 in *ibid.*, 12.

⁸⁴ 「ヒットラーは美貌である。整つた顔の中にキリツと引きしまつた男性味を持つてゐる。ドイツの婦人達はヒットラーを好む。」 in Nakagawa Shigeru 中川重, *Hittorā* 『ヒットラー』, Ijin denki bunko 67 偉人傳記文庫 第 67 號 (Tokyo: Nihonsha 日本社, 1935), 17. Nakagawa penned a whole host of such popular biographies of notable individuals.

⁸⁵ 「ユダヤ人が唯一つの力と頼む資本と厚顔無恥な態度、その非生・的な生活と呪詛的の舉動。これがヒットラー派にとって甚だしき憎惡の対象なのである。だから、國粹社会労働黨の綱領中には多くの反ユダヤ人的の事項がある。」 in *ibid.*, 14.

⁸⁶ 「ドイツ政府はこの日の午前中、疾風迅雷的にこの傍若無人の態度を決定、記者團に發表する一方ヴェルサイユ條約第五篇軍事條項を破毀する旨をベルリン駐在英、佛、伊、露その他同條約

mechanical civilization” in propelling the military to the rank of the world’s greatest in a year or two.⁸⁷ In late October, the pamphlet *The Memelland Problem and President Hitler* (*Mēmeru mondai to Hittorā sōtō* 『メーメル問題とヒトラー大統領』) went as far as to use Germany’s agitation for recovering the Memelland from Lithuania as an excuse to cheer Nazism. Its writer declared with a straight face that the Nazi dictatorship looked nothing like oppressive regimes in the feudal age, and that Hitler had an “elegant, humble” character.⁸⁸

This booklet, predating the Anti-Comintern Pact by more than a year, deserves some scrutiny because it distinguished itself as one of the first publications to broach the subject of Japanese-German cooperation and to provide a rationale for it. Curiously, besides the abovementioned title, the identical content also appeared as *The Chance for a Japanese-German Alliance* (*Nichidoku dōmei no kiun* 『日獨同盟の機運』).⁸⁹ Since virtually no Japanese knew anything about the Memelland—a tiny strip of land on the Baltic coast northeast of East Prussia the loss of which not even many Germans would get too exercised about—why then would anyone in faraway Japan bother to write a pamphlet about it and

締結各國の大公使を通じて右各國政府に正式通告した。」 in Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbunsha 大阪・日新聞社, ed., *Doitsu no bakudan sengen to senritsu no Ōshū* 『ドイツの爆弾宣言と戦慄の歐洲』 (Osaka: Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1935), 3–4.

⁸⁷ 「今後ドイツはもはや公然と軍備の充實に邁進するわけだが、獨特の優秀な機械文明を持つどいつが、フル・スピードで軍需品の製造に馬力をかけてゐるのだから、こゝ一、二年もすれば空軍および陸軍において世界最大の軍備國出現するに至るであらう戦敗國ドイツが、世界の・國ドイツに更生するのであらうから、國民大多數がヒトラー大統領を支持してゐるのも道理である。」 in *ibid.*, 62–63.

⁸⁸ 「世間では獨逸の獨裁政權を非常に毛嫌ひするやうであるが、それには露西亞、土耳其、支那の宛ら封建時代その儘の彈壓政治が、延て獨逸の獨裁政權をも同一視せしむる傾あるのは事實である。併しながら往昔の無智な民衆を・壓搾取せる時代の獨裁政治によつて現在を律せんとし、漫然ナチス乃至獨逸を蛇蝎視することは、我等の戒むべきところである。獨逸の如き開明せる國民に對して、一度び獨裁者が軌道を・して暴政を行はゞ、三日天下に了はるべきは火を睹るより明かである。筆竟ヒツトラーの獨裁とは、唯だ法律の精神が獨裁主義なのである。…ヒツトラー内閣を組織して今日に及んでゐる。その風貌典雅、その性謙讓にして頗る情誼に厚く」 in Sugiyama Akira 杉山明, *Mēmeru mondai to Hittorā sōtō* (Tokyo: Kyōzaisha 教材社, 1935), 24–6.

⁸⁹ Sugiyama Akira, *Nichidoku dōmei no kiun* 『日獨同盟の機運』 (Tokyo: Kyōzaisha, 1935). Sugiyama wrote several other nationalistic pamphlets, but otherwise nothing is known about him.

expect to sell copies thereof? As it turned out, the answer, as well as the key to any Japanese-German rapprochement, lay with the Soviet Union. In the introduction an army general compared the situation in Europe in 1935 with that in 1903, when unrest in the Balkans kept Russia from concentrating its effort in Manchuria.⁹⁰ The current German-Soviet tension over Memelland in the Baltics could escalate to a war that due to the transcontinental size and geography of the Soviet Union might present opportunities for Japan. Additionally, the spread of international communism threatened both Japan and Germany.⁹¹ In short, Tokyo and Berlin had a common enemy in Moscow.

Nor did Japan's traditional diplomatic partners present any alternative to the country's isolation. According to these pamphlets, Europe and America viewed any Japanese-German collaboration with great suspicion.⁹² In particular, writers singled out Britain as the chief villain scheming to contain and weaken Japan. One called for the "downfall of the crafty British Empire" and the redistribution of land in the world through Japanese-German-Italian cooperation.⁹³ It further urged readers to realize that Japan could

⁹⁰ 「滿洲に於ける露國の行動漸く活氣を呈するに反し、彼が巴爾幹に於ける態度は舊・を變じ、極力平和の維持を希望しつゝあり。是れ・ち彼が全力を東亞に傾注し、東三省の占領を企てんとするものにして...本書を読んで劈頭腦裏に浮んだのは以上の事である。本書の取扱つた問題は、實は我國と數千里を隔つるバルチック沿岸大陸の地に關するものであるが、陳腐の言葉かも知れないが交通網の發達は逐日世界を狭くした。明治三十六年の巴爾幹は今やバルチック沿岸に延びたのである。而かもメーメル問題は、獨逸と我等の隣邦蘇聯の全面衝突を惹起する危險を十二分に孕んでゐる。之れ我等が特に關心を有たねばならぬ理由の一である。」 in Sugiyama, *Mēmeru mondai to Hittorā sōtō*, Introduction 1-2.

⁹¹ 「日・獨を衝撃する赤化の流れ 蘇聯の辛辣な世界赤化工作に就ては、今 ヒットラーの痛憤に俟つまでもなく、我等はその例證として・に支那赤化の發展過程を指摘しつゝその動向を詳にし」 in *ibid.*, 50.

⁹² 「日獨の接近に猜疑の眼を睜りつゝある歐米人が」 in *ibid.*, 48.

⁹³ 「賢明なる同胞よ！日本を自爆から救ふの途はたゞ一つ、日獨伊三國連繫の・化だ。」 in Sassa Kōkichi 佐々鴻吉, *Rōkai Daiei teikoku wo taose Nichidokui no teikei ni yorite sekai ryōdo no saibunkatsu jitsugen wo kantetsu seyo* 『老獺大英帝國を倒せ 日獨伊の提携によりて世界領土の再分割實現を貫徹せよ』 (Tokyo: Kokusai Jijō Kenkyūkai 國際事情・究會, 1935), 46.

save itself from self-destruction only through a tripartite union. In the last week of the year another booklet emerged to echo this sentiment by warning Japan about “cunning Britain” and proposed that true world peace could only be achieved through a coalition of Japan, Germany, and Italy.⁹⁴

The years from 1930 to 1935 thus saw a steady rise of a chorus in Japan propagating a more positive image of Germany and promoting the idea of bilateral partnership—anticipating official diplomacy by about a year. At this point, however, differences in opinion regarding Nazism could still be detected between the upper and lower echelons of society. On the one hand, the rich, business-friendly, and established elements, as revealed in their musings in the Economic Club, treated Hitler and his movement with measured approval and optimism. Most welcomed his strong anticommunism and admired his miracle work in resuscitating Germany’s economy, but they also expressed some reservation regarding Nazi socialism, the liberal use of violence, and the inflationary pressure of rearmament, full employment and the autarky campaign. On the other hand, the pamphleteers for the masses exhibited far less restraint in their enthusiasm for Nazism, going as far as to advocate Japanese-German collaboration.

What caused this schism? To begin with, these Japanese reactions approximated those in Germany itself. The conservatives in the bureaucracy, military, and industries accepted Hitler in a pragmatic maneuver and as the least unattractive alternative, while the middle and lower classes embraced Nazism as an ideology with the promise of transforming their lives

⁹⁴ 「日本よ、獨逸よ、伊太利よ。『土』は資源である。餓死を免れんとすれば、[・]く固く提携して、かぐはしき『土』の獲得に堅陣を張らねばならない。そのためには、因業婆の化身といはれる狡猾英國を、各々の勢力圏附近において蹴飛ばすことが唯一の方法なのではないか。『土』！『土』！『土』を中心に、日獨伊の提携こそは、かへつて世界に眞の平和を齎らす前提的示唆となるであらう。」 Ōtomo Shingo 大友愼吾, *Nihon Doitsu Itaria to kokusai renmei* 『日本・獨逸・伊太利と國際聯盟』 (Tokyo: Kokusai Jijō Kenkyūkai, 1935), 42–3.

and conditions. Since many Japanese already believed that Germany had much to teach Japan, it amounted merely to a logical extension for some in the less privileged population to call for the emulation of Nazism to help the country break out of its funk. Moreover, Hitler and Nazism must also have excited tremendous curiosity among readers and thus created a sizable demand for information that needed to be met. After all, the pamphlets served fundamentally as moneymaking vehicles for their writers and publishers. At a tenth of a Yen per issue, a great number of copies would need to be sold for the producers to turn a profit. If favorable views on Nazi Germany were perceived to turn off potential customers, then it seems unlikely that so many writers would have devoted their efforts to the topic. The proliferation of pamphlets in the 1930s mirrored the popularization of the “one-Yen book” (圓本) after the great earthquake in 1923, whose slim profit margin was compensated for by the quantities sold. To catch hurried commuters’ glances, pamphlets often resorted to incorporating exaggerated graphics and provocative titles, such as *The Chance for a Japanese-German Alliance*.

Years of Activism

Not until November 1936 would that chance come to pass with the signatures of Joachim von Ribbentrop and Mushakōji Kintomo 武者小路公共 on the Anti-Comintern Pact. During a return to Japan back in October 1935, Mushakōji, the sitting plenipotentiary ambassador to Germany, spoke at a lunch meeting at the Economic Club. He gave no hint whatsoever of the government even contemplating a potential alliance with Germany, much less making an effort to sell Japanese-German partnership. Instead, he politely praised Hitler as a dedicated leader who forewent alcohol and marriage in service of the country, though he

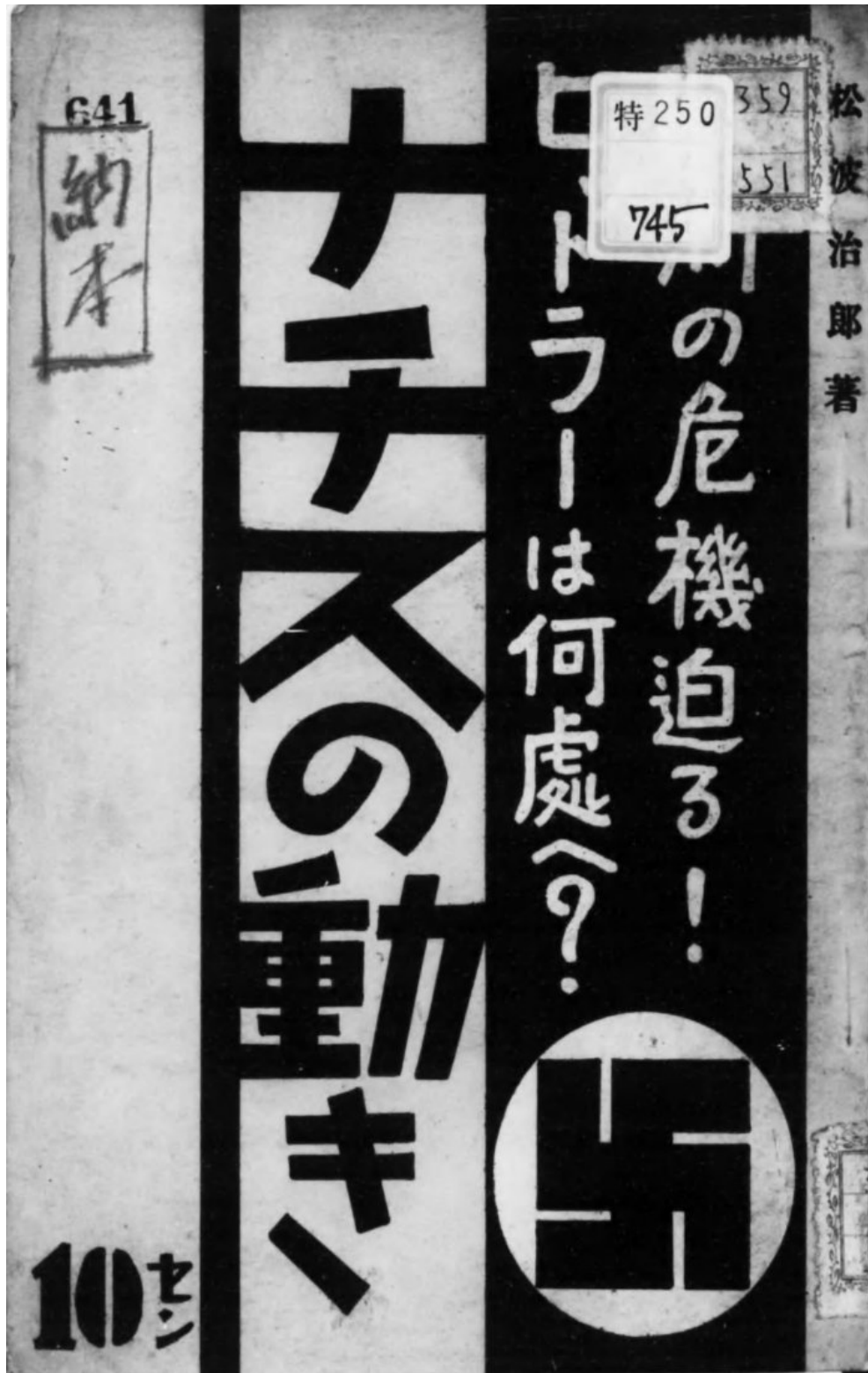


Fig. 6.1 The cover of a pamphlet from 1934. The main title, *The Nazi Movement*, was set clearly in a bold font against a white background. The subtitle, *Where Is Hitler Heading? European Crisis Imminent!*, as well as the swastika, was designed to attract readers and thus customers. The price tag of ten Sen (1 Yen = 100 Sen) was on the lower left corner.



Fig. 6.2 The cover of a pamphlet from 1935 published by the *Ōsaka Mainichi* and the *Tōkyō Nichinichi* newspapers. The title, *Germany's Bombshell Declaration and Trembling Europe*, and especially the unavoidable portrait of Hitler staring into potential purchasers' eyes, were likely chosen to encourage sales. Note the reverse, incorrect swastika on the lower left.



Fig. 6.3 The cover of a pamphlet from 1937. It used eye-catching graphics such as the Nazi swastika flag and an outstretched palm. The title, *Are Germany and Italy Really Japan's Allies?*, was also meant to pique readers' interest. The price of 10 Sen was listed on the lower right corner. It is unclear if the original version was in color.

also identified potential threats to the stability of the regime such as liberals, Jews, Catholics, and Bolsheviks.⁹⁵ How then did official diplomacy in a year's time finally come to march in lockstep with those in public opinion-making calling for bilateral cooperation?

Foremost, the popular press kept up its self-appointed activism to promote Nazism and agitation for closer Japanese-German relations. One writer felt touched that at the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin Hitler personally congratulated and applauded victorious Japanese swimmers and sensed “a shared subconsciousness” between the two peoples; he even thought Hitler somehow “belonged” with or harbored sympathy for Japan.⁹⁶ Another marveled at Hitler's ability to intimidate and captivate Europe, which was forced to follow every sleight of his hand and tremble at every stomp of his foot.⁹⁷ Yet another went as far as to cite the support of Pope Pius XI for Hitler's “declaration of war” on communism, adding that Japan should pay close attention should military conflict break out between Germany and the

⁹⁵ 「そんなわけで、自分の身を持つることと堅固で、酒を飲まぬし、妻帯せず、總ての力を國務に集めて居ると云ふので、國民の信頼は相當に集つて居る。よそで反對な宣傳を聞いて來た人が、ヒットラーに會ふと、いつでも思つたより愉快な人で、偉さうな人だ。斯う云ふ。斯う云ふ悪い宣傳を外國にして置く事は時に依つて都合が宜いと云ふ結論になります。さう云ふ譯で極く皮相な感ではありますが、ヒットラーの政治が危ないと云ふことは、私としては考へられない。...其先づ第一はリベラリズムの人。リベラリズムに反對な政治と云ふものは立つものでないと云ふ一つの觀念。それから第二は宗教的に猶太人を排斥するやうな國は潰れると云ふ考へ、第三はカトリックが反對する。第四はボルシェビズムの連中が反對する。」 in Mushakōji Kintomo, *Hittorā seiken to Doitsu no kokujō* 『ヒットラー政權と獨逸の國情』, Keizai kurabu kōen 101 (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shuppanbu, 1935), 24–6.

⁹⁶ 「臨場のヒットラーがわが選手に心からの拍手を送つてゐたことは、われわれ日本人に異常な感激を與へ、**わが**ヒットラーとさへ感ぜしめたのである。そのわれわれの感激は、彼一流の人心收攬術に依るものにあらずして、一に彼我國民の相關性を潛在意識とした全き理解融合の發露に外ならない。」 in Katayama Takashi 片山隆, *Dokusai sannin otoko sonogo no Hittorā Shō Kaiseki Mussorini* 『獨裁三人男 その後のヒットラー・蔣介石・ムツソリーニ』 (Tokyo: Morita Shobō 森田書房, 1936), 6.

⁹⁷ 「アドルフ・ヒットラー！その一舉手、一投足は歐洲の天地を席捲し、世界の風雲を捲き起す。まことに彼こそは現代の風雲兒であり、一代の惑星である。...英傑ヒットラー。爆彈的存在。噴火山上の全歐洲の眼は今や彼の動きに凝視の的をおいて眺めてゐるのだ。」 in Kondō Keisuke 近藤啓助, *Bakudan otoko Hittorā no zenbō zen Ōshū wasen no kagi* 『爆彈男ヒットラーの全貌 全歐洲和戰の鍵』 (Tokyo: Yūkōsha 有恆社, 1936), 1–2.

Soviet Union.⁹⁸ Lastly, another booklet titled *The Chance for a Japanese-German Alliance* warned readers against British, American, and Soviet designs in East Asia, as well as attempts to isolate Japan.⁹⁹ The writer pointedly mentioned that a portion of the Japanese intelligentsia maintained favorable views on Nazism,¹⁰⁰ and proclaimed confidently that a Japanese-German alliance would inevitably become reality in due time.¹⁰¹

In any case, the positive rhetoric on Nazi Germany in the popular pamphlets represented but a continuation from the previous period. The real change in tone since 1936 took place among some elites and their speeches, as more and more traditional conservatives reconciled themselves with and sought means to accommodate the reality of Nazism. For example, a diplomat-turned-industrialist explained in March at the Economic Club that the Comintern's purported assault on Nazi Germany in fact equaled an attack on Japan's military, thereby handling the two countries as one unit with a common enemy.¹⁰² He also advised his

⁹⁸ 「嗚呼ヒットラー獨逸總統が熱辯もて、共・主義へ宣戰した鐵腕は、彼の赤化黴菌が發生してから、始めて消毒に着手する、恰も泥棒を押しへて繩を縛ふやうな手・いものでは無からう、儼は信ず、彼は必ずや近く砲彈を擲つて、共・主義の害毒を■■■■■■■■■■...彼の日露戰役が如何に悲慘なものであつたかゞ窺はれる、そしてヒットラーの吼え聲、よくロシヤが忍んで沈黙し得るや否、それは今後特に日本國民は大に目を注がねばならぬことゝ思ふ。」 in Miki Rin 三木麟, *Doitsu ha danzen kyōsan shugi e sensensu Hitorā Doitsu sōtō netsuben Pio Rōma hōō rikisetu seien* 『獨逸は斷然共・主義へ宣戰すヒットラー獨逸總統熱辯 ピオ羅馬法王力・聲援』 (Tokyo: Tsūzoku Seidan Kenkyūkai 通俗政談・究會, 1936), Front leaf. Note the censor's handiwork in the passage. Apparently one could be too rabidly anticommunist even for the government's taste—yet another proof that the Japanese state had more to fear from the subversive right than the imagined threat from the left.

⁹⁹ 「英米・ソ聯の極東野望に備えよ！日本孤立は・對に不可！」 Kuroki Shōma 黒木正磨, *Nichidoku dōmei no kiun sono hitsuzensei no kentō* 『日獨同盟の機運 その必然性の検討』 (Tokyo: Kyōzaisha, 1936), Cover.

¹⁰⁰ 「日本インテリ層に於ける一部分の人々はナチスに好感を持つてゐない事實がすくない。」 in *ibid.*, 27.

¹⁰¹ 「必然性の結論 日本とドイツの・み寄れう必然性に就ては相當理解のとゞく程度の考察が済んだと思ふ。然し乍ら、こゝで早計に日獨同盟の必然性に對する結論を下す譯にはゆかない。」 in *ibid.*, 40.

¹⁰² 「昨年の十月にモスコでコミンテルンの第七回大會が開かれましたが、本大會の首要目的は主としてファツシヨ排撃...ファツシヨ排撃と云ひますが、實は獨逸のナチス排撃であります。獨逸のナ

fellow businessmen in attendance that Nazism could at least keep communism in check and that they should hope for a balance between liberalism and fascism.¹⁰³ Meanwhile a journalist and diplomatic historian linked the destinies and interests of Japan and Germany through Russia, arguing that France might mean Japan no harm, but by helping the Soviet Union improve the Trans-Siberian Railway it also indirectly undermined Japan by expediting Soviet troop movements—to Germany of course, but to Japanese controlled Manchuria as well.¹⁰⁴ Even the usually pedantic Japanese-German Cultural Society ventured into politics, by inviting Tomoeda Takahiko 友枝高彦, an ethicist and the first head of the society, to lecture on the Third Reich.¹⁰⁵ He extolled the Nazi education system for instilling new weltanschauungs toward life and nation, and marveled at Hitler's vision to launch a “restorative revolution” by combining ancient symbols with a modern outlook on the

チス、日本の軍部を排撃することに存したのであります。」 in Kajima Morinosuke 鹿島守之助, *Doitsu no Rokaruno jōyaku haiki to Ōshū no anzen hoshō mondai* 『獨逸のロカルノ條約廢棄と歐洲の安全保障問題』, Keizai kurabu kōen 117 (Tokyo: Keizai Kurabu, 1936), 28. Kajima, born Nagatomi 永富, began his working life in the foreign ministry but was soon adopted by the Kajima clan of the famous construction company and joined the company. Today Kajima is mainly known for his advocacy for peace and his monumental series on the history of Japanese diplomacy.

¹⁰³ 「ナチスやファツシヨの勢力の擡頭は、間接に日本の軍部の勢力を増長するような結果となり、餘り御氣に召さない方もあるかと思ひますが、所がその勢力が減ずれば共・主義が勢力を得て來ることは必然でありまして、是は決して皆さんの御好みにならない所と考へます。歐羅巴に於けるナチス、ファツシヨの力と、それから現・維持的自由主義との力が、同じ位であることが、皆様實業家各位に好都合な・態でないかと存じます。」 in *ibid.*, 30.

¹⁰⁴ 「兎に角佛蘭西としては今度相互援助條約を造つたので、若し一朝事ある時はロシヤ鐵道が良くなければロシヤ兵をして迅速に獨逸の後を衝かしむる譯にはいなくなる。依つて佛蘭西は金をロシヤに貸して鐵道を改正完備させんとしてゐる。佛蘭西は極東には關係がなく、日本には敵意は持たぬ。しかし乍らロシヤの鐵道が佛資で良くなるときは、極東行の軍隊輸送も善くなりまじやう、日本も獨逸問題のトバツチリを受くるでじやう。」 in Maita Minoru 米田實, *Echiopia no haisen ni tomonau Ōshū no seikyoku* 『エチオピアの敗戦に伴ふ歐洲の政局』, Nihon kōen tsūshin 317 (Tokyo: Nihon Kōen Tsūshinsha, 1936), 24. Maita studied in Oregon and Iowa, and was a prominent commentator at the Tokyo Asahi Shinbun.

¹⁰⁵ Although the Japanese-German Cultural Society was arguably best positioned to comment on contemporary German politics, it seemed to have studiously avoided most controversial topics in its lecture meetings until 1936. For example, in the depths of economic and political chaos in 1931, the club invited a scholar to discuss contemporary German theater. Then, in 1935 it co-hosted a twelve-day long commemoration of Philipp Franz von Siebold and his contribution to Japanese-German exchange.

world.¹⁰⁶ Lastly, Godō Takuo 伍堂卓雄, the president of the Shōwa Steel Works in Manchuria and a naval officer, gave several presentations shortly after returning from a tour of Germany. Godō was so impressed by what he witnessed in Germany that he even brought a documentary film to his talk at the Japanese Economic Federation (Nihon Keizai Renmeikai 日本經濟聯盟會) so spectators could see the miracle with their own eyes.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, Godō wanted to spread the gospel of Nazism so eagerly that he delivered the identical speech at two other venues, the Economic Club and the Agency for Lectures.¹⁰⁸ Although Godō vaingloriously made sure his audiences knew that he had met the Führer in person, he also perceptively pointed out that a restoration of German monarchy amounted to but a pipedream. From his personal impression of Hitler Godō told his listeners that the Führer's selflessness and single-mindedness in making Germany great again would

¹⁰⁶ 「その他教育制度組織の上に於てナチス政府が、新しい人生觀、國家觀に基づいて、新らたなものを作つたといふことは、注意すべきものがあるやうに思ふ。とにかくかくの如くにして、獨逸が新しい世界觀に基き國民全體の生活を革めようと努力して居ることは最も驚歎と尊敬とに値することである。...ところで古い國旗を立の下にその新しい世界觀によつて革命を行ひ獨逸民族の興隆統一を圖らうとする。従つて、獨逸の將來に對する信仰といふことがこの新しい運動の中心である詩經の中に「周雖舊邦其命維新」といふ言葉があるが、ヒットラーの自覺して居るところは、恐らくその言葉を以て表すべきであらう。■ち彼等は古いゲルマン民族の傳統を維持して、而も獨逸の將來に對する熱烈なる信仰をもつて勇往邁進して居るのである。」Tomoeda Takahiko, “Doitsu daisan kokka ni tsuite” 『獨逸第三國家に就て』, *Nichidoku bunka kōenshū 10* (Tokyo: Zaidan Hōjin Nichidoku Bunka Kyōkai, 1936), 28, 30.

¹⁰⁷ 「昭和製鋼所社長伍堂卓雄君舊臘獨逸を視察し歸朝せられたるに依り、當會は昭和十一年四月一日日本工業俱樂部に同君を招請して會員講演會を開催し、「獨逸視察談」と題する御講話並に獨逸ナチス政策實行の現■に關する映畫の御■明を聴取した。本輯は■ち當日の同君御講演の筆■である。」in Godō Takuo, *Doitsu shisatsu dan* 『獨逸視察談』, *Keizai renmei kōen 81* 經濟聯盟講演 第八一輯 (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Renmeikai, 1936), Front leaf. The Japanese Economic Federation was an association for large businesses and corporations to study economic issues and to lobby the government. It was founded in August 1922 and began holding regular lecture luncheons some time in the early 1930s (very few lectures survived in print and so it is impossible to reconstruct from the imperfect records when the meetings were launched). After World War II the association merged with three other similar organizations to form the vaunted Japan Business Federation or Keidanren (日本經濟団体連合会).

¹⁰⁸ Godō Takuo, *Doitsu shisatsu dan*, *Keizai kurabu kōen 121* (Tokyo: Tōyō keizai shuppanbu, 1936); and, Godō Takuo, *Doitsu wa doko e iku* 『獨逸は何處へ行く』, *Nihon kōen tsūshin 318* (Tokyo: Nihon Kōen Tsūshinsha, 1936).

ultimately find success.¹⁰⁹ Japan, then, could benefit from this resurgent Germany by cozying up to the new dominant power in Europe.

The catching up of diplomacy with exhortations in lectures and pamphlets for Japanese-German rapprochement through the signature of the Anti-Comintern Pact on 25 November 1936 unleashed a wave of civic activism to hail government action. If some opinion-makers had been standing on the sideline vis-à-vis revealing their support for closer relations with Germany, then the pact freed them to speak their minds loudly and safely. Indeed, some civilians in the media responded enthusiastically to the development with breathtaking speed. Before the year ended, no fewer than thirteen speeches and booklets emerged to extol the alliance—a few even within days of the conclusion of the pact. As one might expect, pamphleteers took the initiative in selling and interpreting the new bilateral arrangement to readers. Many employed provocative titles, such as, *Why Did Japan and Germany Become Allies? Declaration of War on Communism*,¹¹⁰ *The Japanese-German Pact and Other Nations' Movement: Struggle against the Threat of the Red Devil*,¹¹¹ *Bombshell for Humanity's Enemy the Communists: The Cause of the Japanese-German Anticommunist*

¹⁰⁹ 「又是等悲觀論者の外に、帝政の復興を夢みて居る者も一部にはある様であります。国内の事情は斯くの如くでありますから、ヒットラーが外に向つて、今や獨逸全國民は一團となつて、新國家の建設に奮闘しつゝあるとの言明は、額面通には受取れないのであります。…ヒットラー政權が沒落するだらうとは私は思ひませぬ。それは今日はヒットラーが如何にも大衆の心を確からと把握して居る。ヒットラーに會つた私の感じは非常に潔白な奉仕的な人格者でありまして、獨身者であるからでもあります、役所の一室に寝起きをして、極めて簡素な生活を営みつゝ、身命を捧げて日夜國務に没頭しつゝあるのでありますヒットラーは内政を統一するに革命的手段を以てし…偉大なる効果を擧げつゝあるのでありますから將來或は極端なる經濟統制に對して、多少の手加減を行ふことがあるかも知りませんが、ナチスは容易に崩壊するものとは私は信じないのであります。」 in Godō, *Doitsu shisatsu dan*, Keizai kurabu kōen 121, 38–39.

¹¹⁰ Mishima Yasuo 三島康夫, *Nichidoku wa naze dōmei shita ka kyōsan shugi e no kyōdō sensen* 『日獨はなぜ同盟したか 共・主義への共同宣戰』 (Tokyo: Kyō no Mondaisha, 1936). Mishima penned several other pamphlets on the threat of communism.

¹¹¹ Suzuki Hidesuke 鈴木日出輔, *Nichidoku kyōtei to kakkoku no dōkō sekima no kyōi ni kōsō* 『日獨協定と各國の動向 赤魔の脅威に抗爭』 (Tokyo: Morita Shobō 森田書房, 1936). He wrote a number of other pamphlets on the danger of communism.

Pact,¹¹² *The Far Eastern Red Encirclement of Our Lifelines: Pros and Cons of the Japanese-German Pact*,¹¹³ and, by one who prophesized the pact, *Weighing the Japanese-German Anticommunist Pact, Calling for the World's Attention: Does It Really Counter the Comintern's Activity?*¹¹⁴

Although they largely conveyed predictable contents—vigilance against alleged Soviet designs on Japan and dread of the spread of communism in China, with an occasional sprinkling of copycat conspiratorial anti-Semitism for suspense, the organizations responsible for their publications still deserve some attention. As early as 1 December—less than a week after the signature of the pact—a group of individuals established the Japanese-German Comradeship Society (Nichidoku Dōshikai 日獨同志會).¹¹⁵ The founders counted the journalist Kuroda Reiji 黒田禮二, who was heavily involved in leftist politics once upon a time but by the mid-1930s had become an adamant adherent of national socialism.¹¹⁶ The

¹¹² Nagata Kenzō 永田健三, *Sekai jinrui no teki kyōsantōin e bakudan – Nichidoku bōkyō kyōtei no yurai* 『世界人類の敵 共・黨員へ爆弾—日獨防共協定の由來』 (Tokyo: Aikoku Shinbunsha Shuppanbu 愛國新聞社出版部, 1936).

¹¹³ Kawasaki Minotarō 川崎巳之太郎, *Wa ga seimeisen wo obiyakasu sekka no kyokutō hōijin Nichidoku kyōtei ze ka hi ka* 『我生命線を脅かす赤化の極東包圍陣 日獨協定は是非か』 (Tokyo: Rakutensha 楽天社, 1937).

¹¹⁴ Kuroki Shōma, *Nichidoku bōkyō kyōtei no kentō sekai no kanshin no yobu hatashite Kominterun no katsudō wo fusegu ka* 『日獨防共協定の検討 世界の關心の呼ぶ 果してコミンテルンの活動を防ぐか?』 (Tokyo: Kyōzaisha, 1936).

¹¹⁵ For more on the Japanese-German Comradeship Society, see Iwamura Masashi 岩村正史, *Senzen Nihonjin no tai Doitsu ishiki* 『戦前日本人の対ドイツ意識』 (Tokyo: Keiō Gijuku Daigaku Shuppankai 慶應義塾大学出版会, 2005), 195–221.

¹¹⁶ Kuroda was born Okano Morimichi 岡上守道 and also used the pen name Okano Misaki 岡上三咲. In the early 1920s he actively participated in leftist groups such as the Thursday Club (Mokuyōkai 木曜會) and the New Man Club (Shinjinkai 新人會). He later worked as a foreign correspondent in Berlin for the *Asahi Shinbun* and thus witnessed the rise of Nazism up close. It was probably around that time that he became a convert to rightwing ideologies. In this respect Kuroda was not at all unique, as several other Japanese intellectuals began their careers in the left and moved drastically to the right, including Tokutomi Sohō, Kōno Mitsu (see footnote 52), and Akamatsu Katsumaro 赤松克麿.

club, albeit far from a one-man enterprise, still managed to accomplish relatively little. It embarked on a lecture circuit across the country, but the outbreak of full scale war with China soon eclipsed collaboration with Germany as the topic du jour, and its planned series of pamphlets and brochures seemed to have lasted but one issue.¹¹⁷ Other publishers, such as the Patriotic Newspaper Company (Aikoku Shinbunsha 愛國新聞社) or the Research Association of International Ideas (Kokusai Shisō Kenkyūkai 國際思想・究會), fared little better, bursting with activity briefly after the pact and then sinking into obscurity soon afterward. Nonetheless, pamphleteers took advantage not only of the liberty in print to press their point, but they also made full and opportunistic use of the freedom of association available at the time.

The last phase of the interplay between public opinion and officialdom witnessed the convergence of the two sides, as a number of current or former politicians and bureaucrats took to the pamphlet-sphere to drum up support for the new direction in Japanese diplomacy. If nothing else, the Foreign Ministry too resorted to publishing a flyer on the Anti-Comintern Pact.¹¹⁸ Meanwhile, an Upper House parliamentarian argued for the inevitability of the alliance,¹¹⁹ and a Lower House member penned a tract urging Japan to imitate resurgent

¹¹⁷ Respectively, Kuroda Reiji, *Nichidoku dōmeiron bōkyō kyōtei wo sarani ippo mae e!* 『日獨同盟論—防共協定を更に一・前へ!』, *Nichidoku dōshikai panfuretto* 1 日獨同志會パンフレット 第一輯 (Tokyo: Nichidoku Dōshikai, 1936); and, Kuroda Reiji, *Nichidoku bōkyō kyōtei no igi* 『日獨防共協定の意義』, *Nichidoku dōshikai shōsashū* 1 日獨同志會小冊子 第一輯 (Tokyo: Nichidoku Dōshikai, 1936).

¹¹⁸ *Nichidoku bōkyō kyōtei ni tsuite* 『日獨防共協定に就て』 (Tokyo: Gaimushō Jōhōbu 外務省情報部, 1937).

¹¹⁹ Ida Iwakusu 井田磐楠, *Nichidoku bōkyō kyōtei ze ka hi ka* 『日獨防共協定是か非か?』 (Tokyo: Kokusai Shisō Kenkyūkai Jimushitsu 國際思想・究會事務室, 1936). Ida was elected into the Upper House in 1929 and was an advocate for fascism in Japan. After World War II he was arrested and charged as a Class A war criminal, but was released in 1947.

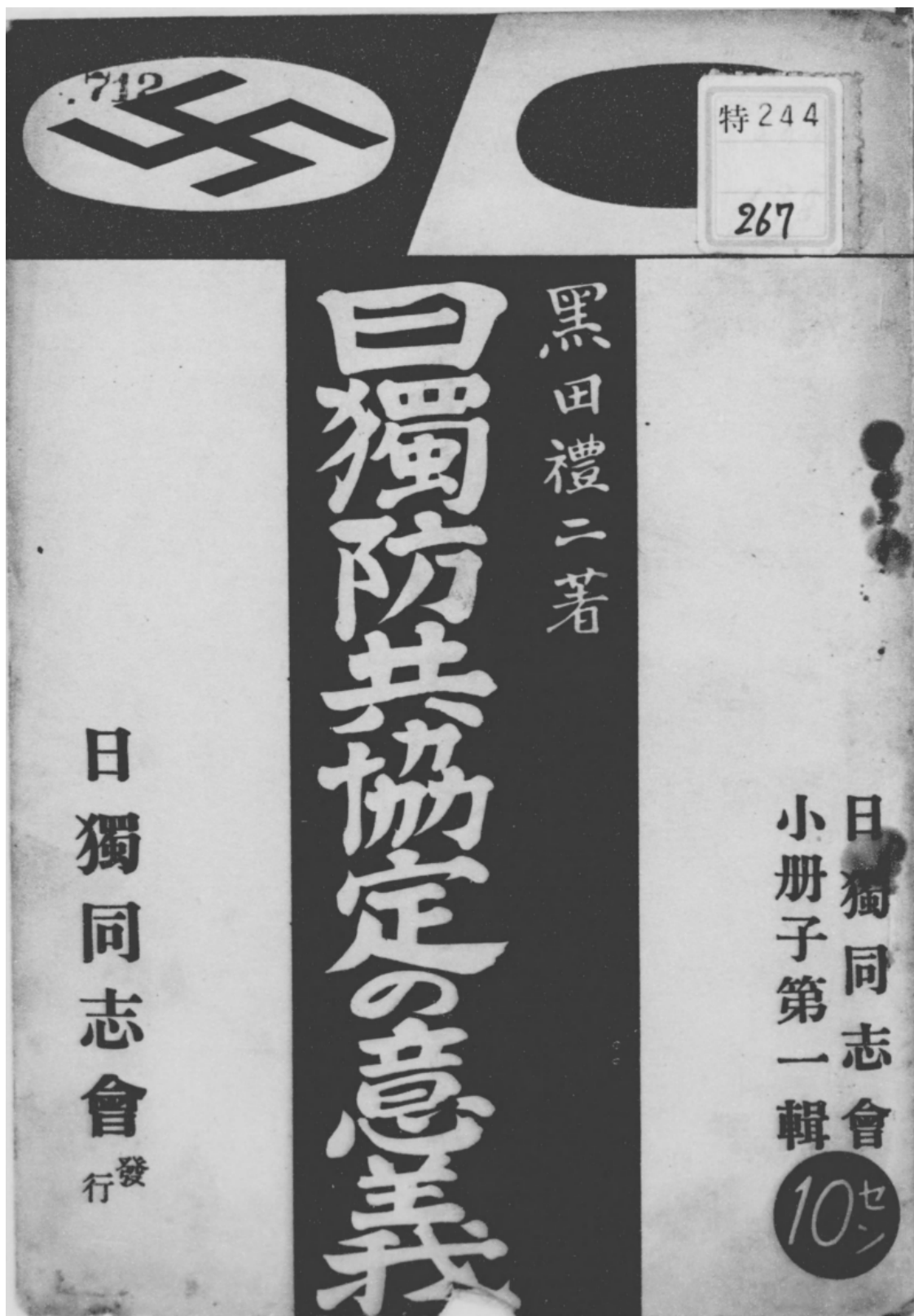


Fig. 6.4 The cover of a pamphlet published by the Japanese-German Comradeship Society in April 1937. Note the two countries' flags next to one another, as well as the clearly written title, *The Meaning of the Japanese-German Anti-Comintern Pact*.

Germany.¹²⁰ Most tellingly, Matsuoka Yōsuke 松岡洋右, president of the South Manchurian Railway whose handiwork included Japan's melodramatic withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933, composed a speech and a booklet to explain the pact from an insider's perspective to the populace.¹²¹ The choice of the once and future diplomat to communicate through a lecture and a pamphlet neatly embodied the union of public opinion and governmental policy.¹²²

Power of Words, Uttered and Written

Ironically, the Anti-Comintern Pact—the moment of triumph for those opinion-makers who advocated in lectures and pamphlets closer ties with Germany—also represented their last hurrah. The formalization of collaboration with Germany eliminated the very latitude that Japanese speakers and writers had enjoyed and used to promote their admiration of Nazism and Hitler. The pact marked the departure of relations with Germany from the fantasy of a few individuals to the prerogative of official foreign policy, to be regulated and executed solely by the government. From now on the state had an interest to maintain a respectable level of esteem for its new ally, but the effusive enthusiasm for Nazi Germany

¹²⁰ Funada Naka 船田中, *Tazan no ishi haisen Doitsu kara Daisan Teikoku kensetsu e* 『他山の石—敗戦獨逸から第三帝國建設へ』, Kokusei isshin ronsō 21 國政一新論叢 第二十一輯 (Tokyo: Kokusei Isshinkai 國政一新會, 1937). Funada was briefly barred from public offices after World War II, but returned to the legislature in 1952. He went on to head the Defense Agency and served two stints as president of the Lower House.

¹²¹ Matsuoka Yōsuke, *Nichidoku bōkyō kyōtei no igi to wa ga gaikō no kaiko* 『日獨防共協定の意義と我が外交の回顧』, Man'ichi shōsho sōsho 7 滿日叢書 第七輯 (Dairen: Manshū Nichinichi Shinbunsha 滿洲日日新聞社, 1936); and Matsuoka Yōsuke, *Nichidoku bōkyō kyōtei no igi* 『日獨防共協定の意義』, Daiichi shuppan jikyoku sōsho 1 第一出版時局叢書 第一 (Tokyo: Daiichi Shuppansha 第一出版社, 1937).

¹²² Matsuoka began his career in the Foreign Ministry. Afterward he helped manage the South Manchurian Railway before returning to diplomacy by representing Japan at the League of Nations during the Manchurian crisis in 1933. He returned to the railway as its head before returning to government as foreign minister in 1940. In September of that year he concluded the Tripartite Pact in Berlin, thus linking Japan's fate with those of Germany and Italy.

demonstrated by some pamphleteers would have to be tampered lest it be mistaken for obsequiousness.¹²³ Moreover, the escalation of the war in China led Japan into a dark valley with even stricter censorship, thought control, and synchronization of society at large. The power of words, so adroitly manipulated by some as sound and in print, was no more.

Interwar Japanese attitudes toward Germany, as reflected in the lectures and pamphlets examined in this chapter, evolved through three stages. Immediately after World War I, lectures—mostly lectures, as pamphlets had yet to become the later phenomenon—aimed to reacquaint Japan with a much transformed Germany. In this phase, lasting until the early 1930s, knowledge on this new Germany largely lay in the care of a few handfuls of genuine, educated experts with personal experience of the country. They maintained a serious, neutral tone when describing Germany, and focused their presentations on fact-finding, always with an eye for extracting applicable lessons for Japan in its perceived predicaments.

Then beginning around 1931, developments in both countries altered Japanese presentations of Germany in the media. Most consequentially, the popularization of pamphlets vis-à-vis closed speaking engagements as a channel of communication grew the ranks of opinion-makers by lowering the barrier to entry and enlarging potential audiences. Those now pontificating on Germany in print no longer had or needed the qualifications associated with the lecturers in the 1920s. Most pamphleteers commanded little firsthand knowledge of Germany and relied heavily on readily accessible materials such as *Mein*

¹²³ For example, Ida the retired general and Upper House member took pains to clarify that the formation of the Japanese-German alliance had nothing to do with Japan adopting the foreign ideology of fascism, see 「現に同じくファシズムと稱せらるゝも伊太利のファシズムと獨逸のナチズムとに幾多の特異點あることは獨伊側解・を一見するも直に判明することでありまして、日本が獨逸と防共協定を締結してもファシズムとは何等の關係なく、獨逸は復興獨逸の主義に依り、日本は萬古不動の傳統的日本精神の上に立つのであります。又た所謂民主主義者としてナチス獨逸を攻撃するものは、何故にヒットラー政權出現前の民主主義獨逸がコミンテルンの活動に苦みたる當時に獨逸を救はずして今更ナチズムを非難して獨逸國民に一種の外國製政治型體を・みんとするか？」 in Ida, 26–7.

Kampf or the twenty-five-point program of the Nazi Party, with the result that they often relayed to readers little more than Nazi propaganda or mythology. In addition, while the Economic Club never needed to sell a printed lecture to stay solvent, the razor-thin profit margin on each issue of pamphlet and cutthroat competition among their publishers privileged inflammatory opinion over uninspiring fact in the quest to attract more customers. Indeed, the elite experts, officials, and businessmen in their lectures always maintained a measure of skepticism toward Nazism, but the rabble rousing pamphleteers embraced the ideology wholeheartedly, both for its intrinsic appeal and its potential to sell copies.

On a philosophical level, the revolutionary weltanschauung offered by Nazism as an alternative to the status quo challenged Japanese of all stripes to question the existing social, economic, and political arrangements in their own country. In particular, the world economic crisis and the two nations' shared but independently-achieved diplomatic isolation seemed to offer a legitimate basis for comparison and emulation. Generally, in Germany as in Japan, the establishment lived up to its conservative reputation. On the one hand, high bureaucrats, industrialists, academics and others with much to lose in any potential upheaval reacted to Nazism with caution. They approved of its rabid anticommunism, economic nationalism, and authoritarian central government, but abhorred its socialist roots and indiscriminate use of violence. On the other, those in the lower and lower middle classes with little to risk would find precisely its rhetoric of classless equality and ruthless determination in solving the nation's existential crises most appealing.

The convergence of these two sides around 1936 marked the last stage. Some Japanese elites, won over by the international and domestic successes of Hitler, joined ranks with the plebeian prophets to call for collaboration with Germany. Without the support or at

least acquiescence of the well-positioned in Japanese society, the Anti-Comintern Pact would likely not have materialized. Nevertheless, one would be overstepping the evidence to claim that public opinion alone caused the Japanese-German alliance. It did not. Instead, it contributed to the discourses in Japanese business, military, and government circles that made the rapprochement imaginable. To wit, years before the diplomats signed the pact in late 1936, there had already existed a lively conversation within Japanese civil society in which determined individuals used what freedoms of speech and association were available to plant the seeds of pro-German, pro-Nazi ideas.

Ultimately, the Tokyo-Berlin Axis would not have come to pass but for the unpredicted and unpredictable rise of Hitler and Nazism onto the world stage. How did such a distant and arrogantly racist ideology gain converts in Japan without the Nazis even trying to propagate it overseas? The answer must lie with the party's twenty-five-point program so often reproduced in pamphlets and lectures, for it embodied the particular version of Nazism that became known in Japan. It was not the narrowly anti-Semitic, xenophobic, racist type that offended so many in the Western, especially Anglo-American, world. Rather it was the broadly proto-socialist, egalitarian, nationalist, and agrarian version. As a matter of fact, only two points explicitly warned of Jews, who, despite some Japanese scaremongers' attempt to turn anti-Semitism into a call to arms in their country, simply meant little to the vast majority of Japanese.¹²⁴ Anti-Semitism would have struck most Japanese as a curious, if crude, white-on-white struggle that did not touch Japan. Nor did Nazi prejudice against non-Aryans in

¹²⁴ “4. Only members of the nation may be citizens of the State. Only those of German blood, whatever their creed, may be members of the nation. Accordingly, no Jew may be a member of the nation,” and, “24. ... The Party, as such, stands for positive Christianity, but does not commit itself to any particular denomination. It combats the Jewish-materialist spirit within and without us, and is convinced that our nation can achieve permanent health only from within on the basis of the principle: *The common interest before self-interest*,” in Document No. 4 in Jeremy Noakes and Geoffrey Pridham, eds., *Nazism 1919–1945 Volume 1: The Rise to Power 1919–1934* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1996), 14, 16.

general catch that much attention, for there was not a resident, permanent, and historic Japanese minority in Germany to be mistreated or even for Japanese back home to experience such persecution vicariously. If anything, concretely anti-Japanese sentiments and discrimination in America exercised the Japanese public far more than any theoretical Nazi racism against non-Aryans. In other words, Japanese readers or listeners encountering the Nazi program would have put themselves in the shoes of Germans and not identified with “fellow victims” of Nazism like Jews and Slavs. Under this light, Japanese in less privileged classes would easily have agreed with several other tenets in the program, such as freedom from interest slavery, equal rights and responsibilities for all members of the nation, accessible higher education, and profit-sharing by major industries.¹²⁵ Not only did the Nazi utopian mirage appeal to Germans of similar social stations, it also seduced enough Japanese opinion-makers to generate a positive image that carried transnational consequences.

Although the lecturers and pamphleteers, single-handedly or collectively, did not quite father the alliance, their spoken and printed words at least played the part of midwives for the idea of bilateral collaboration. As the speeches and booklets showed, the history of interwar Japanese-German relations is also solidly the history of Japan. Notwithstanding few writers and not all lecturers had exhaustive knowledge of Germany, unlike the book authors to be examined in the next chapter, developments in distant and foreign Germany still provoked a soul-searching struggle over the direction Japan as a nation should take. We shall see that, for experts who knew a great deal about Germany and Nazism, the battle would only escalate.

¹²⁵ “11. *We demand therefore*: The abolition of incomes unearned by work. *The breaking of the slavery of interest*. 9. All citizens shall have equal rights and duties. 20. The State must consider a thorough reconstruction of our national system of education (with the aim of opening up to every able and hard-working German the possibility of higher education and of thus obtaining advancement). 14. We demand profit-sharing in large industrial enterprises,” in *ibid.*, 15.

CHAPTER SEVEN

GERMANY BETWEEN COVERS: GERMANY IN BOOKS

固より伊太利のファシズムが同國獨特のものである如く、獨逸の國民社會主義は獨逸民族の特質と・史を除外しては考へられない。偉大なる民族運動は總て其民族獨特の內面的必然性によつて捲き起されるものである。斯かる必然性は民族に依り其性質を異にし従つて或一國之民族運動をそのまゝ他國に移し得ざる事は固より言を要せざるところであるが、新興獨逸の各方面に於ける諸種の試みは我々に幾多の有益なる示唆を與へることを信じて疑はない。此意味に於て本書は専ら新興獨逸のあるがまゝの姿を敘述するに止めた次第である。

—Preface to *An Overview of Germany, 1936* (*Doitsu Taikan 1936* 『獨逸大觀 1936』)¹

昨夏弊社刊行に係る『獨逸大觀』は、この獨逸的な民族運動に現はれた新興國家建設運動を系統的に紹介し、以て江湖に幾多有益なる示唆を與へん事を目的とした。弊社は茲に再び『獨逸大觀』一九三七—八年版を刊行するに當り、更に本書が單なる示唆を越えて啓蒙的役割をも果す事を確信するものである。昨秋日獨防共協定の成立により日獨親善の基礎が益々鞏固にせられた事は誠に慶賀に堪へない處である。而して、同協定の重要性が、歐洲及東亞に於ける新情勢に伴ひ、益々増大せられつゝある事は否定し得ざる事實である。我々は同協定が兩國提携の恆久的楔となり、以てその・史的使命を果すであらう事を衷心より期待し且つ祈願するものである。

—Preface to *An Overview of Germany, 1937–38* (*Doitsu Taikan 1937–38* 『獨逸大觀 1937–38』)²

¹ “Just as Fascism is definitely unique to Italy, so can Germany’s National Socialism not be considered without the German people’s special character and history. Great national movements all stem from an emergence of the unique internal inevitability within the nation. Since such inevitability varies from people to people, one cannot simply transpose a nation’s movement onto another. Yet it may not be denied that we can derive beneficial lessons from the resurgent Germany’s experiments in various realms. With this in mind this book is devoted entirely to describing the many aspects of this new Germany,” in *Nihon denpō tsūshinsha* 日本電報通信社, ed., *Doitsu Taikan 1936* 『獨逸大觀 1936』 *Deutschland ein Ueberblick 1936*, 5th ed. (Tokyo: Nihon denpō tsūshinsha, 1936), Preface 1.

A House Divided

The week of 20 February 1936 was a consequential one for Japan, bracketed as it was by the nineteenth general election—the penultimate in peacetime—of the Diet’s lower chamber and the insurrection by junior army officers on 26 February. It also proved singularly fateful for one particular household. The start of the seven-day span brought Kita Reikichi 北畠吉 his first victory in a contest for a seat in the House of Representatives,³ and the end saw his older brother Kita Ikki 北一輝 implicated in the coup as the alleged spiritual leader for the mutineers.⁴ In other words, just when Reikichi sought to enter the legislature through ballots, young men radicalized by the teachings of Ikki strove to overthrow the same governing system through bullets. To be sure, the brothers personified the clashing weltanschauungs only imperfectly. Reikichi the parliamentarian did join the liberal Constitutional Democratic Party (Rikken Minseitō 立憲民政黨), but he also dabbled in undemocratic ideas like charismatic leadership and concentrated authority.⁵ Ikki, though

² “Last summer our firm published *An Overview of Germany* with the goal of providing our society with useful suggestions by systematically introducing the national resurgence and construction campaign that embodied the German national movement. With the publication of the 1937–38 edition of *An Overview of Germany*, we hope the book will exceed mere inspirations but perform an enlightening role as well. One cannot help but celebrate enthusiastically the forging of the Japanese-German Anti-Comintern Pact of the previous autumn as the basis of the consolidation of Japanese-German rapprochement. Moreover, one cannot deny that the pact becomes more and more crucial in view of the new states of affair in Europe and East Asia. With all our hearts we hope and pray that the agreement will form the lynchpin of bilateral collaboration and fulfill its historic mission,” in preface by Mitsunaga Hoshirō 光永星郎, *Nihon denpō tsūshinsha*, ed., *Doitsu Taikan 1937–38* 『獨逸大觀 1937–38』 *Deutschland ein Ueberblick 1937–38* (Tokyo: Nihon denpō tsūshinsha, 1937), Preface 1.

³ In 1936 Reikichi won his election in the first parliamentary district of his home prefecture Niigata. In 1930 he campaigned for a Lower House seat for Tokyo but lost. He would go on to win eight consecutive re-elections, the last in 1955.

⁴ Although Ikki was arrested, tried, convicted, and ultimately executed in association with the failed coup, he did not play a hands-on role in either its preparation or implementation. For more, see George M. Wilson, *Radical Nationalist in Japan: Kita Ikki 1883–1937* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969).

⁵ For more on Reikichi’s involvement in debates on fascism and national socialism, see Christopher W. A. Szpilman, “Fascist and Quasi-Fascist Ideas in Interwar Japan, 1918–1941,” in *Japan in the Fascist Era*, ed. E. Bruce Reynolds (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 73–106. In the early 1940s, however, he and several

often excoriated in posterity as a vanguard of fascism in Japan, actually embraced populism before he turned rightward and inspired the antiestablishment revolt.⁶ Still, since the siblings represented philosophies competing for dominance in the country, the Kita family feud might stand in as a microcosm of the political milieu in interbellum Japan.⁷

As seen in the lectures and pamphlets, various factors—the global economic meltdown, Japan’s internal political impasse and external diplomatic isolation, and the metamorphosis of the Weimar Republic into the Third Reich in the early 1930s—helped trigger a soul-searching crisis within Japan over its own future direction. As it turned out, the Kita brothers too contributed to the debate through their published intellectual endeavors. On the one hand, though Ikki did not study Germany closely, he was after all a Japanese national socialist before National Socialism came into existence in Germany. His main treatise, *Fundamental Principles for the Reorganization of Japan* (*Nihon kaizō hōan taikō* 『日本改造法案大綱』), not only was articulated around the same time as the Nazi Party’s twenty-five-point program but also contained comparable tenets on land use and ownership, publicly-funded education, and limitations on the profits of some industries.⁸ On the other hand, Reikichi penned *Germany under Another Revolution* (*Saikakumei no Doitsu* 『再革命

lawmakers opposed the founding of the monolithic party Imperial Rule Assistance Association 大政翼賛會, which some observers have viewed as an attempt to create a one-party state in Japan.

⁶ On Ikki as a symbol of fascist ideas in Japan, see Tanaka Sōgorō 田中惣五郎, *Kita Ikki Nihonteki Fashisuto no shōchō* 『北一輝 日本のファシストの象徴』 (Tokyo: San’ichi Shobō 三一書房, 1971).

⁷ For more on the falling out between the brothers, see Inabe Kojirō 稲邊小二郎, *Ikki to Reikichi Kita kyōdai no sōkoku* 『一輝と吟吉 北兄弟の相剋』 (Niigata: Niigata Nippō Jigyōsha 新潟日報事業社, 2002).

⁸ For an English translation of the work, see Brij Tankha, *Kita Ikki and the Making of Modern Japan: A Vision of Empire* (Folkestone, Kent: Global Oriental, 2006), 161–229. Curiously, Ikki was far more generous toward Koreans than the Nazis were toward the far more integrated Jews in Germany. While he rejected the notion of self-determination, he did propose that Koreans should eventually be able to exercise the same rights as Japanese. On his version of national socialism, see Takimura Ryūichi 滝村隆一, *Kita Ikki Nihon no kokka shakai shugi* 『北一輝 日本の国家社会主義』 (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō 勁草書房, 1973).

の獨逸』) to reflect on the unrest that the country experienced after World War I as well as prior to the Nazi ascendancy. He held a front-row seat in Germany to the upheavals in both instances: in the first, in spring 1920, he witnessed the aftermath of the Kapp Putsch and the general strike that defeated it, and in the second he departed Germany just days before Hitler became chancellor in January 1933.⁹ According to him, the Germans, a stubbornly dogmatic people lacking a sense of realism, were doomed to build an incomplete nation-state (in contrast to France and its model revolution) that would continue to plague Europe and pose a danger to the world, much as the Goths used to threaten Ancient Rome. A Germany undergoing a second revolution, this time by the National Socialists, would only make Germany even more German and so more erratic and likelier to cause trouble for the world.¹⁰ Thus, just as the brothers' overarching political outlooks diverged, their views in print on national socialism also differed.

Indeed, after consulting newspapers, and then lectures and pamphlets, the Japanese would find paperback and hardcover books the most accessible and authoritative paths up the step pyramid of acquiring information about Germany. At first glance, surveying Japanese

⁹ The Kapp Putsch was an attempted coup against the Weimar Republic launched in 1920 under the leadership Wolfgang Kapp, an elderly civil servant, and Walther von Lüttwitz, a Freikorps commander. Armed men under Lüttwitz managed to occupy Berlin and drove away the civilian leadership. The Reichswehr refused to suppress the revolt by force, so the exiled government called for a general strike, which ultimately led to the defeat of the coup.

¹⁰ 「殊に獨逸人の如く、・き主觀性の爲めに、現實感を缺き、甚だしき對立性の爲めに、悲劇を繰り返す民族は、算外の算、理外の理に翻弄さるべき宿命のものとして、人々の豫測を不可能ならしめる。佛蘭西人は十八世紀に於て完成せれたといへるが、獨逸人は今尚ほ未完成である。獨逸が依然としてヨーロッパの脅威たる所以は、その未完成と未知數とにある。單にそれが好戰的なるが爲めではない。獨逸民族が未完成なるが故に、ヨーロッパの、從つて世界の・成の秩序に脅威たることは、昔時羅馬に侵略せるゴート族と異なるところはない。從つて、獨逸の明日を知ること、その民族の未完成、未知數を知ることではなければならぬ。獨逸の再革命が進行する限り、獨逸は益々獨逸的となり、ヨーロッパに、また世界に、何事か大きな事件が起るであらうし、また起らねばならぬであらう。」 in Kita Reikichi, *Saikakumei no Doitsu*, *Sekai no ima asu sōsho* 8 『世界の今明日叢書 第8巻』 (Tokyo: Heibonsha 平凡社, 1933), Introduction 1–2.

books on Germany, or even just the subset still available, would appear a daunting feat.¹¹ On closer inspection, however, the task can be made manageable through the elimination of creative works like novels, plays, short stories, and poems by Japanese writers (the most famous being *The Dancing Girl* [*Maihime* 『舞 ▪ 』] by Mori Ōgai 森鷗外),¹² as well as fictional works translated from German.¹³ Also excluded are factual ones too arcane for the populace at large or far removed from current events, such as *An Overview of the Confederation of Youth Hostels in Germany*, *The History of Slavery in Medieval Germany*, or *Discourses on the Management of the German Insurance Industry*.¹⁴ Lastly, the trove of

¹¹ As of 2009–2010, my research using the database of the holdings at the National Diet Library found slightly more than 1,300 individual titles in Japanese associated with some aspect of Germany published during the nineteen years from 1919 to 1937. Of these, close to half were translated works (mostly reports or investigations by various government or private institutions), about a quarter dealt with the German language and German learning, and roughly twenty percent appeared as lectures and pamphlets. Only about a tenth of the total may be considered general nonfiction works on Germany, and even within these some were concerned with topics too narrow to be of interest to the populace at large.

¹² Of course this is not to say that imaginative works, whether domestically produced or imported from abroad, do not mold a people's interest in and understanding of the outside world. They most probably do, though it is difficult to quantify and prove precisely how any corpus of literary works influences a society. Also, fictional works by definition do not claim to describe reality, which adds another layer of complication to the analysis of perceptions. Since this dissertation focuses almost exclusively on factual media such as newspapers, pamphlets and lectures, and films (with the sole exception of a few feature movies), this chapter also limits itself to nonfiction books. For more, see Lee M. Roberts, *Literary Nationalism in German and Japanese* (New York: Peter Lang, 2010).

¹³ Although this chapter does not discuss translated German literature in Japan, a few general observations can be made about the fictional works being translated and the image they collectively painted. Broadly speaking, Japanese during the interwar period were exposed mostly to the Weimar classics of Goethe and Schiller, alongside works by Heinrich von Kleist, Heinrich Heine, Friedrich Hebbel and Gotthold Lessing. These authors, all active in the 1700s and 1800s, naturally depicted a country that differed from the Germany in the twentieth century. As a rule, not many works from the 1920s and 1930s were rendered into Japanese. Exceptions to the rule were few and far between: one drama by Ernst Toller, a couple of novellas by Thomas Mann and a few plays by Arthur Schnitzler. Curiously enough, both Toller and Schnitzler were fairly controversial and could have not survived Japanese censorship. Lastly, it should be mentioned that the “big three” among Japanese Germanists, namely Yamagishi Mitsunobu 山岸光宣, Chino Shōshō 茅野蕭々 and Suita Junsuke 吹田順助, all translated or commented on German literature.

¹⁴ Respectively, Kokusai Kankōkyoku 國際觀光局, ed., *Doitsu seinen shukuhakujo renmei gaikan* 『獨逸青年宿泊所聯盟概観』 (Tokyo: Kokusai Kankōkyoku, 1931); Uchiyama Toshio 内山俊雄, *Chūsei Doitsu doreishi* 『中世獨逸奴隸史』, *Shakai mondai sōsho* 5 社會問題叢書 第5編 (Tokyo: Fukunaga Shoten 福永書店, 1920); and Taketani Shigenao 武谷成直, *Doitsu hoken keieiron* 『獨逸保險經營論』 (Tokyo: Kyōho Seimei Hoken 共保生命保險, 1930).

books on the German language and linguistics, and learning German will be discussed in the next chapter.

This chapter also exempts from literal, individualized scrutiny the non-fictional volumes translated from the German without editorial commentary, such as civil and penal law codes, trade practices, and technical manuals. Although these works each conveyed, and should have conveyed, little beyond their own specialties, together they made up the central pillar of the transfer of knowledge from Germany to Japan and hence a source for the analysis of Japan's perception and understanding of Germany. After all, what a people invests the human resource, time, and money to render from an alien tongue says a lot about what it prioritizes as worthwhile from another nation, so that the aggregate of translated works represents an evaluation by one civilization of another. Seen from this perspective, from the 1920s to 1940s Japan esteemed Germany highly and broadly, as it imported publications on even rather obscure topics, for instance, the procedures for transporting corpses by rail, regulations on horseracing, and protocols of a school for the blind in Berlin.¹⁵ Where appropriate, then, this chapter discusses translated works collectively as a means to gauge what information from Germany piqued the interest of the Japanese.

Primarily the chapter concentrates on the few scores of books on current affairs, politics, culture, and contemporary history. They came in various formats, including but not limited to topical nonfiction works, biographies, travelogues, memoirs, and encyclopedic series like *An Overview of Germany*. Like pamphlets and lectures, they purported to relay

¹⁵ See Tetsudōshō Un'yukyoku Kokusaika 鐵道省運輸局國際課, ed., *Doitsu shin tetsudō unsō kitei furoku shitai unsō kyokashō* 『獨逸新鐵道運送規程 附 死體運送許可證』 (Tokyo: Tetsudō Un'yukyoku, 1928); Teikoku Keiba Kyōkai 帝國競馬協會, ed., *Doitsukoku keiba shikō kitei* 『獨逸國競馬施行規程』 (Tokyo: Teikoku Keiba Kyōkai, 1929); and, *Fukoku ōritsu Berurīnshi Sutēgurittsu mōgakkō kyōju saimoku* 『普國王立ベルリン市ステークリッツ盲學校教授細目』, trans. Machida Sokubun 町田則文 (Tokyo: Tōkyō Mōgakkō 東京盲學校, 1927).

facts. Unlike booklets and speeches, books did not operate within nearly as thin profit margins or as tight publication schedules. The quick turnaround of pamphlets did allow for a response to breaking news, as in the commentaries chiming in merely days after the Anti-Comintern Pact, but book authors and editors could utilize the extra time to incorporate in-depth analysis with a broader horizon and extended timeframe. The wider profit and time margins also enabled books to indulge in themes deemed less pressing or practical than those in pamphlets. In addition, the information contained in books was meant to last far longer, not unlike the paper on which it was printed, for in Japan hardcovers were sold with a sturdy sheath for preserving the volume within for years and even decades to come.¹⁶ What is more, book writers should have felt less pressure than pamphleteers to sensationalize any topic because readers were expected not only to be sufficiently curious in the content to spend the time to read and perhaps even the money to purchase the books, but also to have more knowledge and education than the consumers of pulp booklets. As a result, whereas many pamphlets were armed with front pages featuring outlandish graphics and slogans to boost sales, most books—particularly hardcovers, which sported cardboard shells of a brown hue—literally were designed to be judged not by their covers but by their contents.

Accordingly, this chapter examines Japanese comprehension of and reactions to the developments in Germany in monographs and edited volumes as the next level on the step pyramid. How did Germany appear in Japanese books in the 1920s and 1930s? Who composed the works portraying Germany, and what topics drew their interest? How did the vicissitudes Germany underwent affect the authors and their works? What impact did the unforeseen and unforeseeable rise of Hitler and Nazism have on the image of Germany in

¹⁶ The practice of sheathing books continued well into the postwar era, though nowadays most books are not sold within a cardboard envelope. The main exception is Japanese dictionaries, which are expected to endure significant wear and tear over their lifetimes.

Japan? How might interwar Japanese-German relations and the rapprochement be understood in the context of books? This chapter presents the case that the depictions of Germany in interwar Japanese books fell into two phases. In the first, spanning the 1920s, Japanese authors and translators explored a broad range of topics, reflecting the relatively open atmospheres of the Weimar and Taisho eras. Early publications dwelling on the post-WWI gloom soon gave way to ones marveling at the recovery in the mid-decade. Yet just as the revival was accepted as a fixture, the world economic crisis impacted Germany in such radical ways that it forced Japan to reassess the country. In this second stage, the once-diverse interests in Germany narrowed down to politics, which further focused on opinions about Hitler, so much so that in the 1930s one could scarcely discuss Germany without mentioning Hitler or his deeds, though in the relatively superficial terms of his personality and heroicized life story rather than any analysis of the long-term implications of his ideology and racism. The rise of the charismatic leader attracted many Japanese authors to his cause, so that well before the Anti-Comintern Pact was signed, there had already existed a vocal chorus extolling the virtues of Nazi Germany and of learning from the German spirit.

War and Peace

Sensibly, in the first interwar years the repercussions of World War I dominated as themes in Japanese publications on Germany. The sea change unleashed by the war would have fascinated Japanese commentators especially, since forces at play in Europe, namely the Wilsonian vision of democracy and self-determination, and the Leninist one of internationalism and dictatorship of the proletariat, threatened the authority of the Japanese government as well through the Korean independence movement and popular unrest at home.

Most significantly, the more-than-four years of hostilities had not only cut off the flow of know-how from Germany, but they had also transformed the country so comprehensively and profoundly that much of what Japan had known about Germany up to 1914 no longer applied.

Due to the velocity and scale of the postwar turmoil, in not many books did authors have the leisure to dwell on the war per se or to squeeze the last profits from what remained of wartime paranoia about Germany.¹⁷ For if the fast-paced turn of events in Germany in the early 1920s left little time even for lecturers to revisit the war extensively, then it stood to reason that still fewer authors could have the opportunity to do so. In any case, the outcome of the war presented no great mystery for writers to pore over; one book that did dissect and critique the German conduct of war and foreign affairs reached a conclusion that was probably widely shared in Japan. That is, German arms in general triumphed over those of the Allies, but the same martial prowess instilled a certain complacency and arrogance in the German leadership that lured it to rely too heavily and readily on war, at the expense of diplomacy, in its disastrous attempt to break out of the “Anglo-Saxon encirclement.”¹⁸

¹⁷ While it was true that the Great War did not sow any deep or lasting animosity between Japan and Germany, it did not mean that the two countries were not fighting a real conflict or that at least some Japanese felt threatened by Germany. After all, the German colonies of Tsingtau (Qingdao) and the Pacific archipelagoes did surround Japan in a sense, and there was a small German naval task force roaming in the Pacific in the early part of the war. In any case, there certainly was a market in Japan for paranoia about Germany. For example, a novel about Germany pushing its way through Siberia to invade Japan sold well enough to warrant at least twelve printings. See Higuchi Reiyō 樋口麗陽, *Doitsu no Nihon shinnyū* 『獨逸の日本侵入』 (Tokyo: Dokuritsu Shuppansha 獨立出版社, 1918). After the war the book title was changed, see Higuchi Reiyō, *Shiberia yori Tōkyō e* 『西伯利より東京へ』, 12th ed. (Tokyo: Dokuritsu Shuppansha, 1920).

¹⁸ 「作戰ノ指導・戰略戰術ニ於テ獨軍力遙ニ聯合軍ニ卓越セルノ事實ハ何人ト雖否認スルコト能ハサル所ニシテ作戰其モノヽ指導ニ於テハ彼ハ確ニ聯合軍ノ師長タルノ地位ニ在リシト言フモ過當ニアラス...若シ這次大戰開戦ノ責任カ彼ニ在ルモノトセハ是獨逸外交カ愈ク行詰リタル結果遂ニ武力ニ訴フルニ至リタルモノニシテ要スルニ外交失敗ノ血路ヲ開カンカ爲ニ外ナラス由來巧妙ナル「アングロサクソン」ノ中央同盟包圍政策ハ著々トシテ其功ヲ奏シ中央同盟ハ其包圍圈内ニ壓迫セラレントスル形勢ニ迫リタルヲ以テ彼ハ此壓迫ヨリ免レンカ爲ニ武力ヲ以テ包圍圈ヲ破リ其活路ヲ開カンコトヲ企圖シ・意戰爭準備ニ努力セリ面シテ彼ハ揚言シテ曰ク「自ラ起ツテ敵ヲ破ラスンハ獨逸ハ居ナカラニシ

As a matter of fact, diagnosing the ongoing conditions in revolutionary and then republican Germany attracted far more attention than the retrospective autopsies of the war, which soon would be monopolized by military enthusiasts.¹⁹ As one might expect, the Foreign Ministry took the lead in March 1919 in trying to make sense of the new landscape by publishing the prematurely-titled report *Politics in Post-revolutionary Germany* (*Kakumeigo no Doitsu seijō* 『革命後ノ獨逸政情』). Tellingly, however, dependable intelligence ran so scarce that even the foreign-affairs analysts who composed the study had to resort to using stereotypes to explain the ongoing crisis that just refused to subside. The authors had anticipated that since “the Germans were an organized people with education and culture,” any unrest should have settled down quickly. Instead, unemployment and food shortages unexpectedly fueled the turmoil for five months “after the revolution” and seemed to push the country to the brink of disintegration and devolving into “a second Russia.”²⁰

In general, Japanese books in the early 1920s reflected the chaotic state of Germany, with revolutions, counterrevolutions, putsches, strikes, assassinations, foreign occupation, and border clashes. Perhaps too much was unfolding too quickly for authors and translators

テ滅ヒン」, in Setsudō 雪堂, *Sekaisen ni okeru Doitsu no sakusen oyobi gaikō hihan* 『世界戦ニ於ケル獨逸ノ作戰及外交批判』 (Tokyo: Miyamoto Burindō 宮本武林堂, 1919), 3–4. Setsudō was a pen name; there is no clue about the real identity of the author.

¹⁹ For example, the army translated a work on the German air arms during the war. See Ernst von Hoeppner エルンスト・フオン・ホツプネル, *Ōshū taissen ni okeru Doitsu kūgun no katsuyaku* 『歐洲大戰に於ける獨逸空軍の活躍』, trans. Rikugun Kōkūbu 陸軍航空部 (Tokyo: Fuji Shoin 不二書院, 1923). Likewise, a later book on the war focused exclusively on the journey of a German U-boat. See Hirose Hikota 廣瀬彦太, *Doitsu sensuikan no daikatsuyaku emono wo motomete* 『獨逸潜水艦の大活躍 獲物を探めて』 (Tokyo: Kaigun Kenkyūsha 海軍 究社, 1928). Not surprisingly, Hirose was a captain in the navy, and he included a question-and-answer section to help explain to readers the niceties of submarine warfare.

²⁰ 「獨逸人ハ組織的國民ナレハ革命後ニ於ケル秩序回復モ速カナル可シトハ革命勃發當時ニ於ケル一般ノ豫想ナリキ、然ルニ最早革命後ニ五箇月ヲシ今尚ホ國內ニ騷擾・エスシテ或ハ第二ノ露國ト化スル虞無キニ非スヤト感セシム、教育アリ文化アル獨逸人カ自ラ覺ラサルカ如ク斯克ノ如キ自滅的行爲ヲ繼續シツ、アル原因ハ抑モ那邊ニ在リヤ、其第一ノ原因ハ求メテ之ヲ食糧問題ノ未解決ニ得タリ...次ニ第二ノ原因ハ失業者ノ増加ト復員ニ伴フ困難ナリ」, in Gaimushō rinji chōsabu 外務省臨時調部, ed., *Kakumeigo no Doitsu seijō* (Tokyo: Gaimushō rinji chōsabu, 1919), 75.

to commit themselves to following any one development. After all, very few of them would want to expend effort and time to compose or translate a tract, only to see the next upheaval invalidate the content. Therefore, no one in Japan seemed to have devoted entire books to the fleeting Bavarian Soviet Republic, the fluid Freikorps movement, or the failed Beer Hall Putsch. As seen above, even the Foreign Ministry with its expertise was taken aback by the duration and magnitude of the disorder. In addition, since it took a few months for Japan to re-establish ambassadorial and consular representation throughout Germany, private individuals who happened to be near or in the country, like Kita Reikichi from 1920 to 1922, were often better positioned to document the situation on the ground.

The first Japanese observers of postwar Germany often sympathized with its misery.²¹ One such author admitted in *A Survey of Reforming Europe and America* (*Kaizō tojō no Ōbei shakai kenbutsu* 『改造途上の歐米社會見物』) that his hatred for the Germans collectively had intensified during a tour of the devastated countryside and towns on the Western Front. Yet when he encountered flesh-and-blood German prisoners of war in France and Belgium toiling to clear rubbles and rebuild what they themselves had taken part in destroying, he underwent a change of heart and began to perceive them too as innocent human beings caught in events beyond their control.²²

²¹ Although this chapter does not delve into the portrayal of Germany in fictional works, it does not hurt either to point out that a writer used the suffering of Germans as the subject of a collection of short stories. See Ikuta Aoi 生田葵, *Doitsu aiwa* 『獨逸哀話』 (Tokyo: Jōgen Shodō 上弦書洞, 1920).

²² 「私は此の旅に於て、獨人を憎む心を一層深くされました、戦争といふこと、破壊といふことに、憂身をやつす人の心は、どうしても分りません、幾分か分る所もありますが、同情を寄することが出来ません、噫、何といふ無理、残酷な事を企んだものだらうと... 憤懣に堪へません。... 獨逸の捕が、今も尚佛國に居て（白國でも見ました）道路の修繕をし、壊れた人家の跡片付をし、その他、いろいろな事に働いて居るのを見ました時は、又、別種のいたましい感じを起しました。... 彼等は概して無邪氣な顔付をして居ます、眞に無邪氣でありませう」 in Tagawa Daikichirō 田川大吉郎, *Kaizō tojō no Ōbei shakai kenbutsu* (Tokyo: Nihon Hyōronsha Shuppanbu 日本評論社出版部, 1920), 298–300. Tagawa was a journalist who became a parliamentarian.

Indeed, first-person experiences in Germany and the opportunity of meeting Germans allowed writers to portray German misfortune concretely and compassionately, and not have to rely on generalizations about the whole population. Writing in November 1919, Nagura Mon'ichi 名倉聞一, the correspondent for the *Asahi* in Berlin, lamented in *Republican Germany* (*Kyōwakoku Doitsu* 『共和國獨逸』) the shortages in foodstuffs and fuel he encountered as even the luxurious Hotel Kaiserhof had to resort to serving coffee without sugar and the replacement of automobiles with dirty horse-drawn carriages in the streets.²³ Also in 1919, a travel writer managed to take a step into Germany from Basel, Switzerland and reported in *Chronicle of Wandering in Postwar Europe and America* (*Sengo no Ōbei man'yūki* 『戦後の歐米漫遊記』) his observations of a haggard citizenry exhausted by war and privation: pretty women reduced to wearing rough clothes, shoes so worn that they revealed the wood inside, and faces telling unimaginable tales of hunger and malnutrition.²⁴ He had originally planned to venture inside Germany and continue onto Berlin but gave up upon discovering a two-to-three-month waiting period for an entry permit.

At the same time, another sojourner boasted in *Sampling Defeated Germany* (*Senpai no Doitsu wo rekiyū shite* 『戦敗の獨逸を ▪ 遊して』) to have spent all but “a record two hours” to acquire said document because he worked for Mitsubishi as a purchasing agent of

²³ 「私の居るカイザーホーフと云ふ旅館は伯林一流のホテルであるにも拘らず十四日の朝から朝のコーヒに砂糖を貰ふことが出来ない、カイザーホーフ然りであるがら、他のホテルは勿論カフェ一杯でも却々砂糖は少く... 油やゴムの足りない爲に伯林には自動車が非常に少い... 自動車が少いので其補充に昔風の汚い馬車が澤山街の上を走つてゐる」 in Nagura Mon'ichi, *Kyōwakoku Doitsu* (Tokyo: Ōsaka yagō shoten 大阪屋號書店, 1922), 159–60.

²⁴ 「市民の面は永き戦の疲に倦み、困憊の情に充ちたり。其の身に蒙れる弊衣破帽を見るにつけ、美はしき婦人などの粗服は更らなり、時には破れたる靴、靴裏の木製なりしを見るにつけ、國民全體が如何に過去五年間に疲労せるかを窺知すべく、食物の不足、營養不良は悉く其の顔面に表はれたり。... 如何に其の内情の慘憺たるものありしか、吾人が想像以上にありし也。」 in Yamada Kiichi 山田毅一, *Sengo no Ōbei man'yūki* (Nishi Sugamo-chō 西 ▪ 鴨町: Hōten Gijuku 放天義塾, 1920), 131. Yamada also penned several books on the Ogasawara and South Pacific Islands.

pharmaceuticals.²⁵ Although he was sometimes given to exaggeration, his comment that Germany had been reduced to a country of tears probably did not stray too far from the truth, especially since the book included photographs showing starving civilians picking morsels from rubbish piles in the streets.²⁶ The pity felt by these authors was enhanced by their friendly interactions with regular Germans, who asked the visitors in bewilderment why Japan had chosen to wage war with Germany despite the previous close ties between the two peoples.²⁷ Finally, reminiscing in 1933 and approaching from a more political angle, Reikichi recalled and pitied the pervasive fear among the populace he sensed after the Kapp Putsch. He especially rued the “mechanical fashion” in which the old order continued to operate and the dearth of bold leaders with the drive and determination to consummate the revolution.²⁸

Reikichi, of course, enjoyed the benefit of hindsight in knowing how German democracy would ultimately fare. Yet even before the fledgling republic somehow managed, however imperfectly in retrospect, to right the ship of state and navigate it past menacing

²⁵ 「私は三菱が薬品を買ふ顧問で三菱のメンバーとなつて入國した形式であります。幾多の留學生は瑞西のバーゼルなんかに一ヶ月も滞在して獨逸入國の許可を待つて居ると云ふ次第でしたのに私はレコード破りで二時間で許可を得ました。」 in Kimura Hikoemon 木村彦右衛門, *Senpai no Doitsu wo rekiyū shite* (Osaka: Suzuya Shoten 鈴屋書店, 1921), 10. Kimura held a doctorate in pharmacology.

²⁶ 「此混亂・態の渦巻の中で翻弄せられてゐる獨逸人は、苦しみを忘れる爲にカフェーへ行く。而して偶に潤・して來る英佛商人やら軍人やらの顔さへ見れば・を流して居つた。... 夫れと同時に・が湧いて出るのであります。勸工場に行つても芝居に行つても・、何處へ行つても・で、實に・の國であつたのであります。」 in *ibid.*, 10–11.

²⁷ 「お前は日本人ならずや、日本は何故に獨逸に向つて戦を開きたるか、日本は獨逸と最も親善なる國にあらずやなどゝ質問を試み戀しく親しげに物談れり」 in Yamada, 130; and 「今回始めて獨逸へ往つた人は同國人の案外日本人に對して好感が有るのを覺れ... 殊に現在の南獨逸の獨逸人に逢つた時に、敵國人と云ふ考への・い人程尚驚いて其親切を感銘しませう」 in Kimura, Introduction 1–2.

²⁸ 「余は一九二〇年の春、カップ反動革命失敗直後の人心恟々たりし革命獨逸に入り、約一年の・月を獨逸革命の・究に費やしたが、この結果として最も痛切に感じたことは、獨逸革命が甚だしく劇的色彩に乏しく、舊秩序が機械的に運轉しつゝあつた如く、其の崩壊も亦同様に機械的であつて、革命渦中にあつた人々にも唯徒らに卷くまゝに浮動して、何等積極的に、自主的に運命を指導し、運命に反抗せんとする巨人的、聖雄的氣魄と手腕との見るべきものがなかつたといふことである。」 in Kita Reikichi, 6.

shoals on the extreme left and right, Japanese observers had already reached a consensus that Germany's recovery amounted only to a question of when and how, not if. As early as 1919, a general work concluded that the blows dealt to Germany by the Allies, though painful, did not amount to a fatal wound, and that given time Germany would surely regain its prewar status.²⁹ Even those writers who so dramatically depicted Germany's travails never quite lost faith that the country would soon rise again. Even the correspondent Nagura, perhaps the least sanguine of Germany-watchers, conceded that the adoption of republicanism saved Germany as a nation and could lead to a positive outcome in the future.³⁰ The pharmacologist ended his book with the confident prediction that Germany would undoubtedly recuperate within twenty years. (Amazingly, he also foretold that incendiary language by counterrevolutionary forces could bring a massacre of the Jews, who by and large supported and benefited from the introduction of republicanism to Germany.)³¹ Meanwhile the travel writer blamed the Kaiser for plunging Germany to its catastrophe, and took comfort that the monarch had since been sidelined while Germany's administrative apparatus and social structure remained largely intact. Much as the German nation rebounded after its defeat at the hands of Napoleon a century before by redeeming itself through the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, he added, so too could it endure and overcome the present hardship and once again

²⁹ 「獨逸フエニツクス鳥の如く、其の灰より再生すべきか。... 徹底すれば獨逸に取つては致命傷ならざるまでも、大の苦痛であることは確かである。然る時戦前の獨逸に回復するまでに、かなりの年月と忍耐を必要とする。」 in Inahara Katsuji 稻原勝治, *Saikin no Doitsu* 『最近の獨逸』, Tsūzoku kokusai bunko 1 通俗國際文庫 第1卷 (Tokyo: Gaikō Jihōsha Shuppanbu 外交時報社出版部, 1919), 4–5. Inahara also penned several other books on international affairs in the 1920s.

³⁰ 「話はもとへもどつて何故に獨逸は共和國になつたかと考へて見る勿論戦にまけ、社會黨は勃興する獨帝退位や革命の結果ではあるが、此の如き憲法を作つたと云ふことは、これで無ければ聯合國も許さなかつたであらうし、事實敗餘の獨逸國を救ふ道はこれより外にないと人々が考へたからである... うまく行けば戦敗と革命とは獨逸の未來の爲に大變に幸福な結果となるかも知れない」 in Nagura, 25–26.

³¹ 「要するに生活困難の緩和するに従ひ再び獨逸人は復活するにちがひなく其時期は遅くも二十年内外に來る事は疑ひないのであります。」 in Kimura, 148.

hold its head high.³² To wit, whereas Reikichi faulted the failure to uproot the ancien régime as the original sin of the Weimar Republic, this author anointed the preservation of core elements of the old system as the key to the salvation of the German nation.

Already in these uncertain years, three trends marking the portrayals of Germany during the interwar period were starting to emerge. First, Japanese travelers to Germany, Europe, and the West were often interested in extracting knowledge and deriving lessons from abroad for Japan. To begin with, all the authors mentioned hitherto journeyed faraway for either work or study, and trading or learning by definition involves the absorption of unfamiliar goods or information. Reikichi, for example, had just completed an academic residence in America before he headed to Germany to research philosophy, and the pharmacologist was touring Germany to acquire medical technology. The duties of the journalist and travel writer also called for watching Europe for the latest developments and their implications for Japan. In fact, the guest writers of the forewords to their books both stressed the need for Japan to learn from and about the postwar world,³³ and praised the authors for contributing toward that goal.³⁴ If nothing else, even the titles of some of these books conveyed nuances of gaining new experiences and insights through traveling.³⁵

³² 「歐州中原に生存する一億に近き獨逸民族は、曾てナポレオンの席捲するところとなり、臥薪嘗膽、普佛戦争に於て漸く彼の蹂躪に一失を酬ひたりき。... カイゼル其人が施政方針を誤りたる結果、一朝にして獨逸國民の大敗となる。... 然り獨逸は世界的大亂に敗れたり。カイゼルは和蘭の一閑村に幽閉せられつゝあり。されど獨逸の政治は依然其の頭目を變更したるのみにして、未だ、行政機關、社會組織に於ては毫も變化せず。... 講和條約成立の曉に於ては、勿論、獨逸國民は臥薪嘗膽の時機到來すべし。斯くて獨逸國家は一時、疲敗するも、其の民族は滅びず。滅びざる民族は、何時の秋が、擡頭し來らずんば已まず。乞ふ予をして暫く彼が國民性に就て談らしめよ。」 in Yamada, 133, 135.

³³ See 「要するに、日本は今や國際的に孤立し、列・と仲間はずれの形となつて居る。是の境遇を・するには、先づ自らを改造しなければならない、『改造』は外國から傳へられた詞であるが、我國に於てこそ、最も高く、・く叫ばれなければならぬものである。」 in Tagawa, Foreword by Ozaki Yukio 尾崎行雄 4.

³⁴ See 「其の見識や、能く宇内の大局に達し、其の眼孔や、能く列國の情偽に透徹す。彼我の長短、世相の表裏、殆んど漏らす所なく、而して遂ひに我か大日本帝國の國際政局の上に立つ可き根本義を、

Second, Japanese commentators mostly maintained a strong conviction that Germany and its people would regenerate, even though what they witnessed and experienced in the country, particularly in the darkest hours in the immediate postwar years, hardly justified such optimism. Even in the face of the harsh Versailles Treaty that levied heavy reparations—designed precisely to burden Germany for decades—none of the authors believed that the Germans could be kept under a yoke for long. Rather, their unshakable belief resembled religious faith or innate intuition; they just *knew* that the Germans would soon enough regroup. Certainly, some pointed to the precedent of Germany’s resurgence after the Napoleonic conquest.³⁶ More often than not, however, they put stock in the Germans’ unquantifiable “national character” (*kokuminsei* 國民性) or the “German soul” (*Doitsu damashii* 獨逸魂). This intangible German spirit, albeit deemed critical to the nation’s survival and success, was never specifically defined. Instead, it evolved with the times and the needs of the observers commenting on Germany. In the context of the postwar aftermath, this spirit became loosely associated with traits such as chivalry, perseverance, discipline, hard work, and self sacrifice.

Third, in relation to the nebulousness of the German essence, a budding disagreement arose over what exactly would constitute a reborn Germany. In a way, the Great War created a *tabula rasa* for Japanese intellectuals to re-conceptualize an ideal Germany. Some saw in

闡明して、其意實に豁如たるものあり。…若夫れ本書の經世實用に裨益ある、所謂る市に定價あるもの、固より予の呶々を埃て、而して後之を評値するの必要なきのみ。」 in Yamada, Foreword by Tokutomi Sohō 徳富蘇峰 3–4.

³⁵ For example, *rekiyū* 遊 in Kimura’s book is composed of two elements—*reki* refers to experiencing something (as in *keireki* 經) and *yū* amusement. *Kenbutsu* 見物 in Tagawa’s title also implies more than its common translation as “sightseeing” and means something closer to “surveying,” especially since the term is placed in the context of “reforming Europe and America.”

³⁶ For example, Toyosaki Zennosuke 豊崎善之介, *Fufutsu sensō igo no Doitsu keizai* 『普佛戦争以後の獨逸經濟』 (Tokyo: Kōgyō no nihonsha 工業之日本社, 1920).

the catastrophe a repudiation of the old system and hoped the revolution would run its course. Others breathed a sigh of relief that the revolution did not live up to its name and that familiar faces remained in many positions of authority and influence. These views indicated not only contrasting visions of Germany but also a fundamental level of interest in and familiarity with the country and its people that enabled such differences in opinion to exist in the first place. Moreover, Germany provided a unique battleground for ideologies that would have attracted observers of various political persuasions. For unlike Soviet Russia or Fascist Italy, where one extreme movement or another established undisputed dictatorial control, republican Germany, especially in its first, turbulent years, played host to struggles between forces from the left and the right that were more or less evenly matched. Thus Japanese commentators partial to either side could take heart in the successive coups and countercoups. In other words, postwar Germany's uncertain fate furnished concerned Japanese authors with the drama and creative space to imagine the triumph of their preferred worldview; that conditions in Germany remained unsettled for a few years meant that the observers had to learn about all the new developments in the dynamic country.

The Republic

Through a sheer coincidence of a jolt in the Earth's crust, the capacity of money printing presses, and one man's hubris, the Great Kanto Earthquake, the peaking of Germany's hyperinflation, and the Hitler Putsch all took place within a couple of months of one another.³⁷ Thus, by the end of 1923 Japan and Germany were each rebuilding and

³⁷ The earthquake took place on 1 September, while the hyperinflation reached its peak during November. The Hitler Putsch, also called Beer Hall Putsch, was launched on 8 November. On that evening the political and military leaders of the Bavarian government were holding an event at the Munich Beer Hall. Hitler and his men took advantage of that opportunity by blockading the venue and forcing the leaders under threat of violence to

picking up pieces of either a flattened metropolis or a shattered economy. At the same time, both countries entered a relatively more liberal, democratic phase of government. In Japan, political parties were given the chance to form cabinets and choose prime ministers, and suffrage was granted to all males older than twenty-four in 1925. In Germany, with the smothering of the Nazi coup attempt the republic fended off the last violent challenge to its legitimacy and could focus on implementing a new system of governance. Moreover, although neither the left nor the right triumphed decisively over the other, each side remained committed in agitating to obtain power through more-or-less legal channels. Their activity, and the similar factors affecting Taisho and Weimar, meant that Japanese commentators had yet more cause to keep a close watch on Germany. The relative openness in both countries also enabled Japanese area specialists to discuss more aspects of Germany in more diverse types of publications.

Primarily, the applicability of Germany's contemporary situation that the Japanese discerned for their nation was evidenced by the number, nature, and variety of volumes rendered from German into Japanese. Beginning in 1922, the year when one could reasonably conclude that the republic would survive and remain relevant for some time, there emerged a wave in Japan to translate works from Germany. Since democratization meant foremost a re-organization of the legal regime, the republican government passed a number of new laws and reforms. In addition, Weimar's reputation of being modern and innovative also made Germany an attractive model for inspiration. As a result, from 1922 to 1926, the Japanese Ministry of Justice translated a host of German laws and legal commentaries on matters as varied as juvenile courts, regulation of the economy, attorneys' qualifications, and

support a "march on Berlin" à la Mussolini's March on Rome. The leaders pretended to accede to Hitler's demand, and, once freed, immediately proceeded to mobilize forces to crush the coup. The next day, the putschists marched against a police position, were fired upon, and dispersed. Hitler was arrested.

custody of minors.³⁸ Although Japan did not unthinkingly swallow any German law whole, one should still find it remarkable that the Japanese saw German legal thinking as useful enough to take the trouble—and much trouble it must have been to decipher German legalese—to render exactly the laws into Japanese. After all, since a society's corpus of laws arose and accumulated from its custom, beliefs, traditions, and historical precedents, none of which Japan shared with Germany, Japan's assiduous effort to make sense of Germany's new laws represented Japan's high esteem of the country's legal thinking, which could trace its origins to the nineteenth century. To wit, even if Japan could not internalize the spirit of German laws, it was at least interested in the literal letter.

Beyond the Ministry of Justice, several other Japanese institutions sought lessons from a Germany renewing itself in multiple areas. For instance, the City of Tokyo and the Interior Ministry's Reconstruction Bureau (Fukkōkyoku 復興局), charged with the monumental tasks of rebuilding and redesigning the smoldering capital, edited and translated several reports from German on city planning and urban zoning.³⁹ Some in the mass media even talked ambitiously of doing away with the winding streets of Edo by making the new, unconventionally wide Shōwa Avenue (Shōwa Dōri 昭和通り) Tokyo's version of Berlin's

³⁸ Respectively, Gustav Radbruch グスターフ・ラー ドブルーフ, *Doitsukoku shōnen saibanshohō* 『獨逸國少年裁判所法』, trans. Shihōshō chōsaka 司法省調査課, Shihō shiryō 31 司法資料 第 31 號 (Tokyo: Shihōshō Chōsaka, 1923); Arthur Nussbaum アルチュール・ヌースバウム, *Doitsu shin keizeihō* 『獨逸新經濟法』, trans. Shihōshō chōsaka, Shihō shiryō 33 (Tokyo: Shihōshō Chōsaka, 1923); *Doitsu no bengoshi hōsei* 『獨逸ノ辯護士法制』, trans. Shihōshō chōsaka, Shihō shiryō 13 (Tokyo: Shihōshō Chōsaka, 1922); and, Rudolf Schultheis ルドルフ・シュルトハイス, *Doitsukoku kōken seido* 『獨逸國後見制度』, trans. Shihōshō chōsaka, Shihō shiryō 64–65 (Tokyo: Shihōshō Chōsaka, 1925).

³⁹ Respectively, Fukkōkyoku, ed., *Toshi keikaku ni kansuru Doitsu hōsei oyobi gyōsei* 『都市計畫ニ關スル獨逸法制及行政』 (Tokyo: Fukkōkyoku Keikakuka 復興局計畫課, 1924); and, Tōkyō Shisei Chōsakai Shiryōka 東京市政調査會資料課, ed., *Doitsu ni okeru tochi kukaku seiri no jiturei* 『ドイツに於ける土地區劃整理の實例』 (Tokyo: Tōkyō shisei chōsakai, 1924).

tree-lined Unter den Linden.⁴⁰ The loss of lives and property in the earthquake and conflagration afterward likely prompted Japan to explore ways to manage the risk of the next disaster. Therefore the Postal Insurance Bureau (Kan'i hokenkyoku 簡易保険局) imported several volumes on the German insurance system, including poignantly three distinct ones on fire insurance and one on deploying insurance funds for the construction of public housing in Berlin.⁴¹ Other institutions like the Bank of Japan, the South Manchurian Railway, and the office of the Governor General of Korea also found aspects of Germany worthwhile enough to invest the effort to introduce relevant publications from the German.⁴² Whatever the German spirit might have stood for theoretically, many in official and semi-official circles in Japan found much practical value in picking the German mind.

As broadly as the Japanese establishment imported administrative and legal concepts from Germany through translation, one major item was apparently placed on the contraband list. The Weimar Constitution, as far as can be established, appears not to have been rendered whole into Japanese or published by the Japanese government, even though it delineated the

⁴⁰ Edward Seidensticker, *Tokyo from Edo to Showa 1867–1989: The Emergence of the World's Greatest City* (Rutland, Vermont: Tuttle Publishing, 2010), 312.

⁴¹ Karl Domizlaff カール・ドミツラフ, and Eugen Friedrich Wolfgang Freiherr von Liebig オイゲン・フリードリヒ・ウォルフガング・フライヘル・フォン・リービヒ, *Ippan kasai hoken yakkan* 『一般火災保険約款』, trans. Kan'i hokenkyoku (Tokyo: Kan'i hokenkyoku, 1925); Eugen Friedrich Wolfgang Freiherr von Liebig, *Doitsu ni okeru kasai hoken seido* 『獨逸ニ於ケル火災保険制度』, trans. Kan'i hokenkyoku (Tokyo: Kan'i hokenkyoku, 1925); Heinrich Wessels ハインリヒ・ウエッセル, *Doitsu kōei kasai hoken seido* 『獨逸公營火災保険制度』, ed. and trans. Kan'i hokenkyoku (Tokyo: Kan'i hokenkyoku, 1925); and, Kan'i Hokenkyoku, ed., *Berurin ni okeru kōeki jūtaku kenchiku jigyō* 『柏林に於ける公益住宅建築事業』, Tsumitatekin un'yō shiryō 7 積立金運用資料 第7輯 (Tokyo: Kan'i hokenkyoku, 1926).

⁴² Respectively, *Senzen oyobi sengo ni okeru wa ga taidoku bōeki jōkyō narabi ni Doitsu sangyō fukkō no wa ga kuni ni oyobosubeki eikyō* 『戦前及ヒ戦後ニ於ケル我對獨貿易・況竝ニ獨逸・業復興ノ我國ニ及ホスヘキ影響』 (Tokyo: Nihon ginkō chōsakyoku 日本銀行調査局, 1925); Minami Manshū tetsudō kabushiki kaisha shomubu chōsaka 南滿洲鐵道株式會社庶務部調査課, ed., *Doitsu gyōshōnin seido no kenkyū to Doitsu bōeki no shinkō ni kōken seru chōya no shokikan* 『獨逸行商人制度の・究と獨逸貿易の振興に貢獻せる朝野の諸機關』, trans. Ōta Sankō 太田三孝 and Nakamura Hisashi 中村禧 (Dairen 大連: Minami Manshū tetsudō shomubu chōsaka, 1923); and Chōsen sōtokufu 朝鮮總督府, ed., *Kyū Dokuryō Pōrando tōchi gaikan 1* 『舊獨領波蘭統治概觀 前編』, Chōsa shiryō 9 調査資料 第9輯 (Keijō 京城: Chōsen sōtokufu, 1924).

authority from which all the laws and regulations that Japan translated so eagerly were derived. It seemed improbable that the omission of the document resulted from neglect, as Japan imported works on topics ranging from the minute, such as the protocol for operating lamps on a ship, to the monumental, like the Versailles Treaty in its entirety.⁴³ Neither length nor linguistic complexity should have deterred translators, since the short constitution was composed in clear prose. Nor should doubts concerning the applicability of any work for Japan have played a role. For example, the Foreign Ministry translated in full the German election laws that implemented female suffrage, which Japan would not adopt until 1945.⁴⁴ The main factor disqualifying the Weimar Constitution for rendition into Japanese, then, seemed to be its liberal, and, for the Japanese imperial government, subversive, elements: Article 1 of the constitution proclaimed that “state authority derives from the people.”⁴⁵ Amidst the protests in Japan in the early 1920s, the censors might have thought it prudent to deprive the restive populace of easy access to a readymade blueprint for an alternative arrangement of power between the governed and the governing.

In any case, the authorities might have overestimated the people’s interest in and familiarity with the political happenings in Germany. To begin with, if a Japanese reader truly wanted to read about the Weimar Constitution, if not the document itself, it would not have taken much investigation to do so. For instance, Nagura, the *Asahi* correspondent,

⁴³ Teishinshō kansankyoku sen’yōhin kensajo 逓信省管船局船用品検査所, ed., *1906nen Doitsu sentō shiken kisoku shōyaku* 『千九百六年獨逸船燈試驗規則抄譯』, Kenkyū shiryō 3 ■ 究資料 第3號 (Tokyo: Teishinshō kansankyoku, 1921); and *Dōmei oyobi Rengōkoku to Doitsukoku no heiwa jōyaku narabini geteisho* 『同盟及聯合國ト獨逸國トノ平和條約並議定書』 (Tokyo: Chōyōkai 朝陽會, 1920).

⁴⁴ *Doitsukoku senkyohō yakubun* 『獨逸國選舉法 譯文』, Ōshū seijō kenkyū shiryō 22 歐洲政情 ■ 究資料 第22輯 (Tokyo: Gaimushō Ōbeikyoku dainika 外務省歐米局第二課, 1924). There was a vociferous movement in Japan agitating for female suffrage. The Lower House of the Diet even passed a bill granting women full citizen rights in 1931, but the proposal died in the Upper House.

⁴⁵ Weimar Constitution, < http://www.zum.de/psm/weimar/weimar_vve.php > (accessed 3 October 2011).

discussed several provisions of the constitution in *Republican Germany*. Yet readers would do well not to rely heavily on Nagura's analysis, for he missed the mark by a wide margin when he predicted that Article 1 would raise controversies over whether the new Germany should be a federal or centralized state.⁴⁶ In fact Article 1 said nothing about federalism, and the republic kept without much fanfare the decentralized structure of the Kaiserreich, which would remain until the Nazi *Gleichschaltung* (coordination) campaign. He also made an inexplicable explanation for Article 3 that mandated black, red, and gold as the colors of the republic.⁴⁷ He claimed that the three hues symbolized the parties upholding the government: black recalled the color of monks and thus the Catholic Center Party, red belonged to the Socialists, and gold represented the propertied Democratic Party and its Jewish members. His interpretation had nothing to do with the truth. The "new" tricolor flag predated all three parties and even Germany as a nation-state, and had a tradition stretching back to the Napoleonic Wars. Although in hindsight one might be tempted to criticize Nagura for committing obvious faults and to doubt his competence, one should also view his mistakes against the backdrop of the uncertain early 1920s.⁴⁸ Moreover, if even a veteran journalist

⁴⁶ 「何をいつても最も重大な問題とせられたのは政體問題であつた「獨逸國は共和國なり、國權は人民より發見す」の此一條から選舉の事も聯邦か統一國家かの問題も皆出て來るのであるからして議論の沸騰したのは想像するに難くない」 in Nagura, 8.

⁴⁷ 「舊帝國の國旗の色は黑白赤の三色であつたのを廢し、新しく陸上にあつては黒赤金、海上にあつては黒赤金の三色旗の隅へ小さい黑白赤をつけると云ふことに決定した、黒は僧侶の色で中央黨、赤は社會黨の色、金は物持黨で猶太人の多いデモクラツトの色である、この三色では政府を形成する三黨の爲の國旗であつて」 in *ibid.*, 7–8. All the essays in the book were written before Nagura left Germany in April 1921. He was rather prone to quoting or retelling rumors, which must have been rampant in Germany in the revolutionary and early republican years. Although Nagura usually called a rumor as such, he as a journalist also had a responsibility to ascertain the truth, if any, behind it. In any case, the history of the black-red-gold flag should have been known to Nagura and not subject to unfounded speculation.

⁴⁸ Indeed Nagura seemed to have done a good job elsewhere in his book, including an informative interview with the philosopher Rudolf Eucken. See Nagura, 237–64.

could make such mistakes, then Japan as a whole would have commanded even less knowledge of and attention to nuances in contemporary German politics and history.

In fact, as Weimar put its birth pangs behind and entered the “golden” mid-1920s, the focus of Japanese writers telling of their experiences in Germany also drifted from the political and economic to the social and cultural. For example, although up until 1925 readers in Japan could still find publications on issues like Germany’s ability to pay its reparations, postwar fiscal policy and finance, and feuding Socialist parties, the research for these works had actually been completed prior to mid-1923.⁴⁹ By 1925, such books were becoming scarce, as popular interest in Germany shifted from weighty problems to more-lighthearted affairs.

This change in sentiment was neatly captured in print in the unintentionally pivotal *Berlin Night Tales* (*Berurin yawa* 『伯林夜話』), published in 1925. The author, Koizumi Eiichi 小泉英一, had not set out to compose an epoch-marking opus but stated modestly in the introduction that it would please him just to provide readers with leisurely stories about Berlin.⁵⁰ Even if his statement was dismissed as a formality, the use of the reading aid *furigana* throughout showed that the book was meant for the lay population. The book would have lived up to his intention but for the events described within. His stay coincided with a turning point in German history, as he resided in the country for a year starting in April 1923

⁴⁹ On Germany’s ability to pay reparations, and fiscal policy, see Takagi Senjirō 高城仙次郎, *Doitsu no shōkin shiharai nōryoku* 『獨逸の償金支拂能力』 (Tokyo: Shūkōsha 秀廣社, 1923); and, Takagi Senjirō, *Doitsu sengo no zaisei to kin’yū* 『獨逸戦後の財政と金融』 (Tokyo: Shimizu Shoten 清水書店, 1924). Takagi also wrote several other books on economics. On the recent history of Germany’s leftwing parties, see Morito Tatsuo 森 辰男, *Saikin Doitsu shakaitōshi no hitokoma* 『最近ドイツ社會黨史の一齣』 (Tokyo: Dōjinsha Shoten 同人社書店, 1925). In his long life, Morito (1888–1984) exercised much influence as a leftist sociologist, educator, parliamentarian, and cabinet member. These books demonstrated the risk an author assumed in tackling contemporary issues—the analysis on Germany’s reparations was soon made obsolete by the Dawes Plan of 1924, and the optimism with which the reunification in 1922 of the Socialist parties was described seemed misplaced by 1925, since the far more consequential split between the Social Democrats and the Communists was never bridged.

⁵⁰ 「併し本書は只一片の伯林物語として消閑の暇に讀んで貰つたらそれでも好い。」 in Koizumi Eiichi, *Berurin yawa* (Tokyo: Waseda Daigaku Shuppanbu 早稻田大學出版部, 1925), Introduction 2.

and thus saw “Germany at its nadir and on the road to recovery.”⁵¹ Accordingly the content was arranged to reflect the two different experiences. The first part, “Germany’s Year of Misery” (獨逸悲境の一年), represented in a way the last major Japanese account on Germany’s politics and economy in the 1920s, and the second, “From the Streets of Berlin” (伯林の街頭より) and “Travelogue” (紀行), the first exposition on the culture and society. Although Koizumi was more than qualified to comment on politics and administration—his career would lead to a judgeship on the supreme court (daishin’in 大審院)—he chose to devote more attention to the relaxed second half.⁵²

In hindsight Koizumi should have expended more ink on the first part, for he seemed to have been the first Japanese observer to have described in book form the hyperinflation and the Hitler Putsch in any detail. On the one hand, the historic hyperinflation, which he encountered through astronomical Mark-Yen exchange rates and prices of merchandise skyrocketing by the minute, certainly made gripping material for reading. On the other, the Beer Hall Putsch lasted not quite a day and would have been consigned to a footnote in history but for later, unpredictable developments. In any case, Koizumi lived in Berlin at the time and did not witness the coup attempt in Munich, but he evidently paid close attention to news reports on the event, which he reconstructed vividly in his book. He thought Hitler was “thoughtless” and Ludendorff “reckless,” and the coup simply ill-conceived.⁵³ As a legal expert, Koizumi was drawn to details of the trial of the putschists, and mentioned

⁵¹ 「騒擾と陰謀と叛亂は踵を接し、獨逸の前途には暗い破滅の幻影が横はつて居た。そして翌年の春に至つてやうやくドン底の谷を越えた。」 in *ibid.*, Introduction 1.

⁵² Background information on Koizumi is scarce. It seems relatively certain that he served as a judge on the pre-1945 supreme court, though the time of his appointment and the length of his tenure are obscure. Since he was born in 1892, he was round 32 years old when he lived in Germany. Due to his young age at the time, it seems likely that he became a judge afterward.

⁵³ 「ヒットラーの舉は無謀であつた、ルーデンドルフも輕率であつた。」 in *ibid.*, 96.

Ludendorff's "posturing," Hitler's "lengthy tirade," and the prosecutor's disputation. He also pointed out specifically that Hitler received the minimal sentence mandated (five years) but was freed after serving just thirteen months in jail.⁵⁴ Although Koizumi could hardly have known fully in 1924 the significance of the events he described or their future effects on political developments in the 1930s, he observed shrewdly that the "Hitler faction" actually benefited from the failed coup by capturing seats in the Reichstag for the first time, and predicted that upon leaving prison Hitler would further impact politics.⁵⁵

That would come later, of course. Back in 1925, few Japanese knew of Hitler or cared to, as writers' and readers' interests shifted from matters of the state to diversion, beginning with the rest of Koizumi's book. Of the four-hundred-and-fifty-eight pages of text, only the first hundred-and-three dealt with the hyperinflation or the putsch. The remainder wandered across Germany from restaurants to museums, from parks to theaters, and from Berlin to the Rhine. Although Koizumi had not planned to inaugurate a trend, books by Japanese sojourners to Germany published after *Berlin Night Tales* tended to steer away from politics or the economy. This new direction applied not only to *Europe from a Child's Eyes* (*Kodomo no mita Yōroppa* 『子供の見た歐羅巴』), by a girl in the sixth grade about her trip to the

⁵⁴ 「國民裁判所は・兵學校の校舍を持て之に當て嚴重なる國防軍警備の下に開かれる、ルーデンドルフの氣焰ヒットラーの長廣舌や檢事と辯護士の悶着等種々の波瀾があつた。... 判決はヒットラー、ウエーバー、クリーベル、ペーナーは各謀叛罪により禁個五年（謀叛罪の最短期）」 in *ibid.*, 100-1.

⁵⁵ 「ヒットラーの勢は愈々隆盛になつた。其年五月總選舉にはヒットラー團より十四名の議員を議會に送つた（從來議會にはヒットラー派皆無あつた。）外電によると一九二五年一月ヒットラーは釋放せられたとある。在獄十三ヶ月にして出獄することになるがバイエルンの目下の政情としてはあり得べき事と思はれる。」 in *ibid.*, 102. Since the Nazi Party was outlawed in the aftermath of the putsch, the "Hitler faction" mentioned here refers to the National Socialist Freedom Party (Nationalsozialistische Freiheitspartei, NSFP), a placeholder movement while Hitler and other leaders were in prison. Also, Koizumi seemed to have confused the results of the May 1924 and December 1924 Reichstag elections. In the former, the NSFP and an allied party together won 32 seats. In the latter, they won 14.

continent,⁵⁶ but also *Chronicle of Wandering in Europe and America* (*Ōbei man'yuki* 『歐米漫遊記』), by a member of the Diet attending a meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.⁵⁷

The pupil wrote of her pleasant time visiting the Berlin Zoo, and the parliamentarian too described his leisurely tours at the Reichstag and Berlin University. (Curiously, neither mentioned their impression of German food, while both went to a Japanese restaurant during their stay in Berlin.) Then, in 1928, the *Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbun* organized a tour group of one-hundred-twenty Japanese to support the national team at the Amsterdam Olympics and to sightsee along the way. The newspaper then published their travelogues collectively as *Chronicle of Sightseeing in Europe* (*Ōshū kankōki* 『歐洲觀光記』). The tourists—what a sight they must have presented to Europeans—stayed in Germany for a little more than a week and all recalled fond experiences visiting various cities in the country.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, a politician who went to Europe on the diplomatic mission to represent Japan at the Geneva Naval Conference in 1927 took an unofficial detour for a personal visit to Germany and a private audience with the exiled Kaiser in the Netherlands.⁵⁹ Lastly, this era of playfulness and experimentation was capped by *Erotic German Ladies* (*Kōshoku Doitsu onna* 『好色獨

⁵⁶ Kitahara Toshiko 北原俊子, *Kodomo no mita Yōroppa* (Tokyo: Hōbunkan 寶文館, 1926).

⁵⁷ Takatori Junsaku 高鳥順作, *Ōbei man'yuki bankoku giinkaigi sanretsu* 『歐米漫遊記 萬國議員會議參列』 (Tokyo: Takatori Jimusho 高鳥事務所, 1926).

⁵⁸ Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbunsha 大阪・日新聞社, ed., *Ōshū kankōki* (Osaka: Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1928).

⁵⁹ Matsumoto Kunpei 松本君平, *Kaizaru kōtei to kaiken ikin to suru Ōshū wo mite* 『カイザル皇帝との會見生きんとする歐洲を見て』 (Tokyo: Seinen Kyōdan 青年教團, 1928). Matsumoto had studied in America, where he earned a doctorate from Brown University. He worked as a journalist, educator, and was elected to the Diet's Lower House for several terms.

逸女』), a mishmash of tales and factual observations by the storywriter and translator Hata Toyokichi 秦豊吉 composed during his time in Berlin as an employee of Mitsubishi.⁶⁰

What a reversal of moods in a few years—in 1920 an author had pitied German women for having to wear rough clothes, in 1928 another celebrated other German women for not wearing any. How might this shift in taste from the austere to the libertine be explained? One agent of change stemmed from the popularization of casual tourism. Call to mind that the authors in the early 1920s all traveled to Europe either for work or studies, but several of those from the mid-decade visited the continent for pleasure or leisure. None illustrated this phenomenon better than the sixth-grade pupil, who certainly did not go to Germany for business or school, or the tour organized by *Ōsaka Mainichi*, which might well have ranked as one of the earliest instances of Japanese tourist groups abroad.

Moreover, the first postwar, peaceful decade coincided with and facilitated the spread of intercontinental tourism worldwide.⁶¹ Whereas in the early 1920s Japanese travelers to Europe had to journey by sea, the mid-decade brought, or revived rather, the faster and cheaper option of a land route, as the improved Trans-Siberian Railway resumed regular operation in August 1927.⁶² Even before then, in late 1925, the Diet member attending the Inter-Parliamentary Union meeting had managed to return to Japan through Russia, and in 1928 the *Ōsaka Mainichi* group traveled to Europe by rail and returned by sea, while the

⁶⁰ Hata Toyokichi, *Kōshoku Doitsu onna* (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjū Shuppanbu 文藝春秋出版部, 1928). Hata also translated Erich Maria Remarque's *Im Westen nichts Neues* into Japanese (『西部戦線異・なし』), which became a bestseller.

⁶¹ The phenomenon of interwar international tourism was most visible across the Atlantic. Restrictions on immigration implemented by the American government after World War I meant that ship companies that used to profit by cramming poor immigrants into steerage suddenly had more spaces on board. Thus was born the tourist third class. For more, see the fascinating book, Lorraine Coons, and Alexander Varias, *Tourist Third Cabin: Steamship Travel in the Interwar Years* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

⁶² Tetsudōshō un'yukyoku, ed., *Shiberia keiyu Ōshū ryokō annai* 『西伯利經由歐洲旅行案内』 (Tokyo: Tetsudōshō un'yukyoku, 1929), 1.

parliamentarian to Geneva rode trains for both his outbound and inbound trips. Not only did the railway provide voyagers with another choice of transportation, but it also would have colored their impressions of Germany. The Soviet Union in the 1920s hardly struck anyone as a country of abundance or order. Therefore, for Japanese rail passengers to Europe, who first had to traverse Russia, entering Germany, even in its reduced state, would have felt like re-entering modern civilization. Or for those heading homeward from Europe, their experience in a recovering Germany would have served as the standard from which Bolshevik Russia would be judged. For instance, the *Ōsaka Mainichi* editors commented on the dirty clothes of Muscovites and beggars in the streets,⁶³ while the Diet member also mentioned panhandlers overwhelming visitors arriving in Moscow's train stations.⁶⁴

Lastly, the books must have captured a real shift in the mood from gloomy to hopeful among the Germans in the mid-1920s, when the Japanese authors seemed ready to declare Germany beyond “postwar.” Whereas the titles of the earlier books contained phrases such as “after the war” (戦後), “defeated” (戦敗), and “post-revolutionary” (革命後), the ones in the mid-decade no longer mentioned the Great War. In addition, as the republic stabilized and Germany's economic woes faded from the headlines (if not from actuality), Japanese visitors would have noticed the tangible recovery in material abundance and edgy cultural blossoming. For example, having heard stories of Germany's loss of millions of men and reparations payments of hundreds of millions of Marks, the guides of the *Ōsaka Mainichi* tour had expected to see a ruined landscape. Instead they were surprised by bustling cities

⁶³ 「先づ心を打たれるのはモスコワ住民の服装の見窄らしさ、不潔さである。街々人々の多く乞食かとも思はれる、だらしない、檻褻姿である。」 in *Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbunsha*, 18.

⁶⁴ 「旅客が初めてモスコウの東驛でも或ひは西驛でもへ着いた當時に直覺するロシヤ觀は、眼前に群を爲す乞食によつて、必ず暗い影をうつすであらう。」 in *Takatori*, 134.

with numerous shops and automobiles zooming to and fro.⁶⁵ The politician who visited the Kaiser was also struck by the unanticipated vitality he encountered in both the countryside and Berlin.⁶⁶ Little wonder, then, the titles of travelogues from this period contained more pleasant phrases like “wandering” (漫遊) or “sightseeing” (觀光), and their authors, including even those who journeyed to Europe for business like Hata, wrote relatively little about their work-related activities and more on their extracurricular experiences.

The shift in emphasis from the political and economic to the social and cultural also exhibited itself in another genre of publications. Like the travelers moving away from dwelling on the physical repercussions of the war and hyperinflation to reveling in the hustle and bustle of life in Weimar Germany, some scholars also changed their focus from the concrete to the intangible. Or more precisely, they derived the intangible from the concrete, as they interpreted the material recovery of Germany as both an illustration of the spiritual strength of the German national character and justification for their pontification thereon.

In particular, experts on literature spearheaded this drive from physics to metaphysics. As early as 1922, the philologist Yamagishi Mitsunobu 山岸光宣 had completed the two-part *Contemporary German Opera* (*Gendai no Doitsu gikyoku* 『現代の獨逸戯曲』). In it he proclaimed that since a nation’s literature served as the clearest lens into a people’s

⁶⁵ 「歐洲大戰に敗れて幾百萬の壯丁を失ひ年々幾億マークの償金を支拂ひつゝあるドイツは定めし疲弊し盡して居る事であらうと豫想して來た所、豈計らんやドイツの田舎は見るからに豊かさうであり、ドイツの都會は賑かである。街路には無數の立派な自動車が往復し、道はよく修理され、建築物は新に増され、商店は繁昌して居る。打ち見る所外形上はどこにもあの大戦の創痕とも見るべき跡は無い。... さすがは勤勞無比のドイツ人である。よく不屈不撓の精神を以て空前の國家的災厄に耐へ遂に之に打勝つたのである。」 in Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbunsha, 23.

⁶⁶ 「牧場には青草が繁茂してをる。煙突は盛んに烟を出してをる。農村の中に見ゆる煙突も烟を揚げてをる。都會の工場の附近へ來れば、濛々たる黒煙が上つてをる。そふして伯林に來て見ると、その秩序その整頓その繁榮は驚くばかり、活氣横溢して、新興の氣分が到る處に漲つてをるのが見へる。」 in Matsumoto, 34.

character, German literature occupied a key place in answering questions over the rebirth or demise of the German race, which might still appear to hang in the balance.⁶⁷ As Germany stabilized, more works appeared to explain the outcome. In 1924 alone, three titles attempted to extrapolate Germany's national character from its literature. In *On Contemporary German Literature* (*Gendai Doitsu bungakukan* 『現代獨逸文學觀』), the lexicographer Katayama Masao 片山正雄 felt so confident about Germany's inherent strength that he declared that its culture had actually emerged more brilliant from the crucible of war and now indisputably commanded the pole position in the world.⁶⁸ Another critic, Naruse Mukyoku 成瀬無極, expressed virtually the same opinion in *The Latest German Literary Thoughts* (*Saikin Doitsu bungaku shichō* 『最近獨逸文學思潮』). He believed that the German “sentiment of yearning [Sehnsucht], stubborn persistence, deep meditation, and thorough intellect” that permeated every aspect of German culture would ultimately give rise to a new literature from the “redemptive fire” of the present predicament.⁶⁹ The commentator on German letters Aoki

⁶⁷ 「抑國民性といふものは、其國の文學は最も鮮明に反映するものであるから、一國民を知るには、先づ其文學を・究しなければならない。... 獨逸國民が果して復活するか。或は急で無くとも、徐々に滅亡に赴くか。此等の大問題を解決する鎖鑰は、實に現代の獨逸文學の・究である。」 in Yamagishi Mitsunobu, *Gendai no Doitsu gikyoku 1* (Tokyo: Ōmura shoten 大村書店, 1920), Introduction 6. The second volume appeared in 1922.

⁶⁸ 「今や獨逸の文化が大戦を経て益々光輝を放ち、世界に於ける指導的地位を占むるに至つたとは何人も承認せざるを得ない事實であらうと思ふ。」 in Katayama Masao [Katayama Koson 片山孤村, pseud.], *Gendai Doitsu bungakukan* (Tokyo: Bunken Shoin 文獻書院, 1924), Foreword 1. The work had already been published in 1922, under the title *Contemporary German Culture, Literature, and Arts* (*Gendai no Doitsu bunka oyobi bungei* 『現代の獨逸文化及文藝』; Tokyo: Bunken Shoin). That Katayama could already express such optimism in the darker year of 1922 demonstrated his faith in Germany's cultural strength. Koson was Katayama's nom de plume; from 1925 on Katayama resumed using his given name, Masao. He is best known for his German-Japanese dictionary, first published in 1927 and followed by numerous reprints. For more on him, see Chapter Eight.

⁶⁹ 「憧憬の情と執着の意志と、深遠なる瞑想と透徹せる理知と、獨逸國民の特性はその宗教、哲學、文藝、音樂の各方面に現はれて居る。... 今や獨逸國民は未曾有の一大試鍊を経てなほその淨罪火の中に燬かれて悶えつゝある。彼等の誇りとしてゐた「文化」は危機に瀕してゐる。その深い苦惱と更生の努力との中から生れ出た新文藝は果して健全な發達を遂げ得るであらうか。」 in Naruse Mukyoku, *Saikin Doitsu bungaku shichō* (Tokyo: Hyōgensha 表現社, 1924), Introduction 1–2.

Shōkichi 青木昌吉 even penned an entire book, *Germany's Literature and National Thought* (*Doitsu bungaku to sono kokumin shisō* 『獨逸文學と其國民思想』), to highlight certain German national characteristics. From his overview of historical literature, he concluded that the Germans were a warlike, thorough, quarrelsome, vengeful, persevering, and hard-working folk.⁷⁰

Oddly enough, although the signs of Germany's recovery abounded in the mid-1920s, these literary specialists preferred distant memory over accessible evidence in their telling of the story of the German phoenix by placing the rebound in a long-term historical context. Indeed, the accounts by Katayama, Naruse, and Aoki all followed a template: The Thirty Years' War left the German lands devastated but the Kingdom of Prussia eventually arose from the ruins. Then Napoleon humiliated the German peoples, who through sheer willpower and persistence returned to defeat France and to establish the German Empire that could even compete with Great Britain.⁷¹ The authors thus believed that Germany's current trial, albeit painful, represented but yet another chapter in the nation's saga of epic rises and falls. As a matter of fact, they favored ephemeral traditions so heavily that they even ignored or dismissed tangible facts, as both Katayama and Aoki feared that the physical revival of Germany would actually *threaten* their beloved German soul. Aoki warned that too heavy an emphasis on material enrichment at the expense of spiritual refinement would lead Germany

⁷⁰ 「獨逸人の尚武、獨逸人の徹底、獨逸人の内訌、獨逸人の復讐、獨逸人の堅忍、獨逸人の勤勉」 in Aoki Shōkichi, *Doitsu bungaku to sono kokumin shisō* (Tokyo: Shun'yōdō 春陽堂, 1924), Table of contents 1–6.

⁷¹ For example, 「十七世紀前半の三十年戦争の惨禍は獨逸全土を一大廢墟と化せしめたが、此廢墟の中から獨逸帝國復興の運命を賦與されてゐる普魯西王國が生れ、一時奈翁一世の足下に蹂躪せられて、當時にあつては空前と稱せられた一大屈辱を被りながらも、獨逸民衆の特色たる負けじ魂は容易に屈せず、遂に奈翁を破つて會稽の恥を雪いだす許りでなく、之れが爲めに獨逸統一の氣運を促成し、聯邦の基礎漸く成り、終に再び佛國を破つて獨逸帝國を建設し、その富・と文化とを以つて英の世界帝國と覇を争ふに至つた。」 in Katayama, 39. Similar accounts were found in the works by Naruse and Aoki.

astray, much as it had led the country into World War I.⁷² Likewise, Katayama lamented the transformation of Berlin into a sleepless hub for nightlife and popular entertainment with crowded theaters, restaurants, and cafes as proof of moral decay.⁷³ The reversal of attitudes could hardly be missed: whereas in the early postwar years those observers served sugarless coffee counted on the German national character to resuscitate the country, by the mid-1920s others saw the material recovery as a threat to the very same spirit. In short, while most Japanese commentators in postwar Germany witnessed much hardship but maintained their faith in the German spirit, others in Japan in the mid-1920s saw physical recovery but worried about the state of the German mindset.

How might the volte-face be explained? For one thing, those writing immediately after the war and those writing in the mid-Weimar years belonged to different professions and had dissimilar interests. On the one hand, the early writers—journalists, travel writers, and merchants—were more inclined to describe physical conditions. Moreover they were in or near Germany when they wrote. The travelers to Germany in the mid-decade might also be excused for being impressed with the recovery that they not only saw but also heard (in busy

⁷² 「斯の如く獨逸人は、僅々半世紀餘りに、三たび大戦に遭遇して三たび其大捷を得たので、・大なる兵力と豊富なる財力とさへあれば、天下に恐る可きものなしとの確信を・めて、益々偏頗に、益々極端に彼等の特長の一方面なる實業的堪能の發揮にのみ心を用ゐ、彼等の特長の他の方面・ち精神的堪能の發揮を全然等閑に附したので、或る場合には正義人道を無視し大義名分を顧みないやうに成つたのである。要するに、今回獨逸國民が大失敗を招いた原因は、物質上の成功の餘りに目覺ましいのに眩惑して、無謀の大望を起したことに存して居る。」 in Aoki, 280.

⁷³ 「然るに今回の大戦は再び獨逸帝國を變じて一大廢墟となし、三世の蘊蓄を一朝にして蕩盡し、殘る所は營養不良の爲めに瘦せさらばへた窮民と、骨軟化と佝僂と結核との爲に斃れつゝある小兒と、自暴自棄と風俗の退廢と道義と壞敗とのみとなつてしまつた。然るに新聞紙や旅行者等の報告に依ると、獨逸共和國の主府伯林は今や一大歡樂境と變化し、市民の多くは此寒空に暖爐もなくして慄へてゐるのに、夜は瓦斯燈と電燈との煌々たる不夜城を現じ、有らゆる劇場、料理店、珈琲店は満員の盛況を呈してゐるのみならず、從來伯林には見ることの出来なかつた風俗を亂すべき・樂機關が雨後の筈のやうに出来、賭博は大びらに行はれ、學生は教科書さへ買ふことが出来ないのに、風俗壞亂の淫書が檢閲の廢止に乗じて洪水の如く印刷せられ、眼の飛び出るやうな高價にも係はらず、飛ぶが如く賣行き、グルーネワルト（伯林郊外）の競馬の賭金と三鞭酒の消費高とは戦前に倍するほどであると云ふ。」 in Katayama, 39–40.

streets), smelled (billowing chimneys), and tasted (coffee finally with sugar). On the other, the latest authors were literary critics and more drawn to the mental and spiritual to begin with, and they were writing in Japan and thus had to imagine conditions in Germany. More crucially, some of the literary critics equated the focus on physical recovery with materialism or socialism. According to Katayama, the urge to acquire more goods succored the profiteers and nouveau riche, intensified the stratification of German society, and hastened its moral decay.⁷⁴ Meanwhile, Naruse saw the emphasis on objects and wealth reflected in the rise of social democracy in the literature.⁷⁵

At the end of the decade the republic became the subject of yet another category of publications: encyclopedic overviews designed to give readers a broad but necessarily shallow depiction of the whole country. At least three such series that included a volume on Germany were published: *World Geography for Youngsters* (*Shōnen sekai chiri bunko* 『少年世界地理文庫』) and *An Overview of the Current World* (*Sekai genjō taikan* 『世界現・大観』) in 1930, and *A Compendium of World Geography and Custom* (*Sekai chiri fūzoku taikai* 『世界地理風俗大系』) in 1931.⁷⁶ Although only one work mentioned a specifically targeted readership, all targeted general readers, as throughout the books the reading aid furigana ran next to the texts. With minor differences in styles and formats, the three volumes

⁷⁴ 「從來の美德と良習慣を失つたので、兩階級の社會的勢力は殆ど無に歸し、獨逸の社會道德は今やその倚る所を失ひ、成金や奸商が跋扈して、さらぬだに自暴自棄に墜りつゝある獨逸國民の道念を壊敗せしめるのである。」 in Katayama, 41.

⁷⁵ 「今日獨逸の文壇にはさう云ふ社會民主主義と云ふものが溢れて居るのであるが、實社會の上に於ても此社會民主主義と云ふものが勢力を得て來て」 in Naruse, 177.

⁷⁶ Respectively, Nishiki Masao 西龜正夫, *Shōnen sekai chiri bunko* 7 (Tokyo: Kōseikaku shoten 厚生閣書店, 1930); Satō Yoshisuke 佐藤義亮, ed., *Sekai genjō taikan* 2 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha 新潮社, 1930); and, Nakama Teruhisa 仲摩照久, ed., *Sekai chiri fūzoku taikai* 11 (Tokyo: Shinkōsha 新光社, 1931). Satō was the founder of Shinchōsha, a major publisher of literature in Japan.

presented their contents along a general pattern. All featured ample maps, photographs, and illustrations, and all discussed various aspects of Germany such as its geography, demographics, history, culture, economy, politics, military, and so forth.

That the three volumes appeared within a year of one another amounted to no mere coincidence. For such works required a level of expected stability, permanence, and certainty in a subject, which in the case of Germany did not become apparent until at least the mid-decade. To appreciate this point, one only needs to contemplate whether these anthologies could have been published in the chaotic early 1920s. At that time, even the seemingly timeless topic of geography would have been fraught with ambiguity, since postwar Germany's borders remained in flux for several years. If one could not even define of what land Germany controlled, then how could one speak with any confidence about its population or institutions? Moreover, the two edited works (*Overview* and *Compendium*) mobilized several knowledgeable contributors (including several genuine experts); neither the editors nor the authors would have found such compilations sensible had they foreseen major changes in Germany. Lastly, as in any collaborative project involving a group of people, edited volumes usually require more time to compile, which would again show the writers' anticipation of a stable Germany and explain the tardiness, the early 1930s, when the works became available.

As we have seen, the coinciding eras of relative democracy in the two countries spawned a range of publications in Japan on Germany, including but not limited to literal translations, casual travelogues, literary commentaries, and overarching surveys. Two related phenomena in the mid-1920s enabled the proliferation and diversification from the single-minded doom-and-gloom accounts right after the war. First, the breathtaking upheavals and

groundbreaking reforms Germany respectively experienced and implemented would naturally have fascinated those writers with an interest in the outside world. Second, the defeat of the Hitler Putsch and taming of the hyperinflation created some breathing space for the republic to develop and assurance for its Japanese observers to study it in some detail without fear of becoming quickly outdated. As we shall soon see, this period of liberalization also represented a golden age of sorts of interwar Japanese publications on Germany.

In addition, even among the several types of books on different themes, the three trends identified in earlier publications held firm. First, not only did Germany remain a wellspring of know-how for Japan, but also the Japanese experts would freely acknowledge as much. Nothing demonstrated this fact better than the host of works rendered from German into Japanese, for if commerce is an exchange of goods, then translation must be the importation of knowledge, and Japan voraciously imported expertise from Germany. The general compendiums too carried the implicit mission of learning and intellectual enrichment by explaining Germany's achievements in multiple areas of endeavor. As a matter of fact, *World Geography for Youngsters* declared explicitly that “everyone agrees that ‘Germany is great’” and that Japan did and could learn much from Germany.⁷⁷ The philologist Katayama too proclaimed that the Japanese needed urgently to study a people whose destruction was widely proclaimed but who somehow turned its fortune around to overtake the victorious powers.⁷⁸ Even the tourists on the *Ōsaka Mainichi* group kept an eye out for lessons for

⁷⁷ 「『ドイツはえらい』といふことを誰でもが感じます。實際ドイツは感心にえらい國です。...そして今でも日本お多くの人たちは、實際に世界で一番えらい國はドイツだと考へてゐます。...地震學と醫學と、どちらもドイツと日本とが世界で一二を争つてゐます。そしてもとはドイツの方が先生ですが、今では殆ど同等で、お互に教へつ教へられつして益々研究を續けてゐるのです。」 in Nishiki, 3 and 6.

⁷⁸ 「世界大戰直後切りに滅亡を宣傳された獨逸が、その後國運を挽回して、既に戰勝諸國を凌駕せんとしつゝあることは、世人周知の事實である。この國民を理解することは、吾々日本人に取つても、

Japan. Several expressed their admiration for Germany's order and apparent prosperity; at least one mentioned specifically that Japan should learn from the nationwide exertion toward revival that he witnessed in Germany.⁷⁹

Second, Germany's recovery not only gave Japan a reason to study the country, but it also validated and strengthened the authors' faith in the German national character. Most lucidly, a member of the *Ōsaka Mainichi* tour wrote that of all the countries in Europe he liked Germany most because of the spirit the German people showcased in their effort to rebuild their country.⁸⁰ In addition, although the translators did not stray from their duties by editorializing on the German soul, the act of translation itself must have stemmed from a fundamental admiration of the thought processes and sentiments that generated the original works. Meanwhile, the literary scholars, who made careers out of commentating on the ephemeral, penned several books just to distill the German spirit from its body of literature. As a rule these critics all overlooked, quite deliberately, current factors contributing to Germany's revival in the mid-1920s. Rather, they downplayed the very real recovery in material terms and credited instead Teutonic traditions stretching back to the Thirty Years' War and before for the resurgent Germany of the mid-decade. Even if the scholars could be excused for merely plying their trade, then only a serious, genuine belief in the German soul can explain the compendiums' inclusion of it as a legitimate feature of the country. These

緊急を要するものがなければならない。」 in Yamagishi Mitsunobu, *Doitsu bunka gairon* 『獨逸文學概論』 (Tokyo: Kanasashi hōryūdō 金刺芳流堂, 1927), Introduction 1.

⁷⁹ 「百聞一見に如かずで、見るもの聞くもの悉くが或は参考になり、或はよき戒めともなつたと思ひます。先づ露國では人民の悲惨な・態を見て我國の將來も十分警めねばならぬと思ひ、ドイツでは復興の機運に向つて國民努力の・を目撃して我々も學ばねばならぬと感じ」 in *Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbunsha*, 123. Note the mentioning of the suffering in Russia preceding that of the recovery in Germany.

⁸⁰ 「歐洲各國の中で私の最も氣に入つたのはドイツであつた。國民の意氣の盛んなるには眞に敬服させられた。... 私は敗けても敗けないこの魂のある間はドイツは亡びず、再び擡頭する機のあることを確信する。私はこの魂が氣に入つた。ドイツは私の一番好きな國民である。」 in *ibid.*, 125.

supposed compilers of facts and figures did not shirk from something as intangible and unquantifiable as national character. In fact, they even outdid the literary scholars by tracing the German spirit to the prehistoric landscape and climate; according to one, those harsh conditions hammered the Teutonic folk into one impervious to difficulty.⁸¹

Third, those writing on Germany could not quite agree on what an ideal, rehabilitated Germany should look like and what its lessons for Japan meant. Some disagreement is to be expected among a diverse group of people expressing their views on any subject, but the differences in opinion also revealed the writers' visions and hopes for Germany. As already mentioned, travelers to Germany were taken in by the recovery in prosperity, while those pontificating from afar in Japan emphasized the spiritual aspect. Of course, these conflicting imaginations of a physically oriented Germany versus one metaphysically inclined mirrored debates among the literati in the German lands in the nineteenth century over the essence of the nation-to-be. Other disagreements revolved around more philosophical matters. While the literary scholars in Japan fantasized about a historical Germany, the translators, tourists, and encyclopedists mostly looked forward to a modern country. Although the writers were almost uniformly impressed with Germany, they found different aspects impressive. One tourist in the *Ōsaka Mainichi* group wrote longingly of the freedom of expression in Germany,⁸² and

⁸¹ 「併しながら天、二物を與へざるが如く、また一物をも與へないと云ふことは、滅多にあるものではない。ドイツ人の持つ、上に上げたやうな不幸なる環境は、やがて國民性の陶冶に、偉大なる能率を發揮したことは、疑ふべくもない。」 in Satō, 5; and, 「ドイツ人の性格は、他の諸國民と同様に、その住地と種族の影響の下に構成せられてゐる。ドイツ人は古來、北歐の原野に放浪し、冷酷な氣候と霧深い天候の重々しい空氣の中に育つた。... この自然的環境が、ドイツ人の性格を鍛鍊する鐵槌であつたことは、いふまでもない。ドイツ人の鈍感にして冷靜な性質は、この自然から來るものである。」 in Nakama, 97.

⁸² 「現在世界中で言論文章の・對自由無制限はドイツより外にはないと誇つて居るのは所謂根を張り切つた大木はどんな・風にでも枝も鳴らさぬといふ大國民であると思ふと羨ましいです。顧みてわが日本國民は昨今思想問題で上下擧つてうろつき出し赤いといふたら子供の襁褓にも騒ぐといふ狼狽方は誠に歎はしい次第でありますか。」 in *Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbunsha*, 206.

another admired the leaders who led Germany out of its ruins.⁸³ Most visitors remarked on the orderliness and cleanliness of Berlin and the German countryside.⁸⁴ All of them lamented Japan's deficiency in regard to their particular objects of admiration in Germany, be it freedom, leadership, or infrastructure. Yet not everyone liked what he saw on the same trip to Europe, as at least one traveler warned his fellow Japanese against a shallow worshipping of Europe and advocated instead looking inward for inspiration.⁸⁵ In a sense, then, discussing Germany was not just about Germany but often about Japan as well.

Leviathan

Against the expectations of the experts who contributed to the compendiums, events in Germany and the world soon overtook and rendered obsolete some of the contents of the publications.⁸⁶ Almost as soon as the books left the printing presses, the world economic crisis and the consequent breakdown of the German political system made those essays on Germany's growing economy, stable republican government, or the new reparations repayment scheme anachronistic. Just as during the upheavals that greeted the previous

⁸³ 「又戦後にはラーテナウといふ秀でたる人が出て國民を導きつゝある由なれば實にも羨ましき國と思ひました、今後のドイツはすべての方面に驚くべき發達を遂げるならんと感じて参りました」 in *ibid.*, 237.

⁸⁴ For example, 「殊にベルリンの如きは彼の並木が繁茂して道路に紙屑一つも散亂して居ることもなく整然たるものでありました... それを日本の道路と比較すれば、我國の道路が如何に貧弱で如何に惡道であるか、遺憾に堪へない次第であります。」 in *ibid.*, 216. This sort of comment was expressed by several travelers.

⁸⁵ 「第一には彼地の思想問題である、近頃我國に於て危險なる思想が一部の間に流布されて居るが然しその源は實に歐洲にあると思ふ... 我國も昭和の維新を叫ばれて居るのである、それに拘らず淺薄なる歐洲崇拜は實に慨はしきことである、自ら顧みて發奮を要するのである。」 in *ibid.*, 224.

⁸⁶ Some of the contributors held important posts or were leaders in their fields. They included Honda Kumatarō 本多熊太郎, a former ambassador to Germany; Niiseki Ryōzō 新關良三, a scholar of German theater; the aforementioned Hata Toyokichi, who translated *Remarque*; Kuwaki Gen'yoku 桑木嚴翼, an expert on Kant and member of the Japanese-German Cultural Society (日獨文化協會); and Rōyama Masamichi 蠟山政道, a politician and professor of political science.

decade, Germany played host to problems, writ large, that also plagued Japan, such as unemployment, social tension, political impasse, and closure of export markets. Once again, then, Germany became an object of study for the Japanese seeking inspirations to help Japan out of its own difficulties.

As in the past, translators blazed the trail in introducing solutions from Germany to Japan. Whereas in the mid-1920s German legislation and policies gained attention, in the early 1930s works on finance, commerce, and management of the economy became the mainstay. Since Germany suffered from and attempted to tackle severe unemployment, Japan might benefit from studying works on the topic. In fact, at least two editions of Germany's labor insurance law were published, while the translator compiled an additional work comparing Germany's unemployment insurance and benefits to those of other countries.⁸⁷ Another piece of legislation on the protection of workers was also rendered into Japanese.⁸⁸ Other volumes imported from Germany at the time also reflected the interest in the economy. Most prominently, an industry group translated the entire emergency law on managing the economy,⁸⁹ while the trying times might also have made it worthwhile to investigate the

⁸⁷ Respectively, *Doitsu rōdō hokenhō* 『獨逸勞働保險法』, trans. Okada Kashinosuke 岡田甲子之助 (Shinagawa-chō 品川町: Kawaguchi insatsujo shuppanbu 川口印刷所出版部, 1930); and, Okada Kashinosuke, *Doitsu oyobi sonota shokoku shitsugyō hoken oyobi shitsugyō kyūsai* 『獨逸及其他諸國失業保險及失業救濟』 (Shinagawa-chō: Kawaguchi insatsujo shuppanbu, 1930).

⁸⁸ Shakai rōdōbu 社會局勞働部, ed., *Rōdō hogo shiryō 34 Doitsu rōdō hogo hōan narabini riyūsho* 『勞働保護資料 第34輯 獨逸勞働保護法案並ニ理由書』 (Tokyo: Shakaikyoku rōdōbu, 1932).

⁸⁹ *Sangyō keizai shiryō 7 Doitsu no keizai kokka kanri ni kansuru kinkyū hōki 1* 『・業經濟資料 第7輯 獨逸の經濟國家管理に關する緊急法規 上篇』 (Tokyo: Zenkoku sangyō dantai rengōkai jimukyoku 全國・業團體聯合會事務局, 1932); and, *Sangyō keizai shiryō 8 Doitsu no keizai kokka kanri ni kansuru kinkyū hōki 2* 『・業經濟資料 第8輯 獨逸の經濟國家管理に關する緊急法規 下篇』 (Tokyo: Zenkoku sangyō dantai rengōkai jimukyoku, 1932). From the title it is unclear which specific law was translated.

German mortgage system.⁹⁰ As a sign of the times, even the Ministry of Justice translated a piece on cutting the costs of and simplifying legal procedures. Tellingly, the protocols were adopted in Germany back in 1921, but the Japanese did not take notice of them until 1932, when circumstances made them acutely relevant. In fact, the translating team specifically pointed out that Japan could learn from the austerity measures that Germany used a decade ago.⁹¹

Besides institutional translators, individuals also joined the excavation for German lessons applicable to Japan. For if the unrest in Japan after World War I had already convinced several observers to look to Germany for solutions, then the more severe and simultaneous downturns in both countries in the early 1930s made an even more pressing case for looking harder. Consequently, there emerged a cluster of monographs in the early 1930s with the explicit mission of enlightening Japan with German knowledge. These works were exemplified by *The Rising German Spirit* (*Shinkō Doitsu damashii* 『新興ドイツ魂』) of 1930. Although in that year it seemed rather incongruous to discuss anything rising in Germany besides unemployment figures, the book was received so enthusiastically that it ran through five printings in two weeks. Part of its popularity must be attributed to the author, Ikeda Ringi 池田林儀, a prolific journalist and proponent of eugenics, but the idea of contrasting a resurgent Germany to a stagnant Japan must have caught readers' imagination.

⁹⁰ Arthur Nussbaum, *Doitsu teitō seido ron* 『獨逸抵當制度論』 *Lehrbuch des Deutschen Hypothekenwesens, nebst einer Einführung in das allgemeine Grundbuchrecht*, trans. Miyazaki Kazuo 宮崎一雄 (Tokyo: Shimizu Shoten, 1932).

⁹¹ 「ドイツに於て一九二一年三月十一日帝國負擔輕減法に依り擧げ得たる成績に・し裁判所書記同盟は此法律を擴張改正し... 一方に於て司法事務は逐年増加するに拘はらず他方に於て經濟國難に當面して訴訟澁滯を訴へらるる行政整理に依り人員の減少を餘儀なくせられ居る我國司法部の現・を顧み本書を紹介するの意義少からずと思惟し判事 中野峯夫氏に囑し邦譯を得たるを以て茲に筆寫に代へて排印す。」 in *Shihō jimu no keihi setsugen kan'ika oyobi sokushin Doitsu saibansho shoki dōmei no kaikakuan* 『司法事務の經費節減、簡易化及促進 獨逸裁判所書記同盟の改革案』, trans. Shihōshō Chōsaka, *Shihō shiryō* 169 (Tokyo: Shihōshō Chōsaka, 1932), Foreword 1.

Indeed, Ikeda announced that readers should view the ample compliments for Germany in the book as criticisms of Japan.⁹² At first glance, any talk of a strengthening Germany in 1930 would border on the absurd, but as we have already seen in books in the immediate postwar years, difficult conditions on the ground never diminished the Japanese faith in the German spirit, which, in any case, they worshipped fervently in precisely the contexts of hardship and suffering. In short, the German national character could not be invalidated by reality—in bad times one should believe in its potential, and good times proved its strength.

In addition, the book dealt actually not with the present situation but that in the 1920s, when Germany did, in hindsight, regain a modicum of prosperity and stability. Ikeda particularly admired Germany's ability to circle the proverbial wagons by rallying around the fatherland and tapping into the strength of the national character.⁹³ Several other books—four in 1931 alone—adopted the same tactic of commenting on current Japan through the recent German past. On the one hand, readers would find in bookstores *The Tale of the Fall of Germany's Currency* (*Doitsu kahei botsuraku monogarari* 『獨逸貨幣沒落物語』), focusing unabashedly on money. The author, an economist and old “Germany hand,” wrote the book in order to warn his countrymen about the danger of a diminishing currency—a reference, perhaps, to the Japanese government's decision to abandon the gold standard.⁹⁴ On

⁹² 「私は獨逸のことを述べる時に、主として胸中に考へてゐることは日本のことである。本書中獨逸への讃辭は多く日本への不滿であり、獨逸に對する批難はすべて日本への讃辭である。本書を読まれる方は、日本を読むつもりで読んでいたゞきたいと思つてゐる。」 in Ikeda Ringi, *Shinkō Doitsu damashii*, 5th ed. (Tokyo: Banrikaku shobō 萬里閣書房, 1930), Foreword 3.

⁹³ 「大戰に負け聯合國の・き壓迫の下にあるドイツは、全國家的に著しく統一の實か擧つて來て、ビスマルクの企圖した大ドイツ統一の實は今日漸くその緒に就いたかにさへ見へる。これも外側の壓迫以外に内に此の脈絡相通ずる祖國觀念民族精神が高調せられたことも有力なる原因となつてゐる。」 in *ibid.*, 309.

⁹⁴ 「著者は二十有五年の獨逸生活中、彼の怖るべき、關東大震災に基く圓價の下落と、全世界を戰慄せしめた馬克の慘落とに因つて、重ね重ね大きな損害を蒙つたのだる。——「圓太さも圓と馬克で細

the other, the philosopher Kanokogi Kazunobu 鹿子木員信, returning from a three-year stint in Germany (see Chapter Four), in *The Japanese Mind and the German Spirit* (*Yamato kokoro to Doitsu seishin* 『やまところと獨乙精神』) excoriated the Japanese state for pursuing materialistic hedonism couched in terms of seeking peace. He excused Germany's mechanical technology as not a tool for improving physical livelihood but rather as a manifestation of the "indomitable Gothic heroic spirit."⁹⁵ The same year also saw *Before and after the Deposition of the Kaiser* (*Haitei zengo* 『廢帝前後』), by the correspondent Kuroda Reiji 黒田禮二. Writing on contemporary German history, he denounced the dictatorships of both militarism (ミリタリズムの獨裁制) and democracy (デモクラシイの獨裁制), which approximated the tension in Japan between those favoring parliamentarianism like Kita Reikichi and those rebel officers inspired by Kita Ikki.⁹⁶ Lastly,

くなり」。... 此の小著が、若し、貨幣價值の變動によつて生ずす、其の怖る可き結果に就いて、我が國民一般の注意を喚起することを得れば、著者の至幸とするところである。」 in Oikawa Shigenobu 老川茂信, *Doitsu kahei botsuraku monogatari* (Tokyo: Banrikaku, 1931), Introduction 1. For more on Oikawa, see Chapter Six.

⁹⁵ 「近世獨乙の機械技術は、その根本の動機において、決して單に所謂現實生活の末梢的も安易、快適、便利を主眼とするものではない。それは決して安價なる享樂主義の生み子ではない。否な、寧ろ依然として、彼の無限の蒼穹を志す不屈、雄健、崇高なゴチツクの英雄的精神の表現に外ならぬ。... 此の小文を物しつゝある時しも、我が日本國民は、ロンドン海軍條約問題を機・に異常の危機を暴露しつゝある。朝には、廣く國民の間に漂ふ所謂『平和主義』——その實、低級卑劣なる幸福主義乃至は享樂主義の潮流に乗り... 現代日本時めく輩が朝野の力を擧げて賣國の事に狂奔する時、我等は、靜かに他國の精神とその文化を觀照するに必要な魂の靜澄を持ち能はぬ。余は、此の『獨乙精神』と云ふ好題目を捉へて」 in Kanokogi Kazunobu, *Yamato kokoro to Doitsu seishin* (Tokyo: Min'yūsha 民友社, 1931), 140–1, 149–150.

⁹⁶ Kuroda Reiji, *Haitei zengo* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha 中央公論社, 1931). We may recall from Chapter Six that Kuroda had once been partial to the left, but by 1936 had become an avid booster of Nazism and Japanese-German rapprochement. It appears that in 1931, when he wrote the book to criticize both democracy and militarism, he was halfway in his transition from the left to the right. Tellingly, by choosing the phrase *haitei* to describe what happened to Wilhelm II, Kuroda betrayed his sympathy for the Kaiser. *Haitei* refers to the forceful removal of a monarch from the throne (*hai* means “to invalidate” and *tei* “emperor”), as in the cases of Charles I of England or Louis XVI of France. Wilhelm II, by contrast, abdicated, however unwillingly, and did not suffer a violent end. A more accurate description of Wilhelm's experience is *taii* 退位 (*tai* means “to withdraw from” and *i* “position,” that is, “to abdicate”) or *taijin* 退陣 (*jin* refers to “ranks,” as in the military).

in reaction to the rise of xenophobic mania in Japan, the pedagogue Osada Arata 長田新 dedicated his *Tidings from Germany: A Second Journey* (*Doitsu dayori saiyūki* 『獨逸だより 再遊記』) to combating the narrow-minded, inward-looking nationalism taking hold in Japan by comparing it to the detrimental effects of a self-pollinating flower or an intra-family marriage.⁹⁷ Thus, whereas Ikeda the eugenicist praised Germany for searching within itself for salvation, Osada the educator penned a book on Germany to urge Japan to explore beyond itself. While one expert detected monetary lessons in Germany for Japan, another idealized the very same Germany as a paragon of mind over matter. All the while, Kuroda the correspondent seemed torn between government by the many or by the few.

Essentially, these questions over searching outward or inward, the physical against the spiritual, looking forward to the future or harking back to the past, and liberalism versus authoritarianism derived from the fundamental, political struggle in Germany, and to a smaller extent, in Japan as well. Generally speaking writers associated the left with internationalism, a concern with material possessions (especially the distribution thereof), a vision to construct a utopia-to-come, and at least the principle of majority rule. By contrast, the right evoked links to nationalism, a belief in willpower, a tendency to romanticize bygone glories, and the practice of hierarchical leadership. A dichotomy, however, did not mean an even split. As we have seen thus far, the conceptualization of Germany in Japanese publications, with a historical narrative of the country recovering from catastrophes through

⁹⁷ 「私は一國文化の自花受精乃至同族結婚を最も怖れる者の一人である。... 自己を見るとは他人において自己を見ることである。日本を知ると言つても、それは世界において日本を知ること以外の何物でもない。人をして屢々「窓なき單子」を想起させるやうな狹隘な愛國主義者の現はれようとする今日、文化の自花受精と同族結婚とに依て、國民の文化的生命衝動を去勢しようとするやうな小型の國粹論の現はれようとする今日、私はこの小書を新日本の教育者に贈るであらう。」 in Osada Arata, *Doitsu dayori saiyūki* (Tokyo: Meguro shoten 目黒書店, 1931), Introduction 2–3. Osada was seriously wounded by the atomic bomb attack against Hiroshima. Today he is remembered for his advocacy against nuclear weapons.

its national character, lay closer to that of the traditionalists. Most crucially for those Japanese sympathetic to the German right, in the early 1930s the far right in Germany received a powerful spokesman whose words attracted attention even in faraway Japan.

Hitherto Hitler had attracted scant coverage in Japan. As mentioned, apparently only one book, *Berlin Night Tales*, discussed his failed coup and trial in any detail, while works by other Japanese visitors ignored the man and his movement altogether—including remarkably the memoir by an author resident in Germany at the time of the putsch but published only in 1933, when one would have plenty of reasons to discuss Hitler.⁹⁸ This neglect was changed radically in 1931 by the publication of the first biography of Hitler in Japan. The magnitude of this reversal in attitudes should not be understated, as only a handful of Germans had been honored with such a work in the genre during the interwar years. Not Friedrich Ebert, the first German head of state of plebeian origin. Not Gustav Stresemann, the long-time foreign minister who did much to reintegrate Germany. Not Fritz Haber, the Nobel chemist who strove for Japanese-German collaboration. By the stroke of a pen, then, Hitler rose to the ranks of biography-worthy personalities like the Kaiser, Goethe, and Luther. Yet when Izeki Takao 井關孝雄, a professor of economics at Nihon University, wrote *Hitler: The Giant of Rising Germany* (*Hittorā shinkō Doitsu no kyojin* 『ヒットラー 新興獨逸の巨人』) in 1931, the Führer held no official position, headed only the second largest party, and did not even possess German citizenship. What could have propelled Hitler from being worthy of only passing references to becoming the subject of an entire book?

Foremost, Hitler and the Nazis made news in Japan. As we have seen in Chapters Five and Six, Japanese newspapers, lectures, and pamphlets covered extensively the deeds

⁹⁸ Abe Jirō 阿部次郎, *Yūō zakki Doitsu no maki* 『游歐雜記 獨逸の巻』 (Tokyo: Kaizōsha, 1933). Abe was a prominent art scholar and critic.

and words of Hitler. Some among the populace thirsted to know more about Hitler, and the mass media responded to the demand and opportunity for profit. Indeed, signs abounded that the biography was put together in some haste just to enter the market first. For one thing, Izeki did not seem to command much expertise on Germany. For another, he did not write another work on either the country or the person before or since *Hitler*. Moreover, the book contained little original content, most of which was derived from the highly favorable biography of Hitler by the English author Wyndham Lewis.⁹⁹ The main selling feature of the book, however, consisted of the transcript of the interview with the Führer by Momo Minosuke 百々巳之助, also of Nihon University and likely the only Japanese to have met Hitler before the latter's ascension to power. For those Japanese interested in learning more about the man and his movement that appeared with increasing frequency in newspapers and pamphlets, the biography would have presented a rare book-length treatment of the subject, albeit a biased one. If nothing else, the book cover even featured a portrait of Hitler and his signature, which set the biography apart from the many other publications in plain brown covers or cardboard sheaths.

The monograph also heralded the trend of Hitler and Nazism as popular topics for authors and translators. For instance, the year after the biography saw the first Japanese translation of *Mein Kampf*. Although the translator attempted to strike a neutral tone by describing the translation as a fact-finding middle path between blind criticisms and adulations of Nazism, he also could not help but concede that one must respect the Hitler

⁹⁹ 「書中、第一章ヒットラー會見記は、極めて稀に得られる機會を捉へ、同學の友人在伯林の百々巳之助君が親しく彼と會談して、その通信を寄せたものを採・した。また第二章の『伯林』より第七章の『ヒットラー主義經濟學』に至る間は主としてレヴィス氏の著作によつたものと、書中「余とあるは原著」レヴィス氏の言である事を斷つて置く。」 in Izeki Takao, *Hittoraa shinkō Doitsu no kyojin* (Tokyo: Senshinsha 先進社, 1931), Introduction 4. The “Revis” (レヴィス) is likely a mis-transliteration of “Lewis,” an error corrected later in the book. See also Wyndham Lewis, *Hitler* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1931).

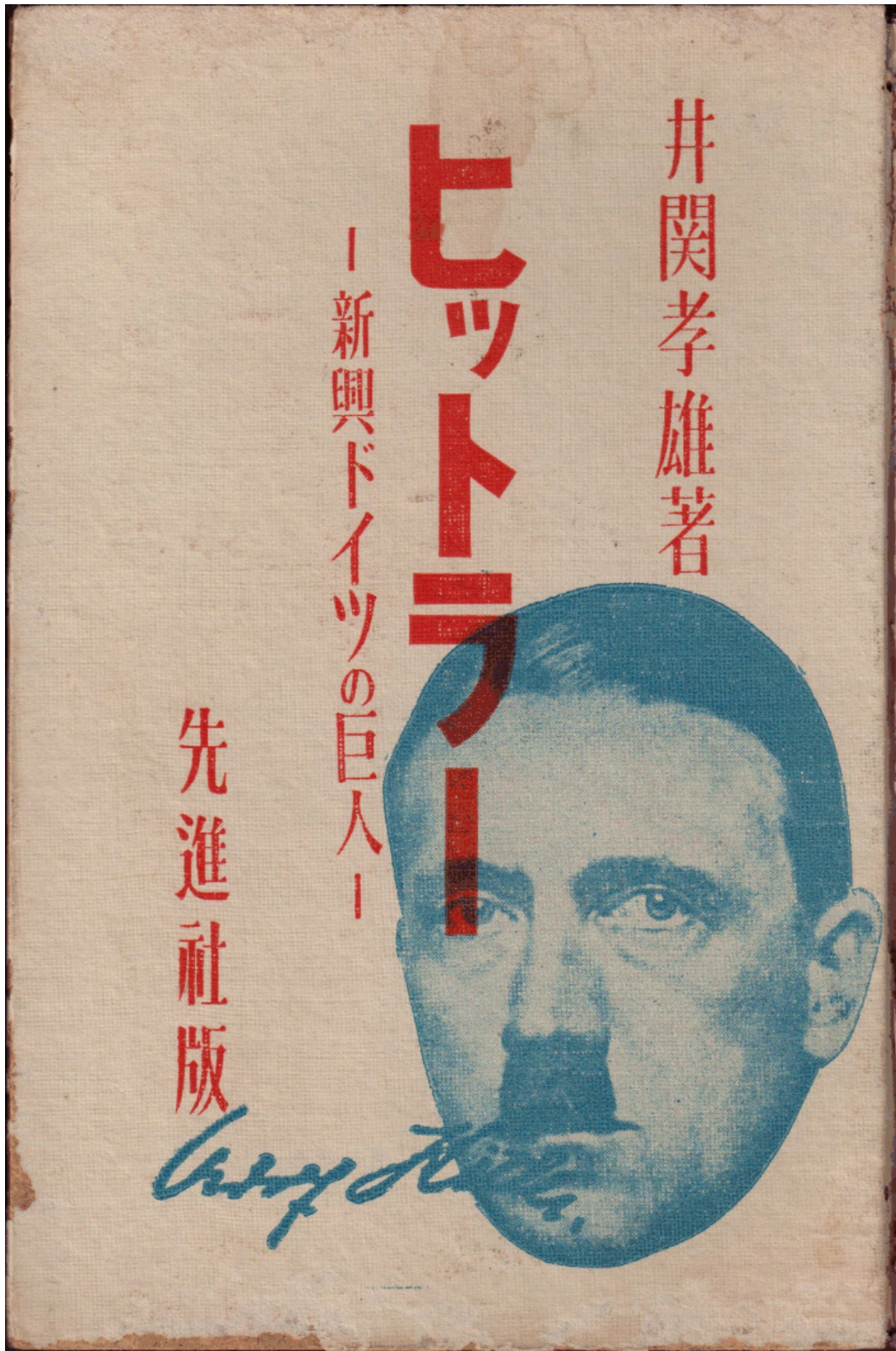


Fig. 7.1 The cover of the first biography of Hitler in Japan, published in September 1931. Note the use of color and graphics, which would make the book quite eye-catching and stand out among others. Bring to mind also the covers of the pamphlets discussed in Chapter Six.

movement for overcoming state repression and media attacks, and persevering for over ten years before achieving its current status.¹⁰⁰ Along a similar vein, the author of *Hitler and the German Fascist Movement* (*Hittorā to Doitsu Fashizumu undō* 『ヒットラーと獨逸ファシズム運動』) adopted a supposedly fair approach by ending the book with a chapter on criticisms of Nazism. Yet he then proceeded to answer the critique point by point. In any case, the last section hardly balanced the rest of the book, in which he praised Hitler as “not merely a politician but the incomparable leader of a million National Socialists.”¹⁰¹ Lastly, eschewing the pretense of dispassionate observation altogether, the nationalistic commentator Murobuse Kōshin 室伏高信 marveled in *Hitler and the Hitler Movement* (*Hittorā to Hittorā undō* 『ヒットラアとヒットラア運動』) at the amateur statesman’s progress in winning over the German populace and proclaimed, “Hitler is the future.”¹⁰² Those words would prove prescient, especially for Murobuse, who in 1940 would lend his name as the translator

¹⁰⁰ 「・代政府からの・えざる弾壓と、凡ゆる言論機關からの攻撃の中に、惡戰苦闘十餘年、能く今日の大をなし得た事は、その讃否を別とするも、我が國に於ける一切の諸政黨が、餘りにダラシなき現・に比すれば、我々は先づ何より彼等に敬意を表せざるを得ない。今や日本に於ても、異常なる國際的重壓及國內的不安の増大と共に、盛んにヒットラーの名前が宣傳せられ、國粹社會黨に關する幾多の紹介がなされて居る。だが其等は大率ね、此のナツチ運動を唯無批判的に排撃せんとし、或は盲目的に迎合せんとする左右小兒病的傾向多くして、その全面的實態乃至哲學的根據に關する究明が殆んどなされて居ない。」 in Adolf Hitler アドルフ・ヒットラー, *Yo no tōsō Doitsu kokumin shakai shugi undō* 『余の闘争 ドイツ國民社會主義運動』, trans. Sakai Takaji 坂井隆治 (Tokyo: Naigaisha 内外社, 1932), Translator’s Introduction 2. Sakai was an educator.

¹⁰¹ 「ヒットラーは、單なる政治家ではなくて、將來のドイツの自由と獨占との爲めに闘争する百萬の國粹社會勞働黨の無比の統率者である。黨員は凡て、全ドイツ民族は一致此のナチオナルゾチアリストの運動に團結すべきを確信して居る。」 in Kinoshita Kōtarō 木下好太郎, *Hittorā to Doitsu Fashizumu undō* (Tokyo: Naigaisha, 1932), 26. Kinoshita was a lawyer.

¹⁰² 「ヒットラアは未來だ。それも遠い先きのことではない、彼は一九三二年だ。... そしてこの一個の上等兵でしかなかった四十三・の素人政治家が何ゆゑに破竹の勢で獨逸の民衆を征服してゆくのであらうか。」 in Murobuse Kōshin, *Hittorā to Hittorā undō* (Tokyo: Heibonsha 平凡社, 1932), Introduction 1-2.

of the best-selling Japanese edition of *Mein Kampf*, with a print run of at least 219,000 copies.¹⁰³

Even back in the early 1930s, one did not need to be a convinced believer in the Führer to sense that National Socialism amounted to a phenomenon to be reckoned with, for better or for worse. By the end of 1932, especially, the Nazi Party had become by far the largest in Germany, and Hitler had stood toe to toe with the venerable Hindenburg in a presidential election. Perhaps more important than what Hitler had accomplished was what he had not. As long as the Nazis remained out of government and implemented no policy, there existed certain creative space for Japanese observers to project their imaginations of Nazism in their publications. For example, though the Nazi movement had never made the restoration of monarchy an issue of any priority, Momo still asked Hitler about the possibility of elevating to the throne the ex-Kaiser's fourth son, who belonged to the party, once the Nazis received power. Hitler unsurprisingly replied that the prince was but one comrade like everyone else, and that he intended firmly to establish a Nazi dictatorship.¹⁰⁴ Adding to the ambiguity resulting from the party's lack of a track record, the Nazi movement not only tried to be all things to all people in its quest for power, but it also masterfully manipulated its own image through propaganda. Consequently, the Japanese books on Hitler could do no better than to repeat the oft-repeated myth of the Führer launching his political career as the seventh

¹⁰³ Adolf Hitler, *Wa ga tōsō* 『我が闘争』, trans. Murobuse Kōshin (Tokyo: Daiichi shobō 第一書房, 1940). It seems highly unlikely that Murobuse could actually translate the work from German into Japanese.

¹⁰⁴ 「X『貴下の傍には常に先帝ウイルヘルムの第四王子が好意寄せてゐるやうですが、一日天下が來た時は、彼を皇帝にするつもりですか、それとも自らその地位に就きますか、そして又、デイクタテウアを行ふのでせうね。』□『成るほど、第四王子は我黨の後援をしてゐる、しかし單なる一黨員たるに過ぎない、況して皇帝は何人か等と云ふ問題は考へてゐない、しかし時機到ればデイクタテウアは斷然行ふ。』」 in Izeki, 33–4, where “X” denoted Momo and “□” Hitler.

member of the party or to rely on Hitler's own romanticized account of his previous incarnation as a drifter retroactively invested with significance for his later epiphany.¹⁰⁵

Although the publications on the Führer certainly showed much curiosity with the minutiae of the life of a celebrity, the attention to the person of Hitler should not be dismissed as simplistic star-struck obsession. Beginning in the 1930s, the books illustrated the return of the primacy of politics in discussions on Germany, and discussions on German politics increasingly revolved around discussions on Nazism and Hitler. It constituted no mere coincidence that the books on Nazism mentioned thus far all used “Hitler” in the title. Even the one book-length criticism of the Nazi ideology in Japan at the time was labeled *Hitlerism* (*Hittorā shugi* 『ヒットラー主義』)—tellingly, it was written by an American author and translated to Japanese from the English.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, Hitler's rhetoric and autobiographical narrative of overcoming failures, enduring hardships, heroic struggles, and unswerving belief in an ultimate triumph of the will neatly personified the historical storyline of Germany at large so prevalent in the books. Little wonder, then, when Hitler burst onto the national political scene, several authors felt comfortable devoting their attention to one person as a proxy for the whole country. Lastly, the diversity of interests and topics in books on Germany in the 1920s narrowed down to differences in political opinions in the early 1930s. Since the talk of the vaunted German spirit and national tradition of recovering from disasters had already predisposed commentators to sympathize with the rightist vision of Germany, such differences in opinions did not amount to much.

¹⁰⁵ In *Mein Kampf* Hitler boasted of being the seventh member of the obscure German Workers' Party (Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, DAP) and single-handedly turning it into the National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei). In fact Hitler was never the seventh member of the DAP. The myth was repeated in order to portray the DAP as even more insignificant, and Hitler's impact more dramatic.

¹⁰⁶ See, Louis Leo Snyder [Nordicus ノーディカス, pseud.], *Hittoraa shugi*, trans. Kizaki Masaru 木崎克 (Tokyo: Kaizōsha, 1932).

Brave New World

When the Führer greeted his followers from the chancellery as the new chancellor on 30 January 1933, Nazism began to crystallize from the fluid state of theory and promises to the solid form of reality. The republic, of course, was never violently abolished; in fact it died a quiet legal death through constitutionally permitted acts like the Reichstag Fire Decree and the Enabling Act.¹⁰⁷ Once the Nazi movement held the levers of authority within the government, it took steps to consolidate its power throughout society through tackling the problem of the day, high unemployment, and through myriad legislative and administrative moves. Much as the innovations of the Weimar Republic attracted attention a decade prior, the frenzy of activities by the Third Reich in reorganizing society triggered a similar response in the mid-1930s.

Once again translators assumed the lead in importing knowledge from Germany. Although Japan suffered less severely during the economic crisis, the erection of barriers to trade hurt its export industries and led to job losses. Since Germany had shed the most jobs proportionally and yet seemed on its way to recovery, it must have made sense for Japan to seek lessons there. Thus, the government of Tokyo Prefecture translated a series of works on the system and legal basis of the Nazi National Labor Service (Reichsarbeitsdienst).¹⁰⁸

Meanwhile, a think tank translated a work on the role of public corporations in economic

¹⁰⁷ The Reichstag Fire Decree was issued in the wake of the arson attack on the Reichstag building. It suspended many civil liberties and allowed the Nazi regime to arrest political enemies in droves. The Enabling Act was passed in March 1933. Through the legislation the parliament more or less made itself irrelevant by empowering the chancellor and cabinet to make laws without the parliament's participation.

¹⁰⁸ Helmut Stellrecht ヘルムート・シュテルレヒト, *Doitsu rōdō hōshi seido* 『獨逸勞働奉仕制度』, trans. Tōkyō chihō shitsugyō bōshi iinkai 東京地方失業防止委員會 and Tōkyōfu gakumubu shakaika 東京府學務部社會課, *Shitsugyō taisaku shiryō* 3 失業對策資料 第3輯 (Tokyo: Tōkyō chihō shitsugyō bōshi iinkai, 1934); and, Erich Gräf エーリッヒ・グレーフ, *Rōdō hōshi seido no hōritu genri* 『勞働奉仕制度の法律原理』, trans. Tōkyōfu gakumubu shakaika, *Shitsugyō taisaku shiryō* 6 (Tokyo: Tōkyōfu gakumubu shakaika, 1934).

activities, and later in the decade, another outfit imported information on the Four-year Plan.¹⁰⁹

Over and beyond the management of the economy, the Nazi regime broke ground in using the law as an instrument for reshaping society. The Japanese Ministry of Justice accordingly translated several pieces of legislation adopted by the Third Reich. They included the new penal law code that criminalized behavior deemed harmful to the “national community” (Volksgemeinschaft), such as betraying one’s race through sexual intercourse with Jews, which of course had very limited application in Japan.¹¹⁰ Also rendered into Japanese by the ministry was the Nazi Party’s legal theory, even though it had not acquired the status of an official document.¹¹¹ Most poignantly, in 1937 the ministry produced a report summarizing the practice of preemptive arrest (“protective custody” without charges, trial, or sentencing) by the police, a favorite tactic of the Nazi regime against its opponents.¹¹²

The de jure and de facto establishment of dictatorship in Germany in the mid-1930s, as well as the lawless violence with which the Nazis visited their victims, finally aroused voices of opposition among Japanese intellectual circles, much as in the newspapers. Kita Reikichi, completing his book in July 1933, had already warned that Germany under Nazism

¹⁰⁹ Tōa keizai chōsakyoku 東亞經濟調査局, ed., *Doitsu ni okeru kōdantai no keizaiteki katsudō* 『獨逸に於ける公團體の經濟的活動』, Tōa shōsatsu 13 東亞小冊 第 13 (Tokyo: Tōa keizai chōsakyoku, 1933); and, *Doitsu shin yonkanen keikaku kenkyū shiryō 1* 『獨逸新四ヶ年計畫・究資料 1』 (Tokyo: Nichiman zaisei keizai kenkyūkai 日滿財政經濟・究會, 1937).

¹¹⁰ *Nachisu no keihō Puroshiyahō shihō daijin no oboegaki* 『ナチスの刑法 プロシヤ邦司法大臣の覺書』, trans. Shihōshō chōsaka, Shihō shiryō 184 (Tokyo: Shihōshō chōsaka, 1934).

¹¹¹ Hans Frank ハンス・フランク, ed., *Nachisu no hōsei oyobi rippō kōyō keihō oyobi keiji soshōhō* 『ナチスの法制及び立法綱要 刑法及び刑事訴訟法』, trans. Shinotsuka Haruyo 篠塚春世, Shihō shiryō 211 (Tokyo: Shihōshō chōsaka, 1936).

¹¹² Sakakibara Yoshio 榊原芳夫, *Doitsu ni okeru yobōteki keisatsu kōryū seido* 『獨逸に於ける豫防的警察拘留制度』, Shihō kenkyū hōkokusho 21 (12) 司法・究報告書 第 21 輯 12 (Tokyo: Shihōshō chōsaka, 1937).

would loom threateningly over Europe like a low pressure weather system.¹¹³ Some of the most eloquent liberal criticisms of the Nazi lawmaking and abuse of power were elaborated by Wagatsuma Sakae 我妻榮 in *The Nazi Laws* (*Nachisu no hōritsu* 『ナチスの法律』).¹¹⁴ A professor of law at the Tokyo Imperial University, he methodically refuted the latest trends in Nazi legal views on race relations, the preference for the “German legal spirit” at the expense of the Roman one, and the reliance on rhetoric evoking Germanic comradeship as a substitution for solutions for social problems between employers and employees. Despite his antagonism to the new system, Wagatsuma should not be mistaken as being hostile to Germany itself. Rather, he had devoted his entire career to studying German laws governing property and personal rights, and was dismayed and disappointed to see the Nazi dismantling of the German state of law (*Rechtsstaat*).

Leftist commentators also reacted to Nazism with hostility. One such writer, the sociologist Shinomiya Kyōji 四宮恭二, was studying in Germany during the “seizure of power” and the early years of the Nazi regime. As such, he was incensed by the politicization of higher learning and knowledge creation. He labeled the expulsion of racially undesirable

¹¹³ 「従つて將來の獨逸は内にマルキシズムと英米流の自由主義を撲滅し、外に向つては、ヴェルサイユ條約の改訂に依る獨逸兩國の國境改訂、獨逸兩國の合體、軍備平等權の獲得等内外に亘つて甚だしき・硬政策を取るであらう。斯くして獨逸は依然として歐洲の低氣壓の中心をなし、「獨逸の危険」は益々・化するであらう。」 in Kita Reikichi, 186–7.

¹¹⁴ 「第一、ナチスの所謂『人種法則的法律理論』なるものは、恐らくは、何等學術的根據なき獨斷であり、その民法理論はこの人種法則的原理から演繹し得ざる矛盾を包含するものであらう。殊に財・法理論とその立法に於てその感を深うする。... 第二に、従つて、彼等の理論が果してドイツ固有の法律精神なるものから導かれたものであるかどうか、又彼等のローマ法理論の排斥なるものが、果して正鵠を失せざるものなりや否やも、・ひて問題とする必要もあるまい。... 第四に、従つて、所有と契約の統制に關する彼等の理論も、右と同じ意味で、問題であると思ふ。私はその指導者原理による協同體なるものが、果して、彼等が獨斷的盲信的に主張するやうにゲルマンの *Genossenschaft* の思想に合致するものなりや否やを問題としようとはしない。然し、今日の社會組織の下に於て、雇主と被傭者との横斷的對立を直ちに抹消して、配慮と忠誠とを紐帶とする縦の協同體を結成せしむることが、果して、何時まで國民の支持を保ち得るであらうか。又その獨裁的統制機構が果してよく各人の所有と自由とに對して適當なる社會性を帶ばしめんとする理想を實現し得るものなのであらうか。」 in Wagatsuma Sakae, *Nachisu no hōritsu* (Tokyo: Nihon hyōronsha 日本評論社, 1934), 155–7.

professors and burning of books disapproved by the movement “the crucifixion of the universities” (十字架上の獨逸大學) and compared Hitler to the bloodthirsty first emperor of China who also purged scholars and torched books.¹¹⁵ The most vociferous attack on Nazi Germany came from Suzuki Tōmin 鈴木東民, a correspondent in Berlin from 1926 to 1934. Suzuki had already in 1931 composed a pamphlet on “German fascism,” and upon returning to Japan published *Looking at the Nazi Country* (*Nachisu no kuni wo miru* 『ナチスの國を見る』) to sum up his experience and insights. Suzuki was outraged by the punishments meted out by the regime to its enemies, especially communists and socialists. He suspected foul play behind the Reichstag Fire that gave the Nazis an excuse to grab more power, so much so that he took the extraordinary step of attending the trial of the accused arsonists in the high court in Leipzig, where he recalled being jeered by the crowd outside as a “Jap.”¹¹⁶ Reflecting on what he had witnessed in and expected of Germany, he wrote, “An age of terror had begun on the night of 30 January, 1933.”¹¹⁷

The most comprehensive critique of Nazi Germany appeared in 1936 in *An Exposé of the Hitler Regime* (*Hittorā seiken no hyōri* 『ヒットラー政權の表裏』), consisting of the transcripts of an interview with three correspondents posted to Germany. The conversation

¹¹⁵ 「私は、遺憾ながらまた、秦の始皇を引合ひに出さねばならぬ。彼は、儒を坑にするだけでは満足しないで、遂に氣に喰はぬ書物を皆火にくべて焼いてしまったといふ。ヒットラーも、幾百の教授連中を首にするだけでは飽き足らないで、到頭そのいはゆる「非ドイツ的」なる書物を焼き棄てるといふ處まで、船を乗上げてしまった。」 in Shinomiya Kyōji, *Nachisu* 『ナチス』 (Kyoto: Seikei shoin 政經書院, 1934), 40–1. Shinomiya was associated with the Ohara Institute for Research on Social Problems.

¹¹⁶ 「「なあんだ！ヤツプか」と一人がほざいた。それにつれてクスクスと笑ふ聲が聞えた。この國ではヒトラアが政權を握つて以來「ユダヤ人、黒人及びその他の有色人種」は劣等なる種族として侮蔑をうけなければならない。この頃のドイツで「ヤツプ」の冷語を浴びせられることは、めづらしいことではないが、決して氣もちのよいものではない。」 in Suzuki Tōmin, *Nachisu no kuni wo miru* (Tokyo: Fukuda shobō 福田書房, 1934), 29.

¹¹⁷ 「一九三三年一月三十日の夜からドイツでは恐怖時代が始まつた。」 in *ibid.*, 163.

covered topics ranging from international relations to gossip about Hitler the person, often in a disapproving tone. The journalists' mastery of details enhanced their accounts with concreteness and immediacy. For example, rather than denouncing Nazi anti-Semitism by using the nuances of individual rights, the correspondents discussed the plight of Jewish Germans familiar to the Japanese like Einstein and Haber. In addition to describing the establishment of dictatorship in legislative and administrative terms, the speakers also discussed the bloody Night of the Long Knives in gory details, including the executions of some of Hitler's closest and earliest adherents. Looking to the futures of Germany and Japan, one of the correspondents felt fortunate that Japanese democracy still had time to ponder its own path and relations to fascism or Nazism, and to stop short of approaching extremism.¹¹⁸

As fate would have it, his optimism could last less than a day. The book left the printing presses in Tokyo on 25 November. Eight time zones away, on the same day, the Anti-Comintern Pact was signed in Berlin by the two countries. While Japan might not have turned fascist or Nazi, it did become an ally of the Hitler regime that these authors so excoriated. The editor of the *Exposé* could only put on a brave face to the latest turn of events by arguing that the pact made it imperative for Japan to discover the real Germany and that the book would balance the overwhelmingly fawning coverage of Nazism.¹¹⁹ He seemed to

¹¹⁸ 「そこへ行くと我が日本は幸福であることがシミジミ感ぜられます。民主々義の政治にした所が、或はファツシヨかぶれ、ナチスカぶれの政治にした所が、少しづゝ後れて行はれるので反省の時間を有つことが出来る。従つて極端迄で行かず済むのであります。」 in Iizawa Shōji 飯澤章治, ed., *Hittora seiken no hyōri* (Tokyo: Teikoku shuppan kyōkai 帝國出版協會, 1936), 410–1. At the interview, Okajima 岡島 posed all the questions, Tabino 旅野 answered most of them, while Unno 海野 and Kugai 陸井 also chimed in from time to time. Tabino was critical but subdued, while Kugai was openly hostile to Nazism. Their first names were not given anywhere, so I have not been able to find out more about them. The overall editor worked for the newspaper *Chūgai Shōgyō Shinbō* 『中外商業新報』, so it is possible that they all belonged there.

¹¹⁹ 「されば獨逸をして今日斯くあらしめたナチスは如何にして發展して來たか、其の指導者たるヒットラーは如何にしてあらゆる政敵を克服して今日の榮冠を獲得するに至つたか、吾人は不幸にして獨逸の現 状から云つてナチス禮讃的な方面のみを傳へ聞くに過ぎなかつたのであるが、吾々のそして

realize that the few voices of disapproval of Nazism stood as lone islands of criticism in a deluge of compliments and excitement for Hitler and his ideology.

Most prominently, in the years between Hitler's appointment and the Anti-Comintern Pact, three more biographies on the Führer appeared in Japan. In 1933, Ikeda Ringi, the author of *The Rising German Spirit*, published *Hitler* (*Hittorā* 『ヒットラー』). The book contained little more than excerpted propaganda speeches or self-aggrandizing tales found in *Mein Kampf*, including of course the myth of Hitler as the seventh party member. Specifically, Ikeda adored Hitler's boldness in punching a path through the uncertain times and argued that Japan needed a similar bugler to lead the public forward.¹²⁰ Then, in 1934, another biographer of Hitler expressed the identical sentiment. That is, now that Japan found itself in the extraordinary emergency of being squeezed on all sides, the nation needed a hero of Hitler's caliber to lead it out of the crisis.¹²¹ Lastly, by 1936 Kuroda Reiji had become a convinced follower of the right (recall his indecision in an earlier book) and wrote *Hitler the*

多くの人々の關心は、何が獨逸をして、ナチスをしてこゝまで來らしめたか、その眞の原因如何といふ點にかゝつてゐると思ふ。殊に最近外電の傳へるところによれば、對蘇日獨提携などゝいふやうな局面の展開さへも豫想されて居る時である。眞の獨逸を正しく認識するといふことが、此の際我が帝國の態度を定める上に於ても必要の事ではないかと思はれる。」 in *ibid.*, editor's foreword 1-2.

¹²⁰ 「日本は、現在のまゝであり得ない。また、あるを許さぬ。宜しく、世界の動向を把握し、轉換期における時代の突撃路を打開し、大衆進軍の喇叭を吹き鳴らさねばならぬ。吾人がヒットラーを望見する所以、たゞそれ、時代の突撃路を打開するに勇敢なりし一闘士の面目を窺いたるに過ぎず、一念、皇國萬々の昌榮に奉仕せんと欲するのみ。」 in Ikeda Ringi, *Hittoraa* (Tokyo: Taiyōsha 太陽社, 1933), Introduction 1-2.

¹²¹ 「非常時とは、英雄を待望する、民衆の鬨の聲だ。... 今や祖國日本が、世界混迷の狂瀾怒濤を押しきり、四圍迫害の暴風雨を冒して、輝かしき王道の彼岸に到達せんとする悲壯なる姿こそは、燦として古今の青史に獨々すべき英雄的な努力である。... 素より、日本に生るべき英雄と、これら歐羅巴の英雄達との間には、超ゆべからざる根本的の差異がある。それは、彼等の所謂非常時が、祖國の窮迫と没落を濟はんとする、消極的目的より出でたるに反して、日本の非常時とは、我等の日本民族が、これより世界の大舞臺に躍り出さんとする、積極的目的にあることである。従つて日本に現はるべき英雄は、ムツソリニよりも光輝に満ち、ヒットラーよりも崇高であらねばならぬ。... これらの諸點が、彼の巨人的生涯を物語るうちに、著者の瞭かにせんとしたる事實である。そして恐らくそれば、非常時の暴風のなかにある日本にとって、特に重要性を要求するのであらう。」 in Sawada Ken 澤田謙, *Hittoraa den* 『ヒットラー傳』 (Tokyo: Dainihon yūbenkai kōdansha 大日本雄辯會講談社, 1934), Introduction 1-6. Sawada also wrote a biography of Mussolini.

Dictatorial King (*Dokusaiō Hittorā* 『獨裁王ヒットラア』). Kuroda claimed he set out to write a “commentating biography” that was supposed to examine the topic dispassionately, but he still could not help but admit that he considered Hitler a hero.¹²²

Beyond an obsession with the person of the Führer, several publications appeared in the mid-1930s to capitalize on the interest in his ideology. In 1933, Hata Toyokichi, who just a few years ago had celebrated erotic German women and translated Remarque’s *Im Westen Nichts Neues* into Japanese, now fell in line with the sober times. In *Berlin-Tokyo* (*Berurin Tōkyō* 『伯林・東京』) he attempted to excuse Nazi repression as normal behavior with which the Japanese could sympathize. For instance, he explained away the burning or banning of volumes denounced by the Nazis as pornographic or unpatriotic by dismissing the bonfire of books as merely a staged act for public consumption with little concrete significance, not unlike, he claimed, the routine anti-Japanese demonstrations in Shanghai.¹²³ He also excused the persecution of Jews as a legitimate response to the usurpation of one’s homeland by foreigners.¹²⁴ In the same year, an army lieutenant colonel took the trouble to write *The Truth of the Nazis* (*Nachisu no shinsō* 『ナチスの真相』) to share with his fellow

¹²² 「尠くとも一種のヒットラアの『評傳』らしいものは書けるだらうといふ自信があつたのだ。それが・ち本書なのである。『評傳』——と言つた所で、一個の人間の熱烈な意志と感情との火花をさう冷たい客觀的なメスで解剖して、... 私も矢張りヒットラアは到底一種の『英雄』だと仰歎してゐる一人なのだから。で、英雄と言へば誰しも雲を呼び風を起す體の所謂風雲兒、・ち一個の龍みたいあものを想像するだらう。」 in Kuroda Reiji, *Dokusaiō Hittoraa* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1936), Introduction 3.

¹²³ 「又この焚書は、社會的事件として、獨逸では決して重大視されなかつた。上海の抗日大學生が、日本商品を往來で焼いたといふ程度に過ぎない。... 國立其他の圖書館が、その藏書を焼かせたといふ事も、僕は聞いてゐない。」 in Hata Toyokichi, *Berurin Tōkyō* 『伯林・東京』 (Tokyo: Okakura shobō 岡倉書房, 1933), 261–2.

¹²⁴ 「然し例へばもし日本に、純日本人でない人種が日本の政權を支配する事が出来たら、同じく排斥の聲は起るであらう。日本は日本人の手で、といふ標語と同じやうに、獨逸は獨逸人の手で、と叫べば、數の少い猶太人の聲は、譯なく消えてしまふ。僕は獨逸の猶太人排斥を相當に同情する。」 in *ibid.*, 278.

Japanese the excitement he experienced of hearing Hitler's speeches in person.¹²⁵ Another author went even further to glorify Hitler for having "a revolutionary's blood run in his veins," so that the Führer could audaciously incinerate books and even have his comrades executed to consolidate power.¹²⁶ The literal sanctification of the Führer appeared in 1936, when a journalist declared the emergence of "holy Hitler" (神聖ヒトラー).¹²⁷

Lastly, the affirmation of the Nazi regime in Japanese works took the form of the encyclopedic *An Overview of Germany, 1936*, an affirmation, bound and in print, of the expectation that Nazi Germany would remain valid for some time. This belief was implicitly reinforced by the inclusion of the year of publication in the title, meant to give readers the impression that they should expect similar books on Germany for years to come. Call to mind that it took the Weimar Republic more than a decade to warrant such a genre of books in Japan, but the Third Reich needed only three years. Not only was the *Overview* received so enthusiastically that it went through five printings in twenty days, but the publishers also held the ambition to compile a sister publication *An Overview of Japan* for German readers.¹²⁸ As a matter of fact, in as early as October 1935, the parent company of *The Japan Times* had

¹²⁵ 「現在、世界の視聽は、獨逸に注がれて居り、三尺の童兒尚ナチスを口にして居る。... 本春二豎に冒され、幸九死に一生を得たから、轉地療養の爲め、獨逸へナチス修學旅行に出かけて、ヒトラーの風姿に接し、其雄叫びの聲を聴き、... 而して獨逸人は、ナチスに重壓を感じて居らないばかりか、之を謳歌して居ることを、特に汎く紹介する。此點に於て、或は本邦於て、大なる認識不足がある様である。」 in Adachi Kenzo 安達堅造, *Nachisu no shinsō* (Tokyo: Arusu アルス, 1933), 1-3.

¹²⁶ 「然し、彼は決して野人を棄てたのでない。焚書を敢てした。最大の同志レーム以下を清黨の名を以つて銃・した。革命家としての「力」の血は依然、彼の血管を流れてゐる。」 in Kitagami Ken 北上健, *Nachisu Doitsu* 『ナチス・獨逸』 (Tokyo: Gakuji shoin 學而書院, 1935), 44. I have not been able to locate more information about the author.

¹²⁷ Ōtsuka Torao 大塚虎雄, *Nachi Doitsu wo yuku* 『ナチ獨逸を往く』 (Tokyo: Ari shoten 亞里書店, 1936). He was a former correspondent in Berlin for the *Ōsaka Mainichi* and *Tōkyō Nichinichi* newspapers.

¹²⁸ 「尚弊社は本「獨逸大觀」の姉妹書として獨文「日本大觀」の刊行を計劃し、近年鬱勃として醸成されつつある獨逸及中歐諸國に於ける日本・究熱に應へ、政治、經濟、軍事、文化等萬般に亘つて躍進日本の紹介を企て・意之が準備を進めつゝあるが、この新しき企劃に對しても江湖の御協贊を賜らば幸甚である。」 in *Doitsu Taikan 1936*, Preface 2.

already published the volume *Converging Japan and Germany* (*Sekkin suru Nihon to Doitsu*

『接近する日本と獨逸』) to celebrate and promote Japanese-German rapprochement.¹²⁹

The editors reasoned that since the two newcomer nations faced similar threats and challenges in the “exceptional times,” Japan and Germany should cooperate more closely in the cultural and economic realms. Indeed, the publication itself not only preached but also put into practice Japanese-German collaboration, as it consisted of essays from comparable numbers of contributors from both countries. In other words, some time before the Anti-Comintern Pact was signed, authors and publishers were already binding Japan and Germany together between book covers by producing works with reciprocal counterparts like *Overview* or working with German partners on *Converging Japan and Germany*.

. As we have seen, the path to the diplomatic alliance had been paved for several years by a chorus of works extolling the Führer and his movement. Why were pro-Nazi books more prevalent in Japan in the 1930s than critical ones? On the surface, Nazi ideology had little to offer Japan. Japan had entered and exited the world economic crisis early on, and its unemployment did not reach disastrous levels. The homogeneous nation lacked a prominent minority to demonize. Nor did the other boogeyman, communism, pose much of a threat in Japan. If anything, the emphasis on Aryan superiority and discrimination against other races should have antagonized nationalistic Japanese. Yet many more writers were drawn by Nazism than repulsed by it, why?

¹²⁹ 「日本と獨逸とは、遠く距たり分れて洋の東西に在り、其の建國の基本、民族史的傳統而して又政體其他にも幾多の顯著なる差異あることは喋々を要しないが、思へば此の兩國民ほど、優れたる素質と実行力とを多分に所持し乍ら、近代的文化の舞臺に只單に後れて顔出しゝたといふ原因のもの爲めに、兄貴株よりの壓迫下に喘ぎ、新參者たるに悲哀を味ふ、苦き體驗を重ねて來た國家は無いのである。我等は、互に「同病相憫む」べき立場に在るのである。... また實に獨逸に對して吾人の抱く上述の如き僚友的心情發現の一端であつて、現今の世界的非常時に直面し、一層緊密なる日獨兩國間の文化竝に經濟的親善を提唱せんとするに外ならない。」 in *Sekkin suru Nihon to Doitsu* (Tokyo: Taimusu Tsūshinsha タイムス通信社, 1935), Editors' Foreword 2–3.

As it turned out, part of the answer did literally lie on the surface. Unusual among books in the interwar years, several publications on Nazi Germany and Hitler featured sharp, eye-catching graphics like that seen on the outside of the first biography of Hitler. For example, the sheath of Kuroda's biography of Hitler featured a photograph of a sitting Führer in full uniform. The *Overviews of Germany* too unabashedly showcased the Nazi swastika on their covers. The clearest demonstration of the fascination with the visual aspects of Nazism could be seen in *The Truth of the Nazis*, which combined both symbols and colors of the movement with portraits of Hitler. Echoing the earlier misreading of the republic's black-red-gold colors, the author noted that the Nazi flag, with a red background punctured by a white circle, exactly mirrored that of the Japanese. He added, without a hint of irony, that since the swastika symbolized the ancient Germanic valor that resembled Japan's Bushido, the Germans were thus definitely not a warlike people.¹³⁰ Never mind that Hitler frequently spoke longingly of wars past and expectantly of wars to come—the writers believed what they wanted to believe.

As a matter of fact, this sort of misinterpretation, willful or otherwise, of Hitler and Nazism occurred frequently. To begin with, many books on the topic contained precious little original research. Consequently, they recycled Hitler's self-aggrandizing myth of being the seventh member of what became the Nazi Party. Some even circulated unfounded rumors of Hitler working as a journalist or dentist. Toward Nazism the authors exhibited a similarly superficial grasp, as many just reprinted the twenty-five-point program or speeches by Nazi bigwigs in lieu of in-depth analysis of the actual deeds of the movement. The simplemindedness of the books and that of the targeted audience might well be gauged by the

¹³⁰ 「結極、ナチスは、其旗が我日の丸の逆で、卐字が、古代武勇を表現する型であること、其精神が、日本の古代武士道に相似たる點、獨逸人の眞意は決して好戦ではない。」 in Adachi, Introduction 1. The swastika in the original text was oriented correctly.



Fig. 7.2 The cover of the cardboard sheath protecting the biography of Hitler by Kuroda Reiji, *Hitler the Dictatorial King*. Such use of an image on a protective case for a hardcover book was rare in interwar Japan.



Figs. 7.3, 7.4 The cover of *An Overview of Germany, 1936* (left) and *An Overview of Germany, 1937–38* (right). Note once again the use of attention-grabbing colors and that symbols of Nazism are prominently featured. By the time these books were published, there was little distinction in these publications between Nazism and Germany—party and country were one, just as the Nazis proclaimed.



Figs. 7.5a, 7.5b, 7.5c, 7.5d The dust jacket (top), and the front and back covers (bottom) of the book *The Truth of the Nazis*. Note that the upper-body portrait of Hitler is the same as that used in Kuroda's biography, indicating limited sources for such images. The publisher, ARS, would become a veritable specialist press on Nazi Germany in the 1940s.

use of furigana—remarkably, all the Hitler biographies employed the reading aid, but none of the critical works did. Given that Nazism sold itself masterfully through visual and verbal propaganda, it appeared that, without the Nazis quite trying, a number of Japanese authors were won over by the ideology and its leader.

Lastly, the allure in Japan of the charisma and enigma of Hitler should not be understated. The “Hitler myth” of an underdog ne’er-do-well inspired by patriotism to overcome obstacles through willpower and ambition, and triumphing in the end would have found cultural and historical resonance in Japan. It should surprise no one that in interwar Japan more biographies were written about Hitler than any other German—the story was a compelling one. The Führer was seen as more than a mere politician like the squabbling ones whom he displaced, but the leader at the head of a national revival. In short, Hitler was not just a person but a personality, which justified the curiosity in trivialities like his mustache, relations with women, and daily routine. One could also not begrudge the Hitler regime of its real foreign and domestic successes in the first few years, such as achieving full employment, repudiating the reparations without suffering any consequences, re-militarizing the Rhineland and implementing general conscription, and concluding a naval treaty with Great Britain. From the perspective of those in Japan in the mid-1930s, then, they had much to look forward to from Hitler in the years to come.

Great Expectations

On the afternoon of Sunday, 16 July 1922, shortly after arriving in Berlin, the art critic Abe Jirō decided to take a stroll in the districts of Grunewald and Hohenzollerndamm, on the western fringe of the metropolis. He was not prepared for what he was to experience.

An uneducated man with a beer belly walked past him and yelled, “Japp’an!” Another man who was walking his dog called out, “Jap, Jap!” Then, three young women who spotted him from afar approached him and together shouted, “Japanese!” Abe reflected in his diary that none of these encounters could have taken place in central Berlin, where he usually moved in sophisticated circles that treated guests from Japan with respect and politeness. Still, he philosophically gave thanks for these run-ins with the lay population as a teaching moment. He cautioned that the exclusive interactions that Japanese had with cosmopolitan Germany skewed their perceptions of the overall German attitude toward Japan, and that such misunderstanding could become quite dangerous.¹³¹

Ultimately, of course, his fellow countrymen would have done well to heed his advice. Yet, although Abe published his account more than a decade after the fact, in 1933, he still seemed to have acted prematurely by several years. In the mid-1930s many Japanese authors were falling head over heels for Hitler and helping foster the intellectual atmosphere that made the idea of the eventual Japanese-German alliance imaginable and sensible. The conclusion of the Anti-Comintern Pact gave heart to Japanese boosters of the Führer and Nazism, and generated even more interest in the subjects. For example, Sawada’s biography of Hitler reached its thirty-seventh printing in 1939, while the aforementioned 1940 translation of *Mein Kampf* became a bestseller. ARS, the publisher of the colorful *The Truth*

¹³¹ 「行きがけに、麥酒樽のやうな腹をした無教育らしい男が、鶏の啼聲のやうな聲を出したあとで、僕と擦れ違ひに大聲で Japp’ an! と云つた。グルーネワルトに着いたとき、一人の若い男が、前にちよこちよこ驅けて行く犬に呼びかけるやうに Jap, Jap! と云つてゐたが、これは本當に犬の名だつたのかも知れない。歸りがけ、ホーエンツォルレルンダムからレーゲンスブルクの街へ曲る曲角に近くなつたとき、三人の娘が横町の方へ行かうとして、遠くから私の方を注意して見てゐたが、近づくに従つて思ひ違ひに氣付いたらしく、Japaner! と云つて三人一緒に朗かな聲を出して笑つて過ぎた——凡て伯林の中央では見られぬ光景である。私は獨逸に於ける旅行の全體を通じて、教養ある人達からは凡て敬意と好情とを以て遇せられたが、單にさういふ人達とのみ接觸してゐる限り、吾々は獨逸人の對日感情を知らず識らず好く思ひ過ぎる危險がないとは云はれない。日曜の郊外に出て無智な人達のかういふ態度を見るのも、一つの反省材料として感謝すべき經驗に屬してゐるであらう。」 in Abe, 71–2.

of the Nazis, even became a specialist press of sorts for books on Nazi Germany, offering more than two dozen titles by 1941. Translators too joined the feeding frenzy with renditions into Japanese of harangues by Hitler and Goebbels, and in the 1940s, works on the martial spirit and the financing of Germany's war effort respectively by Alfred Rosenberg and Hjalmar Schacht. Institutional translators had begun talking about war even earlier, in the late 1930s, by importing several German tracts on managing the war economy and propaganda dating from the First World War. Then, in the Second, their attention shifted to highly technical and specialized areas, such as the production techniques for ball bearings or the German aviation industry—knowledge which Japan needed to stave off inevitable defeat. Yet Japanese intermediaries for German culture, translators and authors alike, had not paid much attention to Hitler's intentions and goals, which were spelled out clearly.

In the interwar years Japanese publications on Germany fell into two stages. In the first, overlapping approximately the more open, democratic 1920s, Japanese writers conducted a broad spectrum of inquiries into Germany, ranging from literary studies to the economy. Throughout the gyrations and vicissitudes of the decade three trends held firm, namely, that Japan had much to learn from Germany, that the German spirit would eventually revive the country, and that the experts could not agree on what recovered Germany should look like. In the second phase, inaugurated by the emergence of Hitler from obscurity, interests in Germany rapidly narrowed to opinions regarding politics, which more or less hinged on reactions to Hitler. Gone were evidence- or experience-based investigations of aspects of Germany in the 1920s, to be replaced by bombastic rhetoric lifted wholesale from Nazi hagiography or fixation with minutiae concerning Hitler. It bears pointing out that those who wrote about Germany in the 1920s usually had already earned expertise on the subject,

while some, not all, who pontificated in the 1930s joined the discussion on Germany just to praise Hitler and Nazism. The three trends from the previous decade continued, though in somewhat distorted forms. Writers still saw Germany as a laboratory for Japan; enthusiasts for Nazism pointed to its achievements and their potential benefits for Japan, opponents labeled the same deeds by different names and attempted to steer Japan away from imitation thereof. The German spirit, if anything, gained more accolades, though in the 1930s it became increasingly amalgamated with the power of the will much trumpeted by the Nazis. Lastly, although few would dispute that Germany was recovering in the mid-1930s, not all Japanese observers would agree that the country was transforming into the wonderland the Nazis promised, or if indeed it was, whether it was a good thing.

In hindsight, one may find it easy to heroicize the few Japanese observers critical of Nazism in the 1930s, such as the likes of Wagatsuma, who denounced Nazi lawmaking, or Suzuki, who braved racial taunting to bear witness of the trial of those accused of the Reichstag Fire. One should however keep in mind that their distaste of the ideology also affected their appreciation of the staying power and stability of the Nazi regime. Both Wagatsuma and Suzuki thought the rampant violence would undermine the state institution. Instead, the state institutionalized the violence, first within Germany, then beyond its borders. Ultimately, the Germany-watchers in Japan in the 1930s, albeit hindered by limited information, had great expectations for the country. In the short term those enamored with Nazism had the upper hand, but in the long run those critical of the ideology were proven correct.

CHAPTER EIGHT

GERMANY AS WORDS: GERMANY IN LANGUAGE TEXTS

Die Sprache ist gleichsam die äußer[liche] Erscheinung des
Geistes der Völker; ihre Sprache ist ihr Geist und ihr Geist ihre
Sprache, man kann [sich] beide [nie] identisch genug denken.
—Wilhelm von Humboldt¹

Aller Anfang ist schwer.
何事も最初は難しい。
Ohne Hast, ohne Rast.
急がず、休まず。
—German idioms²

Liebst du deine Muttersprache,
so lerne fremde Sprachen.
Kennst du fremde Sprache[n] nicht,
so weißt du nichts von der eigenen.
國語を愛するなら、外國語を學べ。
外國語を知らなければ、自國語の何ものも分らない。
—Johann Wolfgang von Goethe³

Every evening in 1938, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., dedicated individuals in Tokyo could go to Hongō Ward in the city to attend the Seminar Germania, a German course for the Japanese public taught by native German instructors. Although a poster advertising the class featured

¹ “The language is, so to speak, the external appearance of the spirit of the nations. Their language is their spirit and their spirit their language; one can never think of them as identical enough,” quoted in Yamada Kōzaburō 山田幸三郎, *Doitsugo hattatsu shi* 『獨逸語發達史』 *Geschichte der deutschen Sprache* (Tokyo: Daigakushorin 大學書林, 1935), 1.

² “The first step is the hardest. Without haste, without rest,” quoted in Tanaka Mitsuharu 田中允晴, *Yoku waku shonensei no Doitsu bupō* 『よくわかる初年生の獨逸文法』 *Elementare Deutsche Grammatik* (Tokyo: Taiyōdō Shoten 太陽堂書店, 1939), Introduction 3–4.

³ “If you love your mother tongue, then learn foreign languages. If you know no foreign languages, then you know nothing of your own,” quoted in Iwamoto Tsunemaru 岩本經丸, *Doitsu bupō yōketsu sankō jishū* 『獨逸文法要訣 參考自修』 *Grundriß der Deutschen Grammatik für Japaner* (Tokyo: Daigakushorin, 1930), 1–2.

an eye-catching eagle with the Nazi swastika and the catchy slogan “Learn German from the Germans!!!”, it still seemed rather unlikely that someone would sign up for and commit to attending the nightly, three-hour course out of whim and curiosity alone.⁴ If so, what then drove ordinary Japanese to study this foreign tongue from so far away?

Indeed, slowly yet surely, those Japanese scaling the step pyramid of knowledge acquisition would bump up against an inflexible ceiling. For although secondary works in Japanese, in addition to translated volumes (mostly of legislation or literature), numbered in



Fig. 8.1 A poster advertising Seminar Germania, with information of the meeting time and place for the course. It urges readers, “Learn German from the Germans!!!” (Copyright Bundesarchiv-Bildarchiv, Koblenz)

⁴ Bundesarchiv-Bildarchiv, Plak 003-008-022, 1938. The artist is one F. Greil, and the Overseas Organization of the Nazi Party (Auslandsorganisation der NSDAP) is given as the editor.

the hundreds, they made up but a minuscule portion of the sum corpus of works on Germany, almost all in the subject matter's native language and therefore inaccessible to lay readers. In other words, to common Japanese the German tongue represented at once the lock and key to a treasure trove of information. In order for non-experts to discover firsthand this wealth and gain self-sufficiency in their quest for knowledge, they would first have to rely on and learn from one last group of cultural intermediaries—Japanese linguists and instructors of the German language.

Accordingly, this chapter examines the state of interwar Japanese-German relations through the lens of foreign-language acquisition by investigating aspects of German learning in Japan and depictions of Germany in language books. Quite unlike the more transient channels of information disbursement discussed thus far, language learning demands from its participants much more than the minutes, hours, or days that newspapers, lectures, or books respectively would need. Especially for adult learners, achieving proficiency, let alone fluency, in a foreign tongue means undertaking a continuous, perhaps even never-ending, task that requires commitments in time, effort, and money. What is more, the repetitive, accumulative nature of language studies guaranteed for its participants a certain level of exposure to and absorption of the target culture by introducing new concepts as vocabulary and ways of expression as grammar. Whether one agrees with Humboldt's assertion that language embodies a nation's spirit, one can hardly deny that language is integral to a people's ethnic identity, and that studying a foreign tongue translates into familiarity with components of its culture such as history, literature, custom and belief.⁵ Indeed, language

⁵ Indeed not all linguists concur. Humboldt's articulation of the idea that language not only marked different peoples but also made peoples different by endowing them a distinct way of thought or *Weltanschauung* gave rise later to the principle of linguistic relativity; see Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluß auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts* (Berlin:

learning makes easy, or at least possible, some of the most intense intercultural experiences such as tourism, academic exchanges, commerce, religious conversion, marriage, immigration, and child adoption.

Yet in the present context of interwar Japanese-German interactions, even the more cosmopolitan, elite Japanese interpreters of Germany took part in but a few of these activities. Certainly many traveled to Germany, Europe, or perhaps around the world, as discussed in the preceding chapters. A number studied abroad (a handful even taught in German universities), while others did business with or for German companies, and several converted to Christianity.⁶ Some, women and men alike, married Germans, and a very few among them emigrated abroad with their foreign spouses.⁷ All the while adoption of unrelated children across borders remained a future innovation.

Druckerei der Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1836). The concept, in the form of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (after Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf), reigned prominent in the twentieth century until the 1960s, when it was challenged and displaced by the universalist theory of language championed by cognitive scientists and Noam Chomsky. Since the 1980s modified interpretations of linguistic relativity have made a comeback of sorts and nowadays most linguists acknowledge the role, if not extent, of language in influencing thought. See John J. Gumperz and Stephen C. Levinson, eds., *Rethinking Linguistic Relativity*, Studies in the Social and Cultural Foundations of Language, no. 17 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), and Martin Pütz and Marjolijn H. Verspoor, eds., *Explorations in Linguistic Relativity*, Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science, Series IV, Current Issues in Linguistic Theory (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 2000).

⁶ As mentioned in Chapters Three and Five, most Jesuit missionaries in prewar Japan came from Germany. Since the learned priests had most likely mastered the native tongue, Japanese converts to Catholicism would not need to learn German, though interest in the religion would suffice to bring lay Japanese into direct contact with Germans. Of course, the Jesuits did not hold a monopoly in Christian proselytism in Japan, for they had to compete with other denominations, including Protestants also from Germany and especially those from the United States. In any case, Christianity is not tied to a specific language the way Islam is to Arabic, but traditional Catholicism's link to Latin comes close.

⁷ One example of a Japanese woman marrying a German man was that of Haruko Kunze ハル子・クンツエ, who in 1934 authored a cookbook to introduce German cuisine to Japanese readers, including a recipe for deviled eggs (*Teufelseier* 悪魔の玉子). See Haruko Kunze, *Nihonjin muki no Doitsu katei ryōri* 『日本人向きのドイツ家庭料理』 *Deutsche Küche für Japaner* (Nagoya: Ichiryūsha 一粒社, 1934). The book sold well enough to warrant a revised edition in 1937. An instance of a Japanese man marrying a German woman was that of the philosopher Kanokogi Kazunobu 鹿子木員信 to Cornelia Zielinski, of Polish-German extraction. Their son, Kanokogi Takehiko 鹿子木健日子, played for the Japanese basketball team in the Berlin Olympics in 1936. Kazunobu's embrace of xenophobic nationalism might have contributed to the couple's eventual

If the cultural intermediaries themselves did not have occasion to see or hear German frequently in everyday life, why then did many common Japanese bother to exert themselves to acquire the language, especially when the likelihood of their meeting any Germans remained rather remote? Who were these students and who were their teachers? What did Germany as letters and words mean to them, and how did they go about learning the tongue? What reward did they hope to receive once they broke through the language ceiling to reach the pinnacle of the pyramid of knowledge acquisition? What significance did German learning in interwar Japan have in Japanese-German relations? This chapter will seek to answer these questions by presenting the case that, although the German language labored in Japan under a notoriety of being difficult and unpleasant, many Japanese still chose to tackle the language in hopes of reaping tangible returns for their significant investments in time, money, and effort. Correspondingly, the language experts also aimed to monetize their own decades of toil by churning out reams of books on German to satisfy this demand, each claiming to have discovered the key to overcome the problems associated with learning German. Moreover, these authors not only controlled the quality and quantity of German in Japan, but their preferences and biases also molded the image and imagination of Germany among the Japanese. In fact, as soon as Hitler rose to power, several of the linguists began echoing and propagating Nazism in their works, thereby paving the way for closer bilateral ties. In order to explore fully the roles German and German studies played in interwar Japan, we shall begin by retracing the path Japanese learners would take to acquire the language, starting with an examination of German from a Japanese perspective.

divorce. Cornelia kept her adopted surname and sometimes used a Japanese first name, Neriko 練子 (from her nickname Neli). She remained in Japan after the divorce and taught German in Tokyo. In 1939 she co-wrote a book on German idioms, see Kanokogi Koruneria 鹿子木コルネリア and Koide Naosaburō 小出直三郎, *Doitsugo kan'yōku 2000* 『獨逸語慣用句二〇〇〇』 (Tokyo: Taimusu Shuppansha タイムス出版社, 1939). For more on Kanokogi Kazunobu, see Chapter Four.

German the Different

One needs no linguistic training to realize that German and Japanese are different.⁸ Nevertheless, they share a few fundamental features.⁹ Both employ a finite set of symbols that, albeit devoid of meaning, can express the language in its entirety: the Latin alphabet for German and the *kana* syllabaries for Japanese. The alphabet and *kana* can each convey pronunciation quite accurately, though German has some loanword exceptions and Japanese rarely appears solely in *kana*. Phonetically the basic vowels of /a, e, i, o, u/ are all present in both tongues, and they share some consonant sounds. In a typical sentence the verb placement is fixed. Attributive adjectives precede the nouns they modify, and grammatical markers clearly distinguish noun cases, so that syntax and semantics in German or Japanese depend less on word order than in English or Chinese. Finally, both Germany and Japan borrowed extensively from the vocabularies and concepts of their culturally influential neighbors, France and China, respectively.

These few commonalities aside, the differences between German and Japanese are legion. The Germanic languages belong to the Indo-European language family, but Japanese

⁸ The German and Japanese in discussion and comparison in this section refer to the standard, official and modern versions of the language taught to school children domestically and other students internationally. Comparing the various German and Japanese dialects would amount to a monumental task with results of dubious value. Prewar German and Japanese differ somewhat from their descendants nowadays, but the differences, mostly in spelling in German and simplification of some Chinese characters in Japanese, do not significantly alter the phonetics and grammar of the languages. To the extent of my knowledge there is no substantial work systematically comparing German and Japanese, and this section is not intended to perform that role. Comparing two unrelated languages solely for comparison's sake can only yield a predictable and unenlightening result—namely, that between both there are a few similarities and many dissimilarities.

⁹ For a convenient overview of many languages and language groups, see Bernard Comrie, ed., *The World's Major Languages*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2009). For more works in English on Japanese linguistics, see Masayoshi Shibatani, *The Languages of Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Natsuko Tsujimura, *An Introduction to Japanese Linguistics* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1996); Samuel E. Martin, *A Reference Grammar of Japanese* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004); and Roy Andrew Miller, *The Japanese Language* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967). On German linguistics, see Jean Boase-Beier and Ken Lodge, *The German Language: A Linguistic Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2003); Ekkehard König and Johan van der Auwera, eds., *The Germanic Languages* (New York: Routledge, 1994); and C. J. Wells, *German: A Linguistic History to 1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

is considered a language isolate whose relatedness to other languages remains in dispute.¹⁰

The letters of the German alphabet look nothing like the graphemes of the Japanese kana, and Japanese also uses thousands of Chinese ideographs known as *kanji* that each has to be learned individually. German syllable structure allows more complex consonant clusters than Japanese. Although the two languages' basic vowels and consonants overlap somewhat, German also has the umlauted vowels ä /ɛ/, ö /ø/, and ü /y/, and consonants and combinations thereof that are foreign to Japanese mouths and ears (e.g., the proverbial problem of confusing l /l/ and r /R/, the soft ch /ç/ and hard ch /x/, and strings of consonants such as pfr /pfR/, tsch /tʃ/, zw /tsv/). German is a language with stressed syllables but Japanese has pitch accent. Even Japanese well-versed in *rōmaji*, the Latinized kana in English phonetics, might at first find the German alphabet confounding, for in German the Japanese spellings of *ja*, *ju*, and *jo* become *dscha*, *dschu*, and *dscho*, while *ya*, *yu*, and *yo* become *ja*, *ju*, and *jo*.

In terms of lexicon, syntax, and morphology German and Japanese also diverge widely. Beyond a small number of loanwords of common origins, the two vocabularies are mutually exclusive; their words share no etymological roots. In German a noun may be preceded by a definite or indefinite article. All German nouns fall under the masculine, feminine, or neutral category, and no general guideline governs the pluralization of every noun. In addition, German has four cases: nominative, genitive, dative, and accusative. In a grammatical noun phrase the article, pronoun, and adjective must be declined to agree in gender, number, and case. In Japanese there is no article, no inherent noun gender, no plural form, and thus no declension. Postpositions (*ga*, *no*, *ni*, and *wo*) rather than inflection mark

¹⁰ Several linguists have attempted to connect Japanese to other languages, including Korean, Mongolian and by extension the Ural-Altaic family, the Austronesian family, the Tibeto-Burman subdivision and the Dravidian family through Tamil. The only consensus among the proponents of these theories is the link between Japanese and the Ryukyuan dialects.

the cases so that a noun remains unchanged in all situations. Also, to form the extremely long sentences for which it gains notoriety, German makes frequent use of relative pronouns, which do not exist in Japanese.

The rules for verbs in German also differ from those in Japanese. German verbs show morphological marking for person (first, second, or third), number (singular or plural), tense (present, imperfect, past, past perfect, future I, or future II), mood (indicative, subjunctive, or imperative) and voice (active or passive). Japanese verbs inflect for two tenses, mood and voice but not person and number, which can be conveyed by context and adverbial phrase. A subgroup of Japanese verbs, the honorific (*keigo* 敬語), does denote the person through its inherent meanings. The respectful verbs (*sonkeigo* 尊敬語) never apply to the first person, whereas the humble verbs (*kensongo* 謙遜語 or *kenjōgo* 謙讓語) and polite verbs (*teineigo* 丁寧語) are often used by the first person. In Japanese grammar there are mechanisms to distinguish female and male speakers as well.

German verbs are also divided into the regular or weak inflection class, which follows a consistent formula of conjugation, and the irregular or strong inflection class, which does not. Moreover, the verbs *sein* (to be), *haben* (to have), and *werden* (to become) are even more unusual than the rest. Most Japanese verbs comply with predictable patterns to transform into different forms for various grammatical functions. The most commonly known exceptions are *suru* (to do) and *kuru* (to come), but their irregularity pales next to many frequently used German strong verbs. In German the verb always occupies the second position in a main clause and the last in a subordinate clause, but in a yes/no question or command phrase the verb leads the sentence. By contrast, the verb caps all Japanese sentences by taking the final place.

Yet a language amounts to far more than the total sum of its writing system, phonetics, dialects, lexicon, syntax, and morphology. Rather, among German, Japanese, and other languages in current use, each stands at the end of an evolutionary process that makes the tongue unique and continuously changing. Anyone with experience in studying a foreign language knows intimately that memorizing vocabulary and grammatical rules alone does not suffice to produce competence in listening and reading comprehension, much less speaking and composition. Other elements such as style, register, social tradition, historical development, popular culture, and contemporary politics also influence the appropriate use of any language, as well as the way foreign-language students should translate their book-learning into a practical skill. These intangible features not only separate command of inanimate grammar from a mastery of living language but also render all but impossible a truly profound comparison between German and Japanese due to the drastically divergent environments in which they functioned and keep on functioning.

German the Difficult

In the context of German learning in interwar Japan, the differences between the two languages meant that German would strike even Japanese with some education as quite alien.¹¹ As it is common knowledge that speakers of a tongue related to the target language (e.g., Spanish and Italian, or Hebrew and Arabic) enjoy certain advantages in their studies, it stands to reason that by contrast Japanese students would find the very different German rather hard. Since Japanese demonstrates no significant relation to any other language, one

¹¹ As Japanese is a language isolate, one can argue that all other languages, besides the Ryukyuan dialects, would come across as strange (Chinese might be considered an exception due to the extensive use of kanji in Japanese). Yet in the interwar period German stood out as the only major Western language not to have an official presence in Asia. Those Japanese who studied German did so not because of familiarity with the language from casual exposure or any realistic expectation to use their knowledge in practical situations.

may perhaps argue that all foreign tongues would appear challenging to the Japanese, but German, in comparison to other languages, presented particular problems.

One such feature complicating German for its students was blackletter or broken typeface (gebrochene Schrift), also generally known by the German classification *Fraktur*.¹² Since the fifteenth century Germany had used blackletter alongside Latin letters. By the 1800s Fraktur had in the eyes of many native German speakers assumed the status of a national script for the German people in opposition to the Roman type favored by the hated France and the rest of Europe.¹³ Well into the twentieth century German, unique among major European languages, retained the use of blackletter, not necessarily in opposition to but instead frequently in conjunction with Latin type. For example, some of the German newspapers surveyed in Chapter One routinely mixed typefaces in their headlines and paragraphs.¹⁴ The rise of nativist and xenophobic Nazism to power in 1933 seemingly promised to inaugurate a predominant age for Fraktur. Yet, as in so many other aspects of the ideology, confusion and contradiction marked its attitude and policy regarding the use of blackletter. Although the party and regime indeed blanketed the country with propaganda posters, leaflets, banners, and placards with slogans in Fraktur, Hitler himself spoke out

¹² Blackletter type was developed from calligraphy in early modern Europe for use in printing. It is sometimes called “broken” because curves and arches forming individual letters are broken into angular forms. Fraktur can refer to blackletter in general or to a specific category or font, for example, Plakat-Fraktur.

¹³ Otto von Bismarck reportedly refused to read German books printed in Latin script. For more on the link between Fraktur and German identity, see the very fascinating book, Peter Bain and Paul Shaw, eds., *Blackletter: Type and National Identity* (New York: The Cooper Union and Princeton Architectural Press, 1998). The dispute over German and Latin, sometimes called the Antiqua-Fraktur Controversy, boiled over in 1911 in a Reichstag debate, which anticlimactically left the issue unresolved, and both typefaces remained in circulation. I would like to give special thanks to Mr. Jason Mannix, German Chancellor Fellow 2009–10, for opening my eyes to the highly interesting subject of fonts and imagined qualities people assign to them.

¹⁴ Despite the nationalistic connotations carried by blackletter, leftist newspapers used the script extensively, often with particularly elaborate renditions of the masthead. Some may find it surprising that the Nazi *Völkischer Beobachter* used Latin letters in its masthead, while the communist *Rote Fahne* appeared in blackletter. Thus, the use of blackletter did not correspond neatly to political persuasion.

surprisingly in favor of Latin letters against the so-called “Gothic” typefaces as a relic of the olden days unsuitable for the New Germany he envisioned.¹⁵

The parallel use of two scripts in the interwar years made German more difficult for Japanese students. Those Japanese ready to start learning German certainly already knew the basic Latin alphabet in Roman form, most probably from experience with English.¹⁶ Many language books thus took advantage of readers’ familiarity with the English alphabet by mentioning that German also has the same basic twenty-six letters.¹⁷ German, however, also uses the umlauted vowels ä, ö and ü, and the double-s, ß. In blackletter the frequently occurring consonant combinations of ch, ck, ss, tz, and st in lower case appeared differently from how they would as individual letters. Moreover, in Fraktur the upper case of the letter pairs of S and G, U and A, B and V, K and R, and C and E, and the lower case of r and x, t and k, n and y, and s and f are very similar and easily confused by those unfamiliar with the

¹⁵ In his speech to the Nazi Party Congress in 1934 Hitler supported the use of the Latin script, because he expected German to become the language of Europe and should no longer appear in the antiquated, provincial “Gothic” script: „So wie wir aber in unserem übrigen Leben dem deutschen Geist die freie Bahn zu seiner Entwicklung gaben, können wir auch auf dem Gebiete der Kunst nicht die Neuzeit zugunsten des Mittelalters vergewaltigen. Eure vermeintliche gotische Verinnerlichung passt schlecht in das Zeitalter von Stahl und Eisen, Glas und Beton, von Frauenschönheit und Männerkraft, von hochgehobenem Haupt und trotzigem Sinn“ in “Große kulturpolitische Rede des Führers” (Great cultural political speech of the Führer), *Völkischer Beobachter*, 7 September 1934. Ironically the article was printed in blackletter. Some sources also report that Hitler said, „Unsere Sprache wird in hundert Jahren die europäische Sprache sein. Die Länder des Ostens, des Nordens wie des Westens werden, um sich mit uns verständigen zu können, unsere Sprache lernen. Die Voraussetzung dafür: An die Stelle der gotisch genannten Schrift tritt die Schrift, welche wir bisher die lateinische nannten.“ The struggle between blackletter and Roman types was finally settled in January 1941, when Hitler through Martin Bormann issued a decree condemning Fraktur as “Jewish letters” and banning its official use, and dictating that henceforth only Latin letters be taught in schools. The original document can be found in Bundesarchiv, NS6/334, Partei-Kanzlei der NSDAP, 3 January 1941. It is also reproduced in Bain and Shaw, 48. See also Stanley Morison, *Politics and Script: Aspects of Authority and Freedom in the Development of Graeco-Latin Script from the Sixth Century B.C. to the Twentieth Century A.D.*, ed. Nicolas Barker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 323.

¹⁶ For example, 「又本邦に於ける獨逸語學習者は大部分英語を先に學べる者なり。」 in Tsuzumi Tsuneyoshi 鼓常良, *Shōkai Doitsu bunten fu reigai bunpō* 『詳解獨逸文典 附・例外文法』 (Tokyo: Ōkura Shoten 大倉書店, 1921), Introduction 1.

¹⁷ For example, 「獨逸語の字母の數は英語と同じく二十六文字である。」 in Okada Shun’ichi 岡田俊一, *Okada Doitsugo kōza* 『岡田獨逸語講座』 *Okada Neuer Kursus der Deutsche Sprache* (Tokyo: Heigensha 平原社, 1937), 5.

typeface. As a result, many language books had to devote some words and page space to distinguish the differences and to admonish students to pay special attention to these groups of symbols.¹⁸ The fact that German capitalizes its nouns only exacerbated the problem of numerous nearly-indistinguishable letters, for one needs to identify the first letter of a word in order to look up its meaning in a dictionary, which beginning learners need to do particularly often.¹⁹

In addition to complications resulting from the dissimilarities between the printed blackletter and Roman letters, Japanese students also had to contend with various forms of handwriting in German. Certainly all would have to know and practice the traditional cursive (Kurrentschrift). In the 1920s, another style, the Sütterlin script, rose in popularity and eventually came to compete with the Kurrent in the 1930s.²⁰ The Sütterlin, though originally designed for relative simplicity, would actually strike newcomers to German familiar only with the regular cursive as quite strange and illegible. The combined effect of the differences between Fraktur and Latin, and Kurrent and Sütterlin meant that in practice Japanese students would have to expend time and effort to learn to read and write the alphabet anew. As a

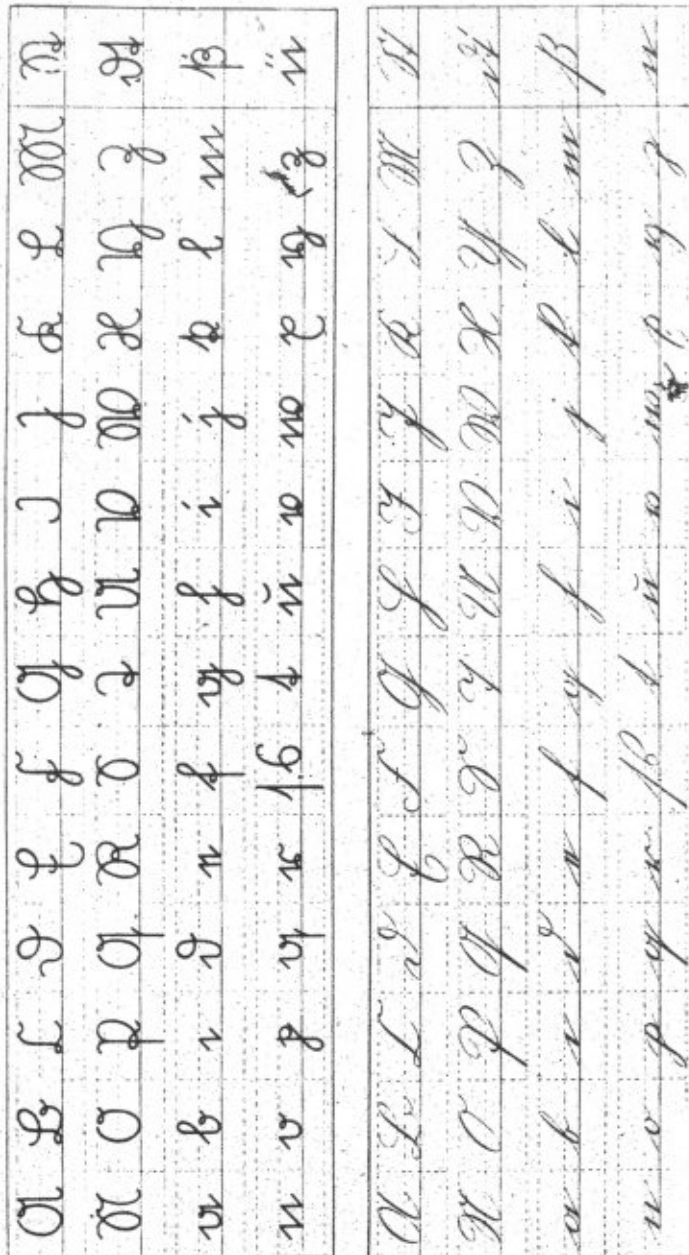
¹⁸ For example, 「AA と UU と似てゐます。B B と V V と見ちがへさうです。おなかの中味の切れてゐるのは V, つながつてゐるのが B です。CC, EE, GG, も稍曖昧です。C のおなかに何だかぶら下がつたのが E, そのぶら下がつたものが延びて外側とつながり、妙に複雑になつたのが G です。I と J とは獨逸字の大文字では同じものです。J と J とどこが違ふのかと苦心して睨めても徒勞です。N と R とは非常によく似て居り、又 R と K とはいくらか間違ひさうです。N と R とは、矢張りおなかのところが少し違ふのです。O のうしろに尻尾の一寸のぞいたのが Q です。Y は胎兒の様ないやな格好です。」 in Uchida Eizō 内田榮造 and Tada Motoi 多田基, *Doitsugo seibatsu* 『獨逸語征伐』 (Tokyo: Ōkura Kōbundō 大倉廣文堂, 1932), 56.

¹⁹ One language book reminded its readers that German uses capitals far more than English and French: 「ドイツ語のては名詞は常に最初の文字に頭文字を用ゆれば頭文字を用ふること英佛語より遙に多し。」 in Tsuzumi Tsuneyoshi, *Katsuyō Doitsu bunpō* 『活用獨逸文法』 *Deutsche Grammatik zur praktischen Übung* (Tokyo: Daigakushorin, 1934), 4.

²⁰ Ludwig Sütterlin, a graphic designer, crafted his namesake handwriting style in 1911 for the Prussian Ministry of Culture and Education. In 1935 Sütterlin became the official script taught in schools, though in 1941 the Nazi regime banned it in favor of the Latin style.

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Fig. 8.2 The table of contents of a German reader published in Japan in 1919. Note the mixed Fraktur and Latin typefaces, intended to help students practice reading both styles. Nevertheless, beginning learners would find the alternating typefaces difficult and befuddling.

[illegible]

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巻頭の一覧表のとは少々ちがつたところもありますが、その一致したところを取れば大体の様子がわかります。

たとへば、本巻に出て来た文を二三書いて見ませう。

(1) Die Atomtheorie erklärt den Aufbau des Stoffes. (原子論は物質の構造を説明する):

Die Atomtheorie erklärt
den Aufbau des Stoffes.

Stoffes の St は、S と t との間をつないで書くことがわかりませう。St は

St

はなく、必ず

st

と書きます。

次に: (2) Wie schwer ist doch eine wissenschaftliche Definition! (學問的定義の如何にむつかしきことよ!) ならば

Wie schwer ist doch eine wissenschaftliche
Definition!

となります。s と i とは筆書体でもちがふことがわかりませう。

Fig. 8.4 A page from an introductory German-for-science text explaining ways to decipher the Sütterlin script. The sentence on the top reads, “Die Atomtheorie erklärt den Aufbau des Stoffes” (The atom theory explains the composition of matter), and the one on the bottom, “Wie schwer ist doch eine wissenschaftliche Definition!” (How difficult indeed is a scientific definition!). Even those used to seeing other styles of German would find the script quite challenging at first.

result, almost all language books on German in interwar Japan began with lessons on the alphabet, complete with tables of letters to demonstrate visually their discrepancies.

The extra hassle stemming from the several scripts in German understandably prompted Japanese authors of language and linguistic books to offer an explanation to their readers. Some, such as Sekiguchi Tsugio 関口存男, agreed with other advocates of blackletter that Fraktur was singularly suited for the elegant, efficient production and consumption of German.²¹ Beginning learners acquainted only with Roman letters might find the observation counterintuitive, but Sekiguchi reminded them that kanji played a similar role within Japanese.²² Another author, Gonda Yasunosuke 権田保之助, informed his readers that blackletter and Roman types existed to serve difference purposes; the former appeared mostly in newspapers and literature, the latter in scientific works and others intended for international readers.²³ As a consequence, a number of texts teaching German used both

²¹ Sekiguchi did not go as far as the eighteenth century aphorist Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, who proclaimed that a German book in Latin letters would need to be translated into Fraktur, but he did argue that blackletter might render German easier to read: 「私の経験によると、ラテン字よりはドイツ字の方が遙かに読み好くもあり、また従つて速く讀める様に思ひます。一たい文字といふものは、一つ一つ分解して讀むものではなくて、一瞥して其の凹凸の加減その他によつて直觀的に印象を受けると云ふのが理想的な態ですが、さう云ふ程度にまで讀める様になると、やはりドイツ字の方が凹凸が激しくて印象に・く應へるやうな氣がします。」 in Sekiguchi Tsugio, *Doitsugo daikōza 1* 『独逸語大講座 (1)』 *Der grosse Kursus der deutschen Sprache Band I*, Sekiguchi Tsugio chosakushū Doitsugogaku hen 5 関口存男著作集 ドイツ語学篇 5 (Tokyo: Sanshūsha 三修社, 2000), 9.

²² 「皆さんも漢字を讀む時の印象を想像してごらん下さい、蓋し思ひ半ばに過ぎるものがあるでせう。」 in *ibid.*

²³ 「現代獨逸では此 Fraktur と Antiqua との兩書體が並用されてゐるのであつた、その使用範圍の大體決定されてゐるのは、新聞、文學作品、其他一般的讀物には獨逸文字が、學術專門書、國際的性質あるもの等には羅典文字が用ひられるといふ位のもので、勿論嚴密な規則のあるわけではない。」 in Gonda Yasunosuke, *Saishin Doitsugo kōza 1* 『最新獨逸語講座 第一卷』 (Tokyo: Yūhōdō Shoten 有朋堂書店, 1931), 3. Gonda is better known to posterity as a commentator on society and culture, but he also authored many authoritative books on the German language, most notably a new German-Japanese dictionary in 1937. For more on Gonda as a sociologist, see Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

Fraktur and Latin letters to help readers get acclimated with blackletter.²⁴ The constant switch between the two typefaces, however, could well confuse and deter students already struggling with German grammar and vocabulary.

The experts went further still to seek causes within the peculiarities of the German mindset for the continued use of Fraktur in Germany long after the rest of Europe had moved on to Latin typefaces. Gonda faulted “the Germans’ love for argumentation” in sustaining the controversy between the two typefaces and advised students to become proficient in both.²⁵ In a separate work Gonda labeled Fraktur, despite being inherently tied to the essence of the German nation, a remnant of closed, provincial times, inevitably to be pushed aside by Antiqua.²⁶ One author compared the “round, circuitous” Latin script used by the British to the “formal, earnest” blackletter preferred by the Germans, and likened the German script to

²⁴ 「この書に於ては、ラテン、ドイツ兩體の活字を併用した。それは、讀者をして兩體の活字に馴れさせやうとするばかりではなく、一つには：獨逸語學修上の便宜を謀つた爲めである。・ち羅甸文字は獨逸文字に較べて、一般の讀者に一層見易く、かつ覚え易いからである。又兩者を併せ用ゐる事によつて、獨逸文字を覚えるに都合よく、同字同語の對照によつて少なからぬ便宜を得るから、この書の初の部分に於ては、おもにラテン字體を用ゐ、愈進むに従つてドイツ字體を多分に用ゐるやうにした。けれども單語並びに註解は大抵ラテン字體を用ゐて、原文のドイツ字體に對照せしめるやうにした。學修者に對して幾多の便益を與へ得る事と信ずる。」 in Akimoto Kikuo 秋元喜久雄, *Shōkai shin Doitsu gogaku* 『詳解新獨逸語學』 *Deutsches Lehrbuch zum Hausgebrauch: Neubearbeitet* (Tokyo: Kōgakukan Shoten 弘學館書店, 1926), Explanatory Notes 2–3.

²⁵ 「Fraktur と Antiqua との優劣是非の問題は、勿論議論好きな獨逸人のことであるから古來多くの學者によつてなされ、又なされつゝあるが、我々日本人にとつては、少くとも獨逸語を學ぶことを或目的的手段とするものにとつては、かゝる比較優劣問題は無關係のものといふべきである。然し實際上の問題として、吾等は此兩書體共に通曉する必要がある。獨逸文字の讀めない人の獨逸語は片輪である。」 in Gonda, *Saishin Doitsugo kōza*, 4.

²⁶ 「獨逸及び獨逸民族が其國粹に固く嚙ぢり付いて、閉鎖的な國民生活に立て籠つてゐた時代から、現代の如き國際生活に開放された時代に置き換へられるや 一種の國粹的特殊性を帶びた龜甲形の Fraktur より移つて國際的な Antiqua へと傾いて來るのは寧ろ當然な事と云はねばならぬ。」 in Gonda Yasunosuke, *Kijun Doitsu bunpō* 『基準獨逸文法』 *Fundamentale Deutsche Grammatik* (Tokyo: Yūhōdō Shoten, 1931), 2. In Japanese, blackletter or Fraktur is variably rendered as “German script” (*Doitsu moji* 獨逸文字), “turtle shell script” (*kikō moji* 龜甲文字—a reference to the ornate oracle bone script from ancient China), “crab-shaped script” (*kanigata moji* 蟹形文字) or “beard script” (*hige moji* 髯文字).

the obstinate, stubborn character of the German people.²⁷ Another echoed this sentiment by proclaiming that in continuing to use Fraktur the Germans were just blindly adhering to traditions.²⁸ The great Germanist and literary commentator Yamagishi Mitsunobu 山岸光宣 too called the Germans “obdurate” for keeping their own way of writing.²⁹ Lastly, Sekiguchi attributed the increased use of blackletter, for example on military uniforms and equipment, in early 1930s Germany to a rise in nationalistic tendency.³⁰ As late as 1940 one book still credited the Nazi regime for reviving Fraktur in Germany—mistakenly, as it turned out, for in 1941 the National Socialist government outlawed blackletter for official use.³¹

²⁷ 「元來英國人ノ用ユル羅馬字ノ書方ハ旋回蜿蜒トシテ連續シ各個ノ部分...或ハ之ヲ換言スレハ獨逸文字ノ書方ハ英國人使用ノ羅馬字ニ比レバ實ニ徹底的端正嚴肅ニシテ邁勁ナルコトヲ主眼トス。思フニ獨逸文字ハ獨逸人ノ性質ニ類シ結屈聲牙タル特ニ標榜スルモノト云フベシ」 in A. Hahn and Sawai Yōichi 澤井要一, *Seiongaku hon'i Dokubun shinkai* 『聲音學本位獨文進階』 *Erstes Jahr Deutsch Laut und Schrift: Neue Deutsche Fibel auf Phonetischer Grundlage* (Tokyo: Nichidoku Shoin 日獨書院, 1924), 63–4.

²⁸ 「Eckenschrift を通例、獨逸文字と呼び之に獨逸魂が籠つてゐるかのやうに考へるのは誤りである。此 gothic letters (gotische Schrift) は名稱の示すやうに獨逸の物ではなく、他國民も獨逸人と同様に用ゐてゐたものであるが、彼等が Renaissance の影響を受けてはやく Rundschrift に移つたに拘らず獨逸人は今も尚ほ、墨守してゐるに過ぎないものなのである。」 in Matsuoka Binkō 松岡敏幸, *Sōyō Doitsu bunten* 『雙用獨逸文典』 *Deutsche Grammatik für Anfänger und Fortgeschrittene* (Tokyo: Shōbundō 尚文堂, 1932), 101.

²⁹ 「殊に科學的の書物などは漸次羅匈文字で印刷されるやうになつて來て居るやうです。然し一方には又獨逸人の頑固な性癖から中々此の獨逸固有の文字を飽くまで使用し通して居る者もあります」 in Yamagishi Mitsunobu, ed., *Shin Doitsugo kōza 1* 『新ドイツ語講座 第一卷』 *Blätter des neuen deutschen Kursus Erster Band* (Tokyo: Doitsugo Kenkyūsha 獨逸語 究社, 1934), 15.

³⁰ 「けれども、ドイツ字の方を尊重する國粹的傾向もかなり盛なやうで、最近何かで讀んだところに依ると、水兵帽の前の方の、軍艦何々といふ例の金文字も、近頃はドイツ書體に改まつたさうです。」 in Sekiguchi, *Doitsugo daikōza 1*, 9.

³¹ 「今から約十數年以前世界大戰後獨逸國家の勢力は稍々衰退せる如き觀を呈したる時代に於ては（獨逸文字）の筆寫體の如きは中等學校卒業程度の教養ある獨逸人にして尚ほ且つ之れを讀み得ざるものがあるが如き態で、獨逸文字の使用が漸次減退するかの如き觀を呈したが、ナチス政權が獨逸國家を支配し、國粹が盛んに發揮せらるゝ現今に於ては（獨逸文字）の使用も亦前と同様に盛んとなつて、以前通りに（羅典文字）と並用されて居る。」 in Shō Naokazu 莊直一, *Jishū Doitsu bunpō shōkai* 『自修獨逸文法詳解』 (Tokyo: Taiyōdō Shoten, 1940), 3. Another author also mistakenly believed that the Nazi government supported Fraktur, 「第一課の Alphabet に げたドイツ字書體は現今ドイツの政府が獎勵してゐるものを選だ。」 in Katayama Hisashi 片山尚, *Shin Doitsugo bunten* 『新ドイツ語文典』 *Neue deutsche Schulgrammatik* (Tokyo: Taibundō 泰文堂, 1937), Introduction 1–2. In this matter, these authors

The pronunciation of German also proved quite foreign and troublesome for those Japanese persevering to acquire the language. Although the consonant and vowel sounds of German and Japanese overlap to a certain degree, a number of differences and challenges plagued the students. The most fundamental problem stemmed from the fact that no book could adequately teach proper pronunciation, though not for a lack of effort or innovation. As early as 1927 NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation), merely one year after its establishment, was running radio programs to teach foreign tongues on air.³² For example, everyday at 7:40 a.m. from 21 July to 31 August 1927, except Sundays and holidays, households with a radio in the greater Tokyo area could tune in for thirty-five minutes of German lessons hosted by Professor Tashiro Mitsuo 田代光雄.³³ Listeners, especially those who purchased the accompanying course text, could read passages aloud after the instructor and learn the correct pronunciation from a trained professional or sometimes even a native speaker. For most Japanese the airwaves could bring them closest to ever hearing native

made the mistake that many opponents and especially allies of Nazism would make—rather than seeing it for what it was, they saw it for what they believed or wanted it to be.

³² The impression that Japanese have a hard time learning foreign languages is matched by the very real interest many Japanese have in learning foreign languages. In addition to mandatory English classes in school and ubiquitous private tutoring companies, Japanese today can also tune in to NHK language lessons from Arabic to Spanish on radio, television and the internet. For more on lectures on radio and their function in public enlightenment in interwar Japan, see Chapter Six.

³³ See Nihon Hōsō Kyōkai Kantō Shibu 日本放送協會關東支部 (NHK Kanto branch), ed., *Rajio Doitsugo kōza* 『ラヂオドイツ語講座』 *Textbuch für Deutsch Sommerkursus* (Tokyo: Tōkyō Chūō Hōsōkyoku 東京中央放送局, 1927). For other examples, see Nihon Hōsō Kyōkai Kansai Shibu 日本放送協會關西支部 (NHK Kansai branch), *JOBK shotō Doitsugo kōza 1929* 『JOBK 初等獨逸語講座 昭和四年度』 *JOBK Textbuch für Deutsch für Anfänger Sommer-Sonderkursus* (Osaka: Ōsaka Chūō Hōsōkyoku 大阪中央放送局, 1929); the instructor was Professor Odagiri Ryōtarō 小田切良太郎. In 1938 Sekiguchi, then a professor at Hōsei University, co-hosted a radio show for German with Rolf Henkl of the Urawa Higher School, see *Rajio tekisuto sokusei Doitsugo kaki* 『ラヂオ・テキスト 速成獨逸語 夏期』 *Radio Textbuch für Deutsch* (Tokyo: Nihon Hōsō Kyōkai, 1938).

German spoken live, until the popularization in Japan of foreign films with sound in the early 1930s.³⁴

Most Japanese students of German, of course, lacked access to such luxury and had to lean on the sheets in language books to bridge the chasm between printed words and uttered sounds.³⁵ This task fell often onto the shoulders of the Japanese syllabaries of *hiragana* and *katakana*. Historically the phonetically identical writing systems played different and sometimes interchanging roles, but by 1920 the division of labor stood clear. Hiragana had become the standard script for Japanese, while katakana served almost exclusively the purpose of transliterating foreign words. Therefore many authors of language books chose katakana to convert German into Japanese terms.

Katakana, however, made a poor substitute instrument for reproducing spoken German accurately for Japanese students. The syllabary could fulfill perfectly its original function of marking Japanese pronunciation, but it was not designed for replicating foreign sounds.³⁶ Japanese writers of German mostly understood katakana's inadequacies in its unintended role. Yet, probably for lack of viable alternatives, many of them still conscripted the script to tackle an impossible objective. In this dubious enterprise, Sekiguchi, albeit one

³⁴ With the advent of films with sound, the so-called “talkies,” Japanese gained a new means to hear German spoken by native speakers. Correspondingly a number of companion books to the talkies appeared, with full translations of the dialogs to help readers understand the film. See for example the one for the propaganda film *Hitlerjunge Quex*, Karl Aloys Schenzinger, *Heigensha tōkī shirīzu A(12) Hittorā seinen Dokuwa taiyaku* 『平原社トーキー・シリーズ A 第 12 巻 ヒットラー青年 獨和對譯』 *Hitlerjunge Quex* (Tokyo: Heigensha, 1934).

³⁵ Although the interwar period witnessed the golden age of radio worldwide, as immortalized by Roosevelt's fireside chats or Nazi propaganda, radio ownership and reception in the 1920s and much of the 1930s remained confined to urban populations. In the beginning of public broadcast in Japan, only the residents in Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya had access to radio programs.

³⁶ Certainly one needs to distinguish the two functions of modern katakana, namely those of spelling Japanese words with foreign origins, such as *tēburu* テーブル (from “table” in English) or *arubaito* アルバイト (from “Arbeit” in German), and approximating foreign pronunciation using the Japanese syllabary, as in *guddo mōningu* グッド・モーニング (“good morning”).

of modern Japan's premiere experts on German, committed some of the worst offenses.³⁷

Thus, readers of one of his books encountered sentences like “Deutschland lehrt Japan” (Germany teaches Japan) phonetically marked as “Doichulanto lēruto Yāpan ドイチュラン ト レールト ヤーパン” or “Japan lernt von Deutschland” (Japan learns from Germany) as “Yāpan lerunto fon Doichulanto ヤーパン レルント フォン ドイチュラント.”³⁸

Sekiguchi attempted to square the circle by adding the diacritical mark (*dakuten* 濁点) to the Japanese “r” to indicate that it represented /l/ instead. At times he also mixed hiragana and katakana in an attempt to make finer distinctions in pronunciation that katakana by itself cannot accommodate. Nonetheless, the resulting transliteration remained imprecise, not to mention its failure to account for subtle differences in pronunciation between the identically spelled “ch” and “r” in German and Japanese.³⁹

Several characteristics of spoken German, exacerbated by the Gordian knot of teaching pronunciation through the imperfect medium of books, frustrated the specialists. Sekiguchi, besides tinkering with katakana to refine it into a better transcription tool, half-jokingly celebrated the Japanese inability to distinguish /l/ and /R/ as a national trait that gained worldwide recognition in the manner of Mt. Fuji and Bushido. He even alleged that linguists coined a term, “Rholamdaism,” to describe the phenomenon of confusing /R/ and

³⁷ Unlike many Japanese Germanists of his generation, Sekiguchi did not study abroad. Instead he received his education at Sophia University. Despite not having spent any time in Germany, Sekiguchi's own command of spoken German was by all accounts fluent. In addition to German, Sekiguchi also knew French, English, classical Greek and Latin. He also acted in some Taisho era silent films, as well as in plays in theater.

³⁸ Sekiguchi Tsugio, *Hyōjun shotō Doitsugo kōza 1* 『標準初等ドイツ語講座 上巻』 *Deutsch für Anfänger Band I* (Tokyo: Tachibana Shoten 橘書店, 1933), 63.

³⁹ Another Germanist did note the difficulty with the German /ch/, 「Ch, ch. 此の發音は獨逸語に特有なものであつて初學者の困難とするところである。」 in Tada Motoi, *Hyōjun Doitsugo daiippo* 『標準獨逸語第一』 *Anfangsgründe der deutschen Sprache* (Tokyo: Gakushūdō 學修堂, 1934), 22. For the problem with /ch/, see also, 「此文字の發音は獨逸語に特有のものであつて、我々日本人には中々むづかしい音である。」 in Shiina, 30.

/l/.⁴⁰ Another author warned readers that even within Germany itself /R/ may sound differently depending on locale and dialect.⁴¹ To convey the right movement of lips and teeth to produce the somewhat challenging and definitely foreign sound /pf/, Sekiguchi described colorfully the process as one similar to firing a bullet with gunpowder.⁴² Meanwhile one Germanist called the umlauted vowels ä /ɛ/, ö /ø/, and ü /y/ the hardest sounds in German, partly because they defied neat transliteration into a Japanese syllabary.⁴³

Although many writers used katakana as a crutch to represent German pronunciations, a number resisted the urge, banished katakana, and attempted to teach spoken German scientifically with the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Whereas foreknowledge of English helped students quickly become familiar with the German alphabet, for pronunciation knowing English constituted a liability. Sekiguchi specifically stated that he chose to use furigana (Japanese pronunciation markers) rather than the IPA to mark German pronunciation because most people learned the IPA in relation to English and thus he did not

⁴⁰ 「日本人に r と l との区別がわからないのは、富士山や武士道と同様に世界的進出をした天晴れ國粹的事実ですが、語學者は此の現象を Rholamdazismus [ローラムダツィスムス]と呼んでゐます。譯してエルエル混同症とでも申しませうか。（rho は希臘字の ρ で r に相當し、lambda は λ で、今の l に相當します。）」 in Sekiguchi, *Doitsugo daikōza* 1, 19. On the Japanese' inherent handicap with /l/ and /r/, another author agreed, 「我々日本人には此の l と r の呼び方(發音のときも)に區別を付けることは頗る困難の事ではある」 in Shiina, 12.

⁴¹ 「ドイツ語は其の行はれる地方に由つて同じドイツ國內ですらも發音が雜多である。殊に北と南とでは著しく異る。大體上北は簡結にして尻下りであり、南（奥、瑞をも含む）は冗長にして尻上りである事日本の關東と關西の別に似てゐる。（名詞の性や語法なども多少相異なるものがある）。殊に r の發音に至つては各地方一様たらずして Friedr. Vischer といふ文學者の „Leiden des armen Buchstaben „r“ auf seiner Wanderung durch Deutschland.“（「ドイツ國中を旅行する間の哀れなる子音 r の悩み」）と題する滑稽な一文が嘗て發表せられた事すらもある位だ。」 in Yamada Kōzaburō, *Jishū shin Doitsugo* 『自修新ドイツ語』（Tokyo: Taiyōdō Shoten, 1930), 32.

⁴² 「・ち、上の齒を以て下唇を噛みしめ、同時に上下の唇をも固く閉ぢ合せて、それを、p の時と同じやうに爆發させます。すると火藥の悪い彈丸が飛び出す時のやうに、p のやうに朗らかでない、半分摩擦音の交つた音が出ます。それが pf です。」 in Sekiguchi, *Doitsugo daikōza* 1, 28–9.

⁴³ 「獨逸語の發音中最も至難とせられる變音(Umlaut) ä, ö, ü, に就いて・究することにするが、この音は到底イロハ文字では書き表はせないから如何にして音をだすかといふ發聲法を言はなければならぬ。」 in Tada, 12.

want to double the burden to the system.⁴⁴ Indeed, several authors, including Saigō Keizō 西
 ▪ 啓造, a director of the Goethe Society in Japan, deemed the effect of familiarity with
 English so detrimental to learning spoken German that they cautioned readers not to confuse
 pronunciations of the two languages.⁴⁵ A few books specializing in pronunciation even
 included cutaway diagrams of the mouth and throat to show the correct positions for the
 tongue, teeth or lips for any sound.⁴⁶ Such works, however, belonged to a small minority of
 language books. In any case, representing spoken words using paper and ink alone remained
 an impossible mission. As one specialist lamented, teaching pronunciation through a book
 matched the challenge of trying to swim on *tatami* mats.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ 「萬國發音符も便利には便利ですが、大部分の人はその英語に於ける應用には慣れてゐるが、獨逸語となるとまたおのづから別で、その符號のためにまた二重の苦勞をすると云つたやうな事が多いやうですから、どうせ多少たりとも英語の心得のある人になれば、萬國發音記號だらうが假名だらうが、全部それに頼るのではなく、疑問が生じた際にそれを ▪ 座に解決するための暗示に用ひると云ふ上から見れば結局大差はない様に思はれますから、まづ最も樂な振假名を用ひたわけです。」 in Sekiguchi, *Doitsugo daikōza* 1, 7.

⁴⁵ For example, 「多數學生の習得した英語の發音と獨逸語のそれとは全然相異なるものであつて、例へば英語の寧ろ滑らかにして明瞭を缺くが如きに比すれば、獨語はより明瞭に發音される」 in Saigō Keizō, *Shin Doitsugo 4shūkan* 『新獨逸語四週間』 *Deutsch in Vier Wochen (Neues System)* (Tokyo: Shōbundō, 1930), 10; and, 「英語が先入主となつてゐる人は獨逸語をも英語流に發音したがる癖があります。英語も獨逸語も結局同一語系に屬するのでありますから兩者の間類似した發音のあるのは勿論であります併し獨逸語では英語のやうに舌端を軽く捲いたやうな發音をすることはありません。」 in Michibe Jun 道部順, *Dokushūsha no Doitsugo Eidoku taishō hatsuon yakudoku bunpō shōkai* 『獨習者の獨逸語 英獨對照發音譯讀文法詳解』 *Elemental Deutsch durch Selbst-Unterricht* (Tokyo: Ikubundō Shoten 郁文堂書店, 1926), 13.

⁴⁶ See for example, Kamo Masakazu 加茂正一, *Dokugo hatsuon kigō no chishiki to renshū* 『獨語發音記號の知識と練習』 (Osaka: Bun'yūdō Shoten 文友堂書店, 1925). Interestingly, the author lamented in the foreword that many Japanese were not speaking their mother tongue properly while foreigners were more eager to study Japanese. See also Momonoi Tsuruo 桃井鶴夫, *Doitsugo hatsuon no kenkyū* 『獨逸語發音の ▪ 究』 *Studien über Deutsche Phonetik* (Tokyo: Taiyōdō Shoten, 1936). See also, 「獨逸の發音を我邦の文字で悉く完全に書き表はさんこと到底不可能の事であるが假名の外に種々の記號を用ゐて可及的實際に近いものを示す様に勉めた。」 in Ōmura Kentarō 大村謙太郎, *Doitsugo nyūmon chokuyaku hitori annai* 『獨逸語入門直譯獨案内』 (Tokyo: Seika Shoin 精華書院, 1921), 3.

⁴⁷ 「只紙上で發音を教へることは、疊の上の水泳と同じ困難を伴ふものであり、然も紙數が限られて居るのですから、その點は豫め御承知を願ひます。」 in Ishikawa Renji 石川鍊次, *Daigakushorin bunkō*

Together the peculiarities of spoken German and the difficulty of learning pronunciation from books bestowed a degree of disrepute on the German language among the Japanese. Some believed that German, in comparison to English or French, demonstrated a certain obstinate boorishness.⁴⁸ German was said to be a rugged, tough language that sounded like the noise of a glass window getting shattered. To other Japanese, German reminded them of angry curses by stable hands. Yet others joked that when Adam and Eve rankled God by eating the forbidden fruit, the irate God denounced the sinful couple in German as he banished them from Paradise.⁴⁹ Speaking of God, one author compared learning German step by step to God's progressive creation of the universe,⁵⁰ while another sought to convince his readers that with hard work they too could hope to master German, for even God himself had to sweat and toil before he became omnipotent.⁵¹

Jests aside, overcoming the various difficulties found in German meant a serious struggle for many Japanese students. Besides the complexities arising from the Fraktur-

Nr. 14 *Doitsugo hatsuon kenkyū* 『大學書林文庫 Nr. 14 ドイツ語發音・究』 *Kleine deutsche Phonetik für Japaner* (Tokyo: Daigakushorin, 1939), 17–18.

⁴⁸ 「獨逸語では一語一語を明瞭に力・く發音するのであります。動もすれば獨逸語が英語や佛蘭西語に比較して頑固に武骨らしく聞えるのは是が爲めであります。」 in Michibe, 11.

⁴⁹ 「獨逸語の發音は荒つばい、ゴツゴツしてゐるといふことがよく云はれる。或人は「窓を打つ霰の如き音」ともいつた。或人は「アダムとイヴが禁斷の果實を食べて神の怒りにふれ、地上に墮されんとした時、神は獨逸語を用ひ給ふたであらう」とも嘲笑した。又或人は「獨逸語は、馬丁の怒罵に等しい音を有する」等々々、かなり惡口を云はれてゐる。」 in Gonda, *Saishin Doitsugo kōza* 1, 7.

⁵⁰ 「獨逸語征服の途に就いた當時の諸君の獨逸語の力は、神が天地を創造し給ひし以前と同様、無の・態であつたが、神がむ秩序且つ空・ながらも、出來上つた天地全面にその靈を浮遊せしめ給ひ、更らにそれを基礎として諸般の事物の創造に力を努し給ふたと同様に、諸君は獨逸語の **Alphabet** を獲得するや、幸先よしとばかりに、當るを幸ひ斬り伏せ、打ち倒し、宛然無人の境地を進むが如くに、聲音、綴音、十品詞、更らに冠詞、名詞、人稱代名詞、物主代名詞、指示代名詞、前置き詞、動詞變化の現在形等を確實に占領して七日目に到達したのである。」 in Saigō, 93–4.

⁵¹ 「獨逸文を自由に讀み、獨逸語に親しみを感ずる境地に至り得るものであることを、著者は確く信ずる者である。「神は堪能の前に汗を置けり」。何の努力もしないで、ものに熟達することは出来ない。」 in Okamoto Shūsuke 岡本修助, *Gendai Doitsu bunpō kōwa hinshiron* 『現代獨逸文法講話 品詞論』 *Deutsche Grammatik Wortlehre* (Tokyo: Sanseidō 三省堂, 1937), Introduction 1.

Antiqua split and the impasse of learning spoken words from paper, teachers and pupils alike faced other hardships. Most books that discussed pronunciation also had to spend much space to explain stress and syllable, both foreign to Japanese. Beyond letters and sounds, readers had to contend with grammatical niceties. A few Germanists wrote that the idea of inherent noun gender struck Japanese as unimaginable.⁵² Meanwhile Gonda diagnosed the “problem of sex” for beginning students, and Sekiguchi penned a humorous skit revolving around German word genders.⁵³ Articles, definite and indefinite, and the declension of noun phrases—neither present in Japanese—also turned away numerous students.⁵⁴ Sekiguchi went so far as to crown relative pronouns, also absent in Japanese, as a priceless heritage of the white race’s thousands of years of spiritual culture that enabled the Caucasians to grasp ideas and act as the vanguard of human spiritual affairs. He lamented that Japanese lacked a similar way of logical thought so that even a simple relative clause in German would come across as complex to the Japanese.⁵⁵ On a more advanced level, idioms and in particular the

⁵² For example, 「我々日本人には一寸想像のつき難い様な性といふものが、有形無形一切の事物を示す名詞に定められてあつて」 in Saigō, 25.

⁵³ See 「さて變化論に入る前に是非共心得てみなければならないことは、特に名詞の性についてである。數、格は大して珍らしくもないが、獨逸語の名詞の性規定については、はじめて獨逸語を學ぶ人にとっては一つの大きな驚異でもあり、難物でもある。誰でも最初が一番にこの「性の悩み」を感じるのである。」 in Gonda, *Saishin Doitsugo kōza* 2, 24; and 「性の關する知識（一幕劇）」 in Sekiguchi Tsugio, *Doitsugo daikōza* 6 『獨逸語大講座 第六卷』 *Der Grosze [sic] Kursus der deutschen Sprache Band 6* (Tokyo: Gaigo Kenkyūsha 外語・究社, 1935), Postscript.

⁵⁴ 「併し普通の文法書によつて、先づ冠詞から始めて次に名詞に進んで行くと、・に名詞の變化といふ獨逸語の一大難關に直面して、獨逸語學習の興味を失つてしまふものが少くない。」 in Iwamoto, Yamagishi’s Foreword 1. In fact, whole books were written on the subject of articles alone. See for example, 「日本にも人間の冠たる帽子はあるが、名詞の冠詞は無い。而も冠詞はドイツ文法の初めに學ぶものであるから最も容易い様に見えるが實は日本人にとって最も呑み込み難い事柄の一つである。此は併し必ずしも日本語に冠詞なるものが全く無いが爲許りで無く」 in Yamada Kōzaburō, *Doitsugo kanshi no kenkyū* 『獨逸語冠詞の・究』 (Tokyo: Daigakushorin, 1937), 33.

⁵⁵ 「關係代名詞及び關係代名詞によつて導かれる關係文は、これこそ白哲人種の過去數千年の精神文化が残して行つた貴重なる遺・です。これあるが爲めに白哲人種は概念を扱ふ方面の精神界に於て斷然人類の尖端に立つてしまつた。...日本語の悲哀」にこんな簡単な文章でも、これを日本語で云

subjunctive mood represented formidable roadblocks.⁵⁶ Language students understandably would find idioms difficult in any foreign tongue, but the subjunctive in German constituted a particularly tricky problem. One author flatly called subjunctive the hardest topic in German,⁵⁷ while another promised his readers that once they broke through the obstacle of subjunctive, the road ahead would become flat and easy.⁵⁸ Another pointed out that subjunctive presented special problems because it contradicted earlier grammatical rules students drilled into their heads back when they began their studies.⁵⁹

Perhaps even more damaging than posing actual challenges to the Japanese, German suffered from a reputation of being difficult. German was widely believed to be much harder than English or French,⁶⁰ and most Japanese equated German grammar with boredom,

はうとすると或種の困難を感じます。...つまり日本語には関係代名詞に相当するものがなく、またそんな理窟つばい考へ方を神武天皇以来しなかつたのです。」 in Sekigushi, *Doitsugo daikōza 1*, 261 and 263.

⁵⁶ For example, 「醫文の文體が讀本の文章とは甚しく趣を異にして居ることと、醫文固有の Idiom 及び Konjunktiv を正解することとであるのを知り得たから、先づ是等三問題に就き解釋法を・明した書籍が最も必要であると信じ、本書を公にしたのである。」 in Kagawa Tetsuo 賀川哲夫, *Hoshū Doitsu ibun kaishakuō* 『補修獨逸醫文解釋法』 *Fortbildungskursus über medizinisches Deutsch für höhere Klasse* (Tokyo: Nanzandō Shoten, 1930), Introduction i.

⁵⁷ 「極めて大切であり又極めて興味多いものであるにも拘はらず、接續法は獨逸語を學ぶものの最も難澁するところの如くに思はれる。」 in Sakurai Waichi 櫻井和和, *Doitsugo wahō no kenkyū* 『獨逸語話法の・究』 (Tokyo: Daigakushorin, 1934), Introduction.

⁵⁸ 「これより愈々獨逸語の最大の難關と目されてゐる接續法の・明に入ります。この峻險を突破すれば後は坦々たる原野が展かれ、何の苦もなく進み得るわけです。」 in Komura Minoru 小村實, *Shin Doitsu bunpō 24jikan seiri* 『新獨逸文法 廿四時間整理』 *Deutsche Grammatik in 24 Stunden* (Tokyo: Taiyōdō Shoten, 1933), 86.

⁵⁹ 「接續文...之を初・文法的に逆讀すると、思想の理路は全く支離滅裂して、難解を極める。獨逸語の文法組織が嚴密だと言はれてゐるが、それはやがて思想の正確を意味するものである。然るに思想の論理的道程を誤つたとすれば、其眞意識を把握し得ないのは當然の話で、難解たるを得ない譯である。」 in Hashimoto Tadao 橋本忠夫, *Doitsugo no shūjiteki kōsei* 『獨逸語の修辭的構成』 (Tokyo: Nankōdō Shoten 南江堂書店, 1933), 4. The subjunctive in question here is probably Konjunktiv I.

⁶⁰ For example, 「獨逸語は英、佛語などよりも學び難いと云はれている。尤もなことである。」 in Ōshima Muneharu 大嶋宗治, *Doitsugo dokushū* 『獨逸語獨修』 *Deutsche Sprache zur Selbsterlernung* (Tokyo: Doitsugo Gakkai 獨逸語學會, 1919), Introduction.

intricacy and adversity.⁶¹ Many Japanese held German to be difficult because it differed from Japanese, and the common method of study, rote memorization of grammar rules and vocabulary, did little to alleviate the problem.⁶² A number of the language book authors thought the idea “German is hard” ingrained enough in contemporary Japan that they found it necessary to attempt to debunk the myth and to assure readers that their works could provide the needed solution to the German problem.

In the face of German’s formidable and intimidating reputation, the specialists devised and deployed special strategies to motivate their students. A number of books sold themselves in the titles as “interesting,” “fun,” “easy to understand,” “real life,” or “practical.”⁶³ Other publications attempted to assuage the students’ fear by invoking the fame and prestige of heavyweight Germanists such as Gonda and Katayama Masao 片山正雄 as a guarantee of the quality of the material.⁶⁴ The most common, and apparently most appealing

⁶¹ 「世人の所謂この難解な無趣味な獨逸文法」 in Kasuya Mahiro 粕谷眞洋, *Kasuya Doitsu jishū bunten* 『粕谷獨逸自修文典』 (Tokyo: Kōbundō shoten 廣文堂書店, 1922), Introduction; and, 「獨逸語ハ世人モ知り通りニ、其ノ文法ガ極メテ複雑デアリ且ツ難澁デアルカラシテ獨逸人デモ餘リ教育ノナイ者ニハ満足ニ獨逸語ヲ會話シ且ツ之レヲ筆ニスルコトハ困難デ」 in Ōshima Shun’ichirō 大島俊一郎, *Jitsuyō Doitsu shōgyō tsūshinbun* 『實用獨逸商業通信文』 *Praktische Deutsche Handelskorrespondenz* (Tokyo: Ōkura Shoten, 1929), 2.

⁶² 「我々日本人が語系の異なる西歐語を學ぶにはいつでも最初の中は困難を伴ふが、殊にも獨逸語は難しいと言はれ勝ちである。これは獨逸語の文法の規則が煩雜なのに起因する様である。... 所謂「獨逸語は難しい」と言はれる品詞の變化、その條件たる性・數・格及び人稱に就て、それらを徒らに暗記せしめんとするよりも、日本語と獨逸語との差異を指摘しつゝ何故にかく學ばねばならぬか」 in Tanaka Mitsuharu, Preface 1–2.

⁶³ Respectively, 『趣味の獨語入門』 (*Interesting Introductory German*), 『獨逸語は楽しみだ』 (*German Is Fun*), 『よくわかる初年生の獨逸文法』 (*Easy to Understand Beginning German Grammar*), 『生ける獨逸語會話』 (*Real Life German Conversation*) and 『實用獨逸語會話』 (*Practical German Conversation*).

⁶⁴ Advertisement for *Doitsu bunpō jiten* 『獨逸文法辭典』 by Katayama Masao, a professor at the Kyushu Imperial University, 「編者片山先生は我が獨逸語學界の一權威である。獨逸に留學すること多年、歸來専ら本書の編纂に其該博の蘊蓄を傾注せられた。... 由來獨逸語の困難なのは主として其文法の困難なるに由るのである。本者は編者獨特の見に加ふるに幾多先人の・究を以てして、... 徒らに獨逸語の學習難を歎ずが如きは、迂者ならずん・ち愚者のわざである。」, and advertisement for Gonda’s *Eibunpō taishō Doitsu bunpōsho* 『英文法對照 獨逸文法書』, 「獨逸文法の學び難い事は、世の定・で

to consumers, advertisement described a book as teaching German in a “new” way.⁶⁵ A few, most notably Sekiguchi, effectively mixed humor with earnest grammar, while others used as encouragement the very idioms (quoted at the beginning of the chapter) that students would eventually struggle with—the first step is the hardest, so proceed without haste, but also without rest.

Curiously, a number of Japanese experts on German took to literally mobilizing their readers with warlike exhortations to gain command of the language. One writer of such a work explained that he had wanted to title his book “the hell of German,” but the publisher thought it too intimidating to potential customers, so he renamed it the more optimistic “conquering German.”⁶⁶ Another author explicitly compared the process of learning German to ancient military campaigns: just as the conquerors would know the strength of their forces and spend time to consolidate their conquests, so should students not attempt to learn German in a hurry but devote effort to looking after occupied territories. Students should also mind their figurative supplies of ammunition and food by managing the knowledge they

ある。権田文學士は獨逸語學者中の新進として夙に令名がある。」, and advertisement for Mizuno Shigetarō's 水野繁太郎 *Doitsu bunpō jishūsho* 『獨逸文法自修書』, 「獨逸文法は我が邦人に取つて最も至難のものとしてゐる。勿論獨逸文法は複雑難解なものには相違ない。けれどもその特に邦人に難解だとされるのは、邦人の手によつて邦人の爲めに作られた文法書がないからであつた。」 in Gonda Yasunosuke, *Doitsu shinbun kenkyū* 『獨逸新聞・究』, Dokuwa taiyaku shōbin bunko 2 獨和對譯小品文庫 第二冊 Aus den deutschen Zeitungen Universal-Jugendserien Heft 2 (Tokyo: Yūhōdō Shoten, 1929), Advertisements.

⁶⁵ For example, 『新式獨和大辭典』 (*New Style German-Japanese Dictionary*), 『新獨逸文典』 (*New German Anthology*), 『最新日獨英會話』 (*Newest Japanese-German-English Conversation*) and 『新選獨逸讀本』 (*New Selection for Reading German*). It is unclear what made the “new” works more attractive to learners than the older books, especially since the classic German textbook written by Ōmura Jintarō 大村仁太郎, et al in 1894 continued to be sold and used well into the 1920s.

⁶⁶ 「私はこの本に「獨逸語地獄」と云ふ名前をつけようと思つて、本屋さんに相談したらことわられた。獨逸語の地獄では困ります、極樂を書きいただきたいと云ふのが、本屋さんの言ひ分なのである。又、いきなり地獄だなどと云ひふらしては、だれも買つて讀む人はありますまいと云はれて、それでは私も困るから、本の名前については、何分にも本屋さんの・に服するに如かずと考へて、地獄の看板は取り外すことにした。しかし看板は下ろしても、獨逸語の學習が若い學生の地獄である事は、氣の毒な事實なのである。」 in Uchida and Tada, Uchida's Introduction 1.

already acquired.⁶⁷ One book advertised itself as the “new weapon” in subduing German,⁶⁸ while another called the mastery of German linguistics a “spiritual weapon” for the task of Japanese-German translation.⁶⁹ The author went on to lecture his students that, just as a country’s defense should not consist of artillery, cavalry, or poison gas alone, students of Japanese-German translation should also not neglect other aspects of language studies.⁷⁰ German, specifically German tests on university entrance examinations, struck such fear and intimidation in students that Gonda encouraged them with a Chinese parable about an ancient king who lost a battle but did not give up hope. Instead he subjected himself to humiliation,

⁶⁷ 「そこで古代の世界征服者(*der Welteroberer der alten Zeit*)が、戦捷の行軍途上(*inmitten der Siegeszüge*)の休息のある一日(*an einem Rasttag*)、自己の勢力範囲の限界(*die Grenzen seiner Herrschaft*)を一層詳しく(*genauer*)確しかめ(*feststellen*)...自分の威力の一つの制限を知らう(*eine Schranke seiner Macht zu erkennen*)と欲するでもある様に...我々が獨逸語征服の途に就いて以來占領し來つた地域の眞の限界(*die wahren Grenzen*)を、一度(*einmal*)はつきり圖取りしやうと試みる(*versuchen*)ことも、何等妥當を缺いた企て(*ein unangemessenes Beginnen*)ではないと思ふ。...諸君は此等の問題の解決に際して充分・得の知識を活用して貰ひたい。斯くしてこそ、始めて戦線に居るものと所謂後方勤務の彈藥糧食の部隊との連絡の圓滑は期せられ、諸君は彈藥、糧食の缺乏に悩まされる心配はなく、今後三週間の行程に向つて何等不安の念なく、否な、元氣頓に百倍して・敵目掛けて前進することが出来るのである。」 in Saigō, 95–96.

⁶⁸ 「獨逸語の基礎を征服することであり、...本書はこの征服の新兵器であり」 in Obara Shizuto 小原靜人, *Doitsugo henka zenpyō* 『獨逸語變化全表』 *Tabellen zur Biegung und Abwandlung* (Tokyo: Daigakushorin, 1935), Introduction.

⁶⁹ 「そのためには、和獨辭典、和英辭典、獨語文法辭典等の參考書も勿論必要であるが、それよりも一層肝要なものは精神的の武器である。一體精神的の武器とは何であるか? といへばそれは語學(獨逸語)の力の充實と其の水準線の向上とである。」 in Miura Kichibē 三浦吉兵衛, ed., *Kōdō Doitsugo kōza 1* 『高等獨逸語講座 第一卷』 *Höhere Stufe des deutschen Kursus oder Oberkursus der deutschen Sprache Erster Band* (Tokyo: Daigakushorin, 1931), 151.

⁷⁰ 「それ故に語學力の根底の薄弱な者が、和文獨譯にのみ達成せんとすることは不可能な話であつて、さういふ不合理の努力は失敗を以て酬いられることを承知しなければならぬ。であるから、大體和文獨譯に上手な者は、語學力が優れて備はつてゐる人であるに相違ない。彼はたしかに譯讀にも會話にもひけをとらない人と見てよい。此の事を、戦争を例に引いて・明しよう。戦線の活動には・兵の突撃戦があり、砲兵の陣地破壊があり、花々しい騎兵の衝突もあれば、陰惨な毒瓦斯戦、壯快な空中戦、等々がある。然し一國の兵力が充實し、軍備が整頓してゐて、士氣旺盛である時には、何兵に限らず皆・いのであつて、どんな局面にも勝を制することが出来る。單に砲兵戦だけで勝敗を決しようとか、空中戦のみでもつて敵國を陥れようと努める様な國防法は考へられない。局部局部の發展向上には、全體としての力がみなぎつて居らねばならない。語學の根源を涵養することを怠り、和文獨譯のみを孤立的に、駈拔けの功名的に上達しよといふ様な考へは・對に除いて欲しい。」 in *ibid*, 152.

hardship and labor and ultimately recovered to avenge himself by winning the war.⁷¹ The frequent use of militaristic imageries and warlike phrases might come across as unnecessary hyperbole, but for many Japanese students of German overcoming the obstacles and mastering the language unambiguously meant something important and serious. That many Japanese decided to tackle German despite its associated difficulties pointed to their anticipation of concrete spoils once they vanquished the language.

German the Useful

The intimidating difficulties, real and imagined, that German posed to the Japanese, logically raises questions concerning the motives and expectations of these language students. As already mentioned in the Introduction, during the interwar era the probability for any common Japanese to meet a foreigner within Japan remained remarkably remote; the chance of encountering a German stood slimmer still. Even for Japanese aiming to venture abroad German did not recommend itself as the obvious foreign language of choice. Japanese with a continental ambition should arm themselves with knowledge of Chinese, Korean or Russian (perchance even some Manchu or Mongolian). Those casting their dreams farther afield would focus on Spanish or Portuguese for migrating to South America, French for Europe in general, maybe Dutch for the East Indies, and definitely above all, English for everywhere. When Germany after World War I relinquished its possessions in China and the Pacific, German lost an official presence near Japan. Indeed World War I imposed a caesura of sorts in Japanese exposure to German. Soon after Japan entered hostilities on behalf of the Allies

⁷¹ 「私は此の嚴肅な態度、謹嚴な心持を、新たに入試戦場に赴かんとする人々に要望すると同時に、苦杯を嘗めて臥薪嘗膽を誓った諸君に、其の戦敗の路を顧みて當時の態度に聊かなりとも斯かる投げやりの態度はなかつたかを反省し、來るべき戦場には最も嚴肅な態度を以て臨まんとする覺悟を懷かれんことを切望するものである。」 in Gonda Yasunosuke, *Kijun Dokubun Wayakuhō* 『基準獨文和譯法』 *Fundament der Übersetzung ins Japanische* (Tokyo: Yūhōdō Shoten, 1933), 37.

the government banned publication and circulation of all German newspapers to snuff out enemy propaganda. The war also severed bilateral commerce, including of course Japanese importation of German books. In addition, Germans in the Japanese Empire, many of whom worked as language tutors, had to leave for the German colony Tsingtau (Qingdao) in China. Many, like the aforementioned Hans Ueberschaar, who taught German in a medical school in Osaka until the outbreak of war, served in the brief, hopeless defense of the German outpost and spent the remainder of the war in a prisoner of war camp in Japan.⁷² For Japanese learning German, especially those few who had the indulgence of having a German teacher, the Great War made a great wreck of their language studies.

Thus, the study of German in Japan entered the interwar era under seemingly inauspicious circumstances, not to mention the formidable notoriety that always preceded it. This impression perhaps influenced the slew of language books that advertised themselves as “new” since German appeared to need a fresh start. In fact German in Japan reemerged from World War I in a surprisingly robust position. The German prisoners of war seamlessly reentered Japanese society and reprised their role as cultural intermediaries, including of course as instructors of German. The Japanese appetite for German, possibly whetted by wartime privations, stayed voracious, and the language book industry responded by furnishing the supply to satisfy the demand. As a matter of fact, of the 1,100-odd books on Germany (excluding literal translations) published in Japan between 1919 and 1937 currently extant in the National Diet Library, nearly a quarter dealt with some aspect of the German

⁷² World War I in the Far East hardly receives any attention in most studies of the global conflict. Yet in the context of Japanese-German relations, the war became a crucial, shared experience between the Japanese captors and their German captives, many of whom already were or would develop into specialists on Japan for their fellow countrymen. The history of German POWs in Japan is well known not only among scholars but captured the popular imagination as well. See Tomita Hiroshi 冨田弘, *Bandō furyo shūyōjo: Nichidoku sensō to Zainichi Doitsu furyo* 『板東俘虜収容所 日独戦争と在日ドイツ俘虜』 (Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppankyoku 法政大学出版局, 1991).

language. Although most Japanese could harbor no realistic hope of ever visiting Germany, many chose to take on the task of grappling with its admittedly difficult tongue, so much so that language acquisition constituted an important component of Japanese-German cultural relations. Moreover, one must not forget that for educated Japanese, German would amount to a third non-Japanese language to be mastered after the Chinese characters and English. For if English in Japan did not take precedence over all other foreign tongues, the German language books would not have assumed that readers already knew the Latin alphabet from English and also warned them not to confuse German and English pronunciations.⁷³ Given the host of alternatives and obstacles to acquiring German, interwar Japanese as well as posterior historians would pose the same question: why German?

As it turned out, German, despite the turmoil and repercussions of World War I,⁷⁴ maintained a presence in interwar Japan as well as the world disproportionately greater than Germany's own under the sun. Some Japanese specialists on German turned the demise of Germany around into an argument for studying the language, confident that certain national traits of the German people, as revealed in their mother tongue, would make their country great and thus worth knowing again. An advertisement in 1929 for a German-Japanese pocket dictionary declared that understanding the German people's indomitable spirit that undergirded their politics, economics, academics and literature had become a vital matter for

⁷³ For example, 「我國に於ける獨逸語學習者の殆んど全部は英語の・習者である。英語より獨逸語への經路をとるものが殆んど全部である。」 in Gonda, *Saishin Doitsugo kōza*, 61.

⁷⁴ In addition to the Great War, the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923 also dealt a blow to German learning in Japan. For example, the quake and fire destroyed the publishing house and draft prints of Katayama Masao's German-Japanese dictionary, about to enter publication. As a result the dictionary, slated to come out for sale in 1923, did not appear in print until 1927. See Katayama Masao, *Sōkai Dokuwa daijiten* 『雙解獨和大辭典』 *Großes Deutsch-Japanisches Wörterbuch mit Worterklärungen in beiden Sprachen* (Tokyo: Nankōdō Shoten, 1927).

the Japanese.⁷⁵ The preface to a book on German for dentistry echoed Goethe's sentiment toward foreign language and mother tongue by declaring that those who despise foreign languages will have a hand in the downfall of their own country and people.⁷⁶ Saigō concluded that because the Germans' "thoroughness and expansiveness" underpinned their culture and its contribution to world culture, the Japanese would do well in their studies to emulate these German qualities.⁷⁷ He added that, though five years of war in Europe together with the Treaty of Versailles seemingly condemned Germany the way Pompeii or Sodom was damned, thanks to its unique German culture the country was making a furious comeback bound to sweep over the entire world. In order to unlock the secrets of this German culture, Japanese students of German should not treat their studies as a casual matter.⁷⁸ Yamagishi, a pillar of German philology in modern Japan and an authoritative voice in Germanic studies, held virtually the same opinion:

⁷⁵ 「不撓不倒獨逸國民の政治・經濟・學術・文學の底に流るゝ精神は世界いづれの國を措いても・究すべき我國民の肝要事であつて、それは獨逸語をよく解すべしとの同意語であるまいか。」 in Ōshima Shun'ichirō, Advertisement.

⁷⁶ 「「外國語を蔑視する者は國家と云はず國民云はず悉く衰退する」」 in Shimada Masami 島田昌三 and Kokubu Shirō 國分史樓, *Shika Doitsugo dokushūsho* 『齒科獨逸語獨習書』 *Zum Selbststudium der deutschen Sprache für Zahnärzte u. -Studenten* (Tokyo: Kanehara Shoten 金原商店, 1929), Preface 1.

⁷⁷ 「今此處に徹底と云ふ文字を用ひたが、此の徹底性(Gründlichkeit)は、十字軍の發動以來・史的著名の事實になつて居る廣大なる散在(Diaspora)性と共に獨逸人の二大特性となり、獨逸文化(deutsche Kultur)の根底を形成して、世界の文化の發展に寄與するところ大なるものがある。獨逸人は・一・着々として・を進める徹底的性質の國民であることを、我々は深く之れを腦裡に刻み込み、日常の凡ゆる仕事に於ても勿論のこと、殊に彼等の國語である獨逸語學習に於ては、此の點を大いに模倣して貰ひたいものである。」 in Saigō, 20.

⁷⁸ 「戰塵五年歐洲の天地を荒廢に歸せしめ當の獨逸帝國をして、その國民は流亡凋落し、其の國力は疲弊消耗の慘禍に陥らしめ、搗て加へて千九百十九年六月二十八日のヴェルサイユ條約は、獨逸の死命を完全に制し、その結果實・に於ては恰かもポンペイの如くに碎かれ、ソドムの如くに燬れ、殆んど再起の望みなきまでに思惟せられたにも拘らず、その獨逸は雄々しくも捲土重來の勢猛に、その後幾何もなくして、其の特有の「獨逸文化」を以つて駸々乎として世界を席捲しつゝあり、學問・究の領土は其の翼に掩はるゝの現・を呈するに到つたのである。故に身苟くも文化の一端に座し、口に文化を稱ふるものは、此の驚くべき「獨逸文化」の祕を探るべく、獨逸語の・究を等閑に附すべからざるは言ふまでもないことである。」 in *ibid*, Introduction 1.

Although the demise of Germany was propagated immediately after the world war, everyone knows that Germany turned its fortunes around afterwards and is now superseding the victorious powers. Studying such potential of German culture is thus absolutely necessary for breaking the impasse in which our country currently finds itself. However, the study of German culture must use a proper knowledge of German as a foundation and in regard to original works proceed steadily step by step.⁷⁹

Thus, learning German and by extension learning from Germany, according to Yamagishi and some of his colleagues (bear in mind also Sekiguchi's not-so-subtle "Japan learns from Germany" pronunciation exercises), amounted to a matter of national importance for Japan. As late as 1942, in the midst of another world war, a language book editor still felt obliged to mention how Germany rebounded from its rock bottom after the previous conflict to become a world power, thanks largely to the reforms implemented by National Socialism. Since German also underwent numerous changes under Nazism in the meantime, Japanese students who wanted to understand the New Germany would need to familiarize themselves with the New German.⁸⁰

Beyond supposedly imparting lessons from the national character it embodied, German also translated into concrete knowledge and tangible benefits for Japanese students. Far from its current lot as merely one among several European tongues, German in interwar

⁷⁹ 「世界大戦直後切りに滅亡を宣傳された獨逸が、その後國運を挽回して、[・]に戰勝諸國を凌駕しつつあることは、世人周知の事實である。斯の如き底力ある獨逸文化の[・]究は、行詰まれる現下の我が國[・]を打開するに、必要缺くべからざるものがある。而して獨逸文化の[・]究は、獨逸語の正確なる知識を基礎として、原書について一[・]々々堅實に足を踏みしめて行かなければならぬ。」 in Yamagishi Mitsunobu, *Shotō Doitsu buntan* 『初等獨逸文典』 *Deutsche Schulgrammatik für Japaner* (Tokyo: Kashiwaba Shobō 柏葉書房, 1929), Introduction. Yamagishi also wrote an almost-verbatim introduction to Iwamoto's book.

⁸⁰ 「ことにドイツは、この前の大戦によつて、世界に覇を爭ふ列[・]の伍列から、急天直下、戰敗のどん底に突落され、しかも民族の若い底力によつて、幾多の苦難を切抜け、ことに 1932 [sic]年初頭には、民族社會主義變革を達成して、再び堂々と世界[・]國に伍し、そして今次の世界大戦の勃發によつて、その最[・]國たるの實力を實證した。かくのごとく、ドイツは、僅々二十五年間に、まことに目まぐるしい程の運命の轉變を経験したのであり、それだけ、ドイツ語も、その間に、非常な變轉を遂げたのである。早い話が、ドイツの書物を讀んでゐて、見慣れぬ語彙に出會すと、在來の辭書を引いても出てゐないことが、しばしばある。」 in Kobayashi Ryōsei 小林良正, ed., *Shin Doitsu seiji keizai goi fu seiji keizai hōrei nenpyō* 『新獨逸政治・經濟語彙 附政治・經濟法令年表』 (Tokyo: Nikkō Shoin 日光書院, 1942), Foreword 1-2.

Japan, indeed the world, served as the de facto lingua franca for a number of professional and academic fields. If nothing else, knowledge in German literally guarded the gates to many Japanese institutions of higher education. Most universities and “colleges” (the pre-1945 “high schools” 高等學校, literally identical to the German *Hochschule* but certainly different from its American namesake) required applicants to pass a foreign language test as part of the entrance examination; the prestigious and ultra-competitive imperial universities specifically stipulated a test for German.⁸¹ Moreover, it mattered little what these potential students intended to study, for the faculties of economics, law, medicine, philosophy, letters, engineering, physics, pharmacy, agriculture and chemistry all administered a German test.⁸² Outside academia, civil servants and army officer school cadets seeking advancement could also brighten their prospects by proving proficiency in German.⁸³ The high stakes involved—university admission and career promotion—in mastering German, or rather mastering the passage of German tests, spawned a cottage industry of examination preparation guides to help aspirants overcome the institutionalized hurdle that German had become in interwar Japan. For examination takers German looked nothing like a living tongue but materialized instead only on paper as words and texts to be translated from and into Japanese within a given amount of time.

This high-stake, institutional status of German within the Japanese educational and professional systems helped commercialize the studying of the language. Japanese students

⁸¹ See Baba Hisayoshi 馬場久吉, *Teikoku daigaku juken jūyō hissu Doitsugo tangoshū 5000go* 『帝國大學受験重要必須獨逸語單語集五千語』 (Tokyo: Nichidoku Shoin, 1932).

⁸² See Nichidoku shoin, ed., *Zenkoku teidai nyūgaku shiken Doitsugo mondai to sono kaitō jukensha no tame ni 1932* 『全國帝大入學試験 獨逸語問題と其の解答 受験者の爲に 昭和7年版』 (Tokyo: Nichidoku Shoin, 1932).

⁸³ See Nichidoku shoin, ed., *Shiken mondai Doitsugo shōkai* 『試験問題 獨逸語詳解』 *Die ausführlichen Lösungen der deutschen Prüfungsaufgaben zum Eintritt verschiedener Schulen* (Tokyo: Nichidoku Shoin, 1925).

knew full well that mastery of German could reap them rich benefits, but they also knew that such valuable skill could only be had in exchange for much time, effort and most certainly money. To wit, summiting the step pyramid of knowledge acquisition by “conquering German” could blaze for one a trail of upward social mobility through opening doors to higher education or workplace promotion, but one also had to pay an entrance fee for the opportunity. Although pre-1945 Japan definitely constituted a hierarchical and even aristocratic society in which people born into certain families or regions enjoyed an edge in business, government or the military, it also abounded with anecdotes of individuals of lowly origins who made their own fortune with sheer will and talent. We need look no further than to some of the Germanists under discussion. For example, Tashiro (host of the NHK German radio course), Sekiguchi (who never had a chance to study abroad), Gonda and the great literary commentator Aoki Shōkichi 青木昌吉 all rose from humble backgrounds to become well-known scholars or university professors.⁸⁴

As sincerely as these language experts wished to share their passion for German and promote its studies in Japan, they also eagerly wanted to profit from their endeavor by pushing and selling products and services to consumers. As a direct result of German’s prized, elevated position in segments of Japanese society, knowledge of the language was bought and sold in the marketplace like any other merchandise. Beyond the aforementioned examination preparation guides, pronunciation exercises for radio lessons and companions to “talkie” films, the specialists also compiled or penned school textbooks, grammar manuals, collections of quotations and idioms, conversation booklets, vocabulary flashcards,

⁸⁴ Granted, none of them had *burakumin* or Ainu ancestry, either of which would have torpedoed their prospect for social advancement. For more on the lives of some prominent Germanists in modern Japan, see the interesting book, Kamimura Naoki 上村直己, *Kindai Nihon no Doitsugo gakusha* 『近代日本のドイツ語学者』 (Suwa 諏訪: Chōeisha 鳥影社, 2008). The scholars mentioned in the book were active mostly in the Meiji and early Taishō eras, but a number worked well into the interwar period.

handwriting practice sheets, declension and conjugation charts, and dictionaries of all sizes. In addition, they translated numerous German works into Japanese, including not only popular, timeless classics by Goethe and Schiller but also the timely and political, from the 25-point platform of the Nazi Party to Marx's *Wage-Labor and Capital*. In fact, throughout the interwar era Japanese readers would find it much easier to locate translations of works by Marx or Engels than Hitler's *Mein Kampf*.⁸⁵

Since many Germanists held posts in schools and universities and taught classes on German, several of them sought to profit additionally by publishing their lessons in book or journal form. For instance, Yamagishi served as general editor for *Short University Course on German* (*Doitsugo tanki daigaku* 『獨逸語短期大學』), an anthology of lectures by an all-star team of professors. Moreover, the experts also edited periodicals on learning German. For example, in 1929 Gonda launched *German Studies* (*Dokugo kenkyū* 『獨語・究』 *Der Die Das Deutsche*), while Sekiguchi steered the monthly *Elementary German* (*Shokyū Doitsugo* 『初級ドイツ語』), and Aoki Shōkichi oversaw the monthly *The German Language* (*Doitsugo* 『獨逸語』 *Die deutsche Sprache*).⁸⁶ Indeed, since the mid Meiji period there had existed a number of magazines teaching German to the masses, for example, *Journal of the German Studies Association* (*Doitsugaku kyōkai zasshi* 『獨逸學協會雜

⁸⁵ Respectively, Gottfried Feder ゴットフリート・フエーデル, *Doitsu shōronbun taiyaku sōsho* 5 『獨逸小論文對譯叢書 第5篇』 *Das Programm der N.S.D.A.P.* ナチス綱領, trans. Kido Hirō 城門廣男 (Tokyo: Daigaku Shorin, 1934); and Karl Heinrich Marx カール・ハインリヒ・マルクス, *Doitsu shōronbun taiyaku sōsho* 2 『獨逸小論文對譯叢書 第2篇』 *Lohnarbeit und Kapital* 賃労働と資本, trans. Hirono Toshikama 廣野利鎌 (Tokyo: Daigaku Shorin, 1933).

⁸⁶ See advertisement for *Dokugo kenkyū* in Gonda, *Doitsu shinbun kenkyū*, Advertisement; advertisement for *Shokyū Doitsugo* in Matsuoka Binkō, *Shōkei Dokubun shoho* 『捷徑獨文初・』 *Kurzgefasstes Deutsches Elementarbuch* (Tokyo: Shōbundō, 1933), Advertisement; and advertisement for *Doitsugo* in Uchida Mitsugi 内田貢, *Doitsu shin bunten* 『獨逸新文典』 *Moderne Deutsche Grammatik* (Tokyo: Ikubundō Shoten, 1930), advertisement.

誌』), *New Journal of German for Self-Study* (*Doitsugo dokushū shinshi* 『獨逸語獨修新誌』) and *New Journal of Accelerated German Studies* (*Doitsugaku sokusei shinshi* 『獨逸學速成新誌』). Some smaller publications fell as casualties during World War I, but the prominent Society for the Journal of German Studies (*Doitsugogaku Zasshisha* 獨逸語學雜誌社) continued its flagship periodical (*Doitsugogaku zasshi* 『獨逸語學雜誌』) into the early interwar period. In the late Meiji period the society also edited or published a number of popular textbooks for German that the Ministry of Education approved for schools and remained in use well into the 1920s. Ultimately, however, the society too withered under the altered reality of German learning in Japan after World War I as a new generation of specialists, many of whom trained by these very publications, emerged to compete for shelf space and market share.

Despite wide varieties in format these works shared the feature that they cost money, which linked their disparate producers and consumers in a commercial transaction. None of the experts taught the language out of charity, and their publishing houses did not give away books on German for free. As a matter of fact a handful of publishers concentrated on selling German as an important component of its product line. For example, Ikubundō shoten, then as now, held a leading role in German teaching in Japan by printing textbooks and grammar guides. Other major firms included Nankōdō shoten, Nichidoku shoin, Taiyōdō shoten, Nanzandō shoten and Seika shoin. Every language tool mentioned in this chapter (vocabulary flashcard, movie companion, handwriting exercise, etc.) carried a price tag, ranging from fractions of a yen for a language magazine to several yen for a dictionary. During the interwar era most language texts, with some inflation, cost between ¥0.80 and ¥2.50, while specific reference works such as German for chemistry or medicine usually sold for ¥3.50,

and comprehensive lexicons would set one back at least ¥5.00, with the priciest specimen going for ¥12.00 in 1937. Twelve yen may not buy anything today, but in the early 1920s a laborer's household of four lived on roughly ¥30 per month, and in the mid 1930s low level civil servants (*hannin* 判任) earned ¥50 or less monthly. Obviously students from these families could hardly build a personal collection of books on German, though many seemed to have saved up enough to acquire at least a popular self-taught German text and dictionary (of paramount importance for textual translation), as evidenced by their multiple editions. Certainly students also had access to textbooks in classrooms and libraries, but these communally available copies presented problems of their own.⁸⁷ In any case, learning German incurred such expenses that many Japanese had to make real sacrifices for it and could not afford to dabble in it simply out of curiosity or admiration of some vague national traits of the German people, despite what some experts wanted to believe. Rather, most students entered German studies with hopes of making good on their financial commitment and concrete expectations of tangible, immediate returns for their input. Simply put, teaching German was good business and learning German was serious business.

The pressure behind acquiring German, exacerbated by the single-purpose, all-or-nothing tests used to certify students' proficiency, deformed the German being taught and learned (and thus sold and bought) to resemble more a dead language than a living tongue.⁸⁸ Since the language examination consisted solely of two-way translation questions, teachers

⁸⁷ Numerous texts on German still extant in the National Diet Library, in original book form or on microfiche, suffer from missing or scribbled pages. Some users who encountered stolen pages let their frustration out by cursing the thief or vandal, for example, 「こんな奴はふん！...畜生！！」 handwritten in Gonda, *Saishin Doitsugo kōza* 1, 89.

⁸⁸ Granted, before the advent of the communicative approach in foreign language teaching in the late twentieth century, students all over the world studied foreign languages mostly through memorization; Japanese students were by no means unique in this endeavor.

and students alike targeted almost exclusively that narrow task. Consequently pupils learned grammar and vocabulary by rote memorization, honed by the endless translation drills that filled the pages of most language books. Indeed the term “memorization” (*anki* 暗記) appeared frequently on and in many books. The focus on replication rather than comprehension also led to heavy reliance on katakana as a shortcut to approximate German sounds in lieu of proper understanding of phonetics. Although a good number of topical works delved into pronunciation and offered conversation lessons,⁸⁹ they made up but a negligible portion of the books on German, not to mention that many language books did not discuss pronunciation at all. After all, the inescapable reality in interwar Japan remained that only a privileged few could ever expect to deploy spoken German, while the rest could only aspire to survive the test.

Appreciating that many students merely wanted to study for the examination and not necessarily to acquire German, some experts tailored their books or advertisements thereof to fulfill the demand. Beyond the blatant examination preparation guides, several works verged on raising false hopes to attract desperate customers. As mentioned, many proclaimed themselves “new,” when in fact no new method of teaching German emerged in the interwar years. Several called themselves “interesting,” but the translation exercises within rendered them anything but fun. Some sold themselves as “practical,” even though students would hardly find value in translating German word for word after passing the language test. A notable few dangled before readers easy, cheap and quick solutions to the German problem by promising students the unrealistic prospects of teaching themselves German with no

⁸⁹ For example, there were even books dealing with the very specific Berlin dialect and Low German. See Komura Minoru, *Beruringo* 『伯林語』 *Berlinisch: Die grammatische Untersuchung des Berliner Dialekts mit Erläuterungen der Wörter und Redensarten* (Tokyo: Daigakushorin, 1935); and Watanabe Kakuji 渡邊格司, *Teidoitsugo kenkyū furoku roiteru goi* 『低獨逸語 ▪ 究 附 ▪ ロイテル語彙』 *Einführung in die Plattdeutsche Mundart. Nebst Reuter-Wortschatz* (Tokyo: Daigakushorin, 1943).

outside help or of achieving proficiency rapidly.⁹⁰ The most egregious examples even offered to teach readers German in four weeks, to improve their grammar in 24 hours or to perfect their pronunciation in five hours!⁹¹ Needless to say, those who fantasized to be over with German in a month or so were not seeking a lifelong relation with the language or its country but only a quick fix to help them squeak by the examination.

No evidence indicates that those Japanese who took to studying German did so because they felt any innate affinity for or held any deep interest in Germany.⁹² Certainly some, notably the very experts who penned books on German, thought highly of the tongue, its speakers and their country. Most students, however, steeled themselves to suffer through the “hell of German” to learn enough of the language as a means to further ends. In other words, for common Japanese the decision to acquire German equaled an investment in time, exertion and money, weighed against alternative third languages—after English—such as French, Russian, Chinese or even Esperanto, for anticipated returns in their scholarship and career. German nowadays may seem a quaint European language studied by fewer and fewer

⁹⁰ Phrases meaning “self-study” or “self-taught” embellished the title of several books, for examples, 『初等獨逸語獨修』 (*Elementary German for Self-Study*), 『粕谷獨逸自修文典』 (*Kasuya's German Grammar Book for Self-Study*), 『獨修自在趣味の獨逸語』 (*Leisurely and Fun Self-Study of German*), 『獨習者の獨逸語』 (*German for Self-Taught Students*), 『自修新ドイツ語』 (*New German for Self-Study*) and 『系統的醫家獨逸語自修書』 (*Book for Systematic Medical German for Self-Study*).

⁹¹ Phrases advertising speed and rapidness donned the title of several works, including 『捷徑獨文初・』 (*Shortcut for Beginning German*), 『速習・獨逸語講座』 (*German Course for Fast Study*), 『急進ドイツ語講座』 (*Accelerated German Course*) and 『獨逸語基本五千語急速暗記法』 (*Method for Rapid Memorization of 5,000 Basic German Words*). At least two books offered to teach German within four weeks, 『獨逸語四週間』 (*German in Four Weeks*) and of course 『新獨逸語四週間』 (*New German in Four Weeks*). One promised results in 24 hours 『新獨逸文法 廿四時間整理』 (*Organizing New German Grammar in 24 Hours*), and another in five hours 『獨逸語發音五時間』 (*German Pronunciation in Five Hours*).

⁹² Similarly, during the Tokugawa period the few Japanese who studied Dutch did so not because they felt any special bond with the Netherlands. Rather, they treated the Dutch language as the only viable means to acquire Western knowledge.

people, but before 1945 it performed the role as the standard language in a number of fields of expertise.⁹³

One such area of scientific endeavor where competence in German paid dividends was the physical sciences, particularly chemistry and physics. Using the Nobel Prize as an approximate metric, anyone in the interwar years could see that German chemists and physicists contributed mightily to the advancement of their fields. Names like Bosch and Planck, and especially Einstein and Haber, who received a hero's welcome in Japan (see Chapter Five), resonated among educated and lay Japanese alike. As the writer of a German for chemistry book put it, "Germany is a country of chemistry. In scholarship it reigns over the world's academic community with its top knowledge, and in practice its newest technology pushes the frontline of civilization."⁹⁴ He added that the advance and development of Japan's medical and pharmaceutical knowledge, as well as all areas of chemistry, owed much to Germany. As a result, knowledge of German acted as a *sine qua non* for the study of chemistry in Japan. An advertisement for another German for chemistry

⁹³ Although the standing of German in the English-speaking world has been declining, it retains a strong position as target foreign language in Eastern and Southeastern Europe, Russia, the Middle East and Latin America. In addition, specialized areas of studies such as classical music or classics also draw students worldwide to learn German. For the current status of German learning in Japan and the world, see Gerhard Stickel, ed., *Deutsch von außen*, Institut für Deutsche Sprache Jahrbuch 2002 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003); Albert Raasch, ed., *Sprachenpolitik Deutsch als Fremdsprache: Länderberichte zur internationalen Diskussion*, Deutsch: Studium zum Sprachunterricht und zur interkulturellen Didaktik (Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V., 1997); Dietrich Sturm, ed., *Deutsch als Fremdsprache weltweit: Situation und Tendenzen* (Munich: Max Hueber Verlag, 1987); Ulrich Wannagat, Jürgen Gerbig and Stefan Bucher, eds., *Deutsch als zweite Fremdsprache in Ostasien – neue Perspektiven* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 2003); and Hans-R. Fluck and Jürgen Gerbig, eds., *Spracherwerb Deutsch in Ost- und Zentralasien: Lehr und Lerntraditionen im Wandel* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1999).

⁹⁴ 「獨逸は化學の國である。學理方面では其の最高の知識を以て世界の學界に君臨し、實際方面では其の最新の技術を以て常に文化の前線に先驅してゐる。現に優良な製品とその低廉な價格とは、世界大戰で一時喪失した世界市場を再び奪還して各國の化學工業界を震駭させてゐる。別して我邦の醫學・藥學その他化學全般の進・發達は、殆んどこれを獨逸に負ふものである。されば、我邦に於て化學を基礎とする諸學の・究には、獨逸語の知識が缺くべからざる前提である。」 in Nakayama Hisashi 中山久, *Kagaku Doitsugo kenkyū* 『化學獨逸語・究』 *Zum Studium des Chemisch-Deutsch* (Tokyo: Mokuseisha Shoin 木星社書院, 1930), Introduction by Takagi Seiji 高木誠司.

book concurred by declaring that for chemists German was the most essential language, and if one could not read German then one's study in chemistry would become mired in difficulty.⁹⁵ Even when an author believed that chemistry in Japan had caught up with that in the West, he still emphasized the importance of learning European languages for accessing Western knowledge.⁹⁶

Beyond its global role in chemistry, German practically functioned as the standard language of those Japanese studying chemistry. A number of Japanese chemical terms, notably the names of elements, were derived literally from their Germanic counterparts. For example, oxygen in Japanese, *sanso* 酸素 (“sour material”), corresponds directly to the German *Sauerstoff*. Hydrogen in Japanese, *suiso* 水素, and in German, *Wasserstoff*, both mean “watery material.” Nitrogen appears in Japanese as *chisso* 窒素, “suffocating material,” which matches the German *Stickstoff*, related to the verb *ersticken* (to suffocate). And sodium is known in Japan as *natoriumu* ナトリウム, a transliteration of the German *Natrium* (itself from Latin).⁹⁷ German dictated too the Japanese nomenclature of compounds and technology. Thus, malic acid is labeled in Japanese as *ringosan* 林檎酸 (“apple acid”), from the German

⁹⁵ 「獨逸語は、化學者にとって唯一、最須要の語學である。獨逸語が讀めないでは化學の・究はもとよりその學修さへむづかしい。」 in advertisement for *Kagaku Doitsugo kaishaku kenkyū* 『化學獨逸語解釋・究』 in Enomoto Tsunetarō 榎本恆太郎 and Kurotsuka Juichi 黒塚壽一, *Doitsugo ronbun sakuhō kenkyū shoshu Doitsubun kōseihō* 『獨逸語論文作法・究 諸種獨逸文構成法』 (Tokyo: Taiyōdō Shoten, 1932), Advertisement.

⁹⁶ 「輒近我國に於ける化學の進・は實に著しく、茲に漸く西歐先進國の域に到達することが出來た。今日では我々は化學の總てを必ずしも歐書を通じて學ぶ要はなくなつた 然し此故に歐書を讀む必要がないと考へることは出來ぬ。彼我の交・は層一層密接となり、言語上の障害の如きも出來得る限り之を征服せねばならぬ時運にあると思ふ。」 in Hashimoto Kichirō 橋本吉郎, *Kagaku yōgo shin jiten* 『化學用語新辭典』 (Tokyo: Taiyōdō Shoten, 1927), Introduction.

⁹⁷ See examples in Nakayama Hisashi, ed., *Nichidoku shoin Doitsugo zensho 1 butsuri to kagaku* 『日獨書院獨逸語全書 第一編 物理と化學』 *Nichidoku-Shoins Universal-Bibliothek Nr. 1 Physik und Chemie* (Tokyo: Nichidoku Shoin, 1934). There is also a large number of Japanese chemical terms derived from direct transliteration of their German originals, such as *uran* ウラン from *Uran* (uranium), *enerugi* エネルギー from *Energie* (energy) and *kuromu* クロム from *Chrom* (chromium).

Apfelsäure, while lactic acid becomes in Japanese *nyūsan* 乳酸 (“milk acid”), from the German *Milchsäure*.⁹⁸ Finally, giving credit where credit is due, a Japanese patient with a broken bone did not receive an x-ray but instead *rentogensen* レントゲン線, or *Röntgenstrahlen*, “Röntgen rays.”⁹⁹ The obvious differences between the English and the German terms for the identical chemicals on the one hand, and the direct correspondence between the German and the Japanese on the other, demonstrated the influence German exercised in the physical sciences in Japan. Indeed, as an advertisement for an engineering German book proclaimed, “The era of omnipotence for English has passed, while the rise in fortune of German studies is all but a matter of certainty.”¹⁰⁰

In addition to chemistry, German also dictated the way Japanese students and practitioners of dentistry, pharmacology and in particular medicine articulated their knowledge, and the experts freely acknowledged that Japan had Germany to thank for its development in these fields.¹⁰¹ A famous surgeon wrote that Japan felt gratitude and awe for the “colleague, nay, mentor” that was Germany, which surpassed by far other countries in

⁹⁸ See examples in Isobe Kōichi 磯部幸一, *Rika Doitsu gohō kyōtei* 『理科獨逸語法教程』 *Deutsche Grammatik für wissenschaftliche Studierende* (Tokyo: Kanehara Shoten, 1933), 13. Although the Japanese names of some elements, such as potassium (カリウム, from *Kalium*), came from Dutch instead of German, the more complex compounds, discovered well after Dutch influence in Japan had waned, certainly had German origins.

⁹⁹ As if to demonstrate the displacement of German by English in Japan after 1945, x-ray in Japan nowadays is called *ekkususen* エックス線. Today, quite likely few young Japanese would know that x-ray was not always x-ray in their country. For more on Japanese’s contact and relations with other languages, see Leo J. Loveday, *Language Contact in Japan: A Socio-linguistic History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

¹⁰⁰ 「英語萬能の時代は過ぎて、獨逸語・究の氣運が起つたのは蓋し當然であらう。」 in Enomoto and Kurotsuka, Advertisement.

¹⁰¹ For example, 「別して我邦の醫學・藥學・その他化學全般の進・發達は、殆んどこれを獨逸に負ふものである。されば、我邦に於て化學を基礎とする諸學の・究には、獨逸語の知識が缺くべからざる前提である。」 in Takizawa Yuzuru 瀧澤譲, *Igaku Doitsugo kenkyū kiso iga hen* 『醫學獨逸語・究 基礎醫學篇』 (Tokyo: Mokuseisha Shoin, 1931), Advertisement.

medical knowledge.¹⁰² As seen in Chapter Five, the Japanese held German medicine and technology in general in high regard, to the point of allowing a foreigner, Erwin Bälz, to serve as doctor for the Meiji imperial family.¹⁰³ Thus it should surprise no one that in interwar Japan the study of German and of medicine remained inextricably intertwined. Not only did all Japanese physicians trained in western medicine have to know a good deal of German (one, Mori Ōgai 森鷗外, knew a great deal), but many experts on German first came into contact with the language through studies of or aspirations in medicine, such as Aoki, Tashiro, Kamei Tōtarō 亀井藤太郎, Taniguchi Hidetarō 谷口秀太郎 and Ōtsu Yasushi 大津康, to name but a few.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, it was likely no mere coincidence that several Germans, like Ueberschaar, taught their native tongue in medical schools or faculties in Japan.¹⁰⁵ The link between German and medicine even exhibited itself in the publishing world, as several publishers of books on German, like Nanzandō, Nankōdō and Kanehara shoten, also specialized in printing medical texts. Indeed, many in Japan shared the opinion that German served as the language of medicine so that medical students could not study one without the other.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² 「獨逸は、科學の國として生きて居る。別して、醫學の方面には獨自の地位を拓き、斷然他の國を凌駕して居る。我々が、日本人として、いま我が國の醫學が遺して來た足跡を顧みる時、何よりも先づ感謝と畏敬の念を以て思ひ出すものは、常に同伴者、否、指導者としての獨逸の醫學の姿である。」 in *ibid*, Introduction by Satō Sankichi 佐藤三吉.

¹⁰³ For more on Germany's influence in modern Japanese medicine, see Kim Hoi-eun, "Physicians on the Move: German Physicians in Meiji Japan and Japanese Medical Students in Imperial Germany, 1868–1914" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2006); and Morris Low, ed., *Building a Modern Japan: Science, Technology, and Medicine in the Meiji Era and Beyond* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

¹⁰⁴ For more on these philologists, see Kamimura.

¹⁰⁵ Other examples include former German POWs like Alexander Spann and Carl von Weegmann, who respectively taught in Kyushu and Tokyo.

¹⁰⁶ 「我が國に於て普通醫語と稱せられるものは、獨逸語」 in Isobe Kōichi, *Doitsu ibun no kakikata* 『獨逸醫文の書き方』 *Methode zur Übersetzung für jünger Äskulaps* (Tokyo: Daigakushorin, 1932),

Unsurprisingly, just as with German and chemistry, the phenomenon of the widespread transfer of German terminology occurred in Japanese medical and biological nomenclature. For example, albumin, a type of protein, translates into German as *Eiweißkörper* and into Japanese as *tanpakushitsu* 蛋白質, both literally “egg white substance.” Cecum, a part of the intestine near the appendix, becomes in German *Blinddarm* and Japanese *mōchō* 盲腸, both meaning “blind intestine.” Cerebrum and cerebellum, respectively transform into German as *Großhirn* and *Kleinhirn*, and into Japanese as *dainō* 大脳 and *shōnō* 小脳—“big brain” and “small brain.”¹⁰⁷ In fact, German became so incorporated in medical Japanese that many Japanese physicians spoke a type of hybrid language intelligible only among themselves.¹⁰⁸ For instance, no monolingual German or Japanese could make out the meanings of *Neugeborene wa gesund desuka* (Is the newborn healthy?) or *Magenkrebs to kimatte Operation wo suru* (When I decide that [a patient has] stomach cancer, I perform an operation).¹⁰⁹ It bears pointing out that the German words

Advertisement; 「されば、由來、我が國に於ては、醫學の・究には、獨逸語の智識によ・體に缺く可からざるものとされて居る。」 in Takizawa, Introduction by Satō; and 「現今「醫學と獨逸語」は我國では車の兩輪の如く常識となつて、醫學に志すものは必ず獨逸語を學び、各醫育機關に於ても・意獨逸語の教授に當つて居る。」 in Hamada Saburō 濱田三郎 and Takahashi Toshio 高橋俊雄, *Dokuwa taiyaku shinsatsu mondō* 『獨和對譯 診察問答』 *Klinische Sprachstunde* (Tokyo: Nichidoku Shoin, 1936), Introduction.

¹⁰⁷ These particular examples are drawn from Takizawa’s book. Just as in chemistry, a host of Japanese medical terms are transliterated from German, for example *arerugī* アレルギー from *Allergie* (allergy), *reseputo* レセプト from *Rezept* (medical bill), and *noirōze* ノイローゼ from *Neurose* (neurosis). The more elementary medical vocabulary in Japanese, such as those for major internal organs, originated from Chinese centuries ago so that there was no need to adopt western terms in these cases.

¹⁰⁸ 「邦語獨逸語交り文 現今デハ邦語中へ外國語ガ盛ニ取り入レラレテ居ル。普通ニ使ハレルノハ英語デアル。...醫用トシテハ獨逸語ガ廣ク使ハレテ居ル。」 in Naitō Hachure 内藤八郎, *Iyō gaikokugo nyūmon Doitsugo Ratengo yomikata* 『醫用外國語入門 獨逸語ラテン語讀方』 (Nagoya: Nagoyashi Ishikai Fuzoku Kango Fusanba Gakkō 名古屋市醫師會附屬看護婦・婆學校, 1933), 23.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 24. This behavior is really not as strange as it may at first seem. For example, nowadays non-English speakers regularly pepper their sentences with various English terms when talking about technology or the internet.

substituted into these hybrid sentences, namely *Neugeborene* (newborn), *gesund* (healthy), *Magenkrebs* (stomach cancer) and *Operation* (operation), all have fully functional, un-transliterated native counterparts, respectively: *shoseiji* 初生兒, *tassha* 達者, *igan* 胃癌 and *shujutsu* 手術. That Japanese doctors mixed German and Japanese showcased the ingrained training they received and the entrenched position of German within Japanese medicine.

German the Political

In addition to its prevalence in chemistry and medicine, German also held influential positions in the studies of law, engineering, aviation, economics, and music in Japan.¹¹⁰ In a sense German played a static role in these areas of expertise. That is, German maintained its significance in these fields before and after WWI (and in a few cases even after 1945), so understandably many Japanese continued studying German after 1919 to access important knowledge. What made German dynamic in the interwar years, however, was that Germany also made innovations in the political arena. For better or worse, the Weimar Republic provided a laboratory and even battleground for contrasting ideologies and political philosophies. Alone among major powers Germany had to tackle defeat, revolution, near-disintegration, putsches, hyperinflation, recovery, and depression within just over a decade.

The ascension of Nazism to power in 1933 spawned a host of unfamiliar ideas and

¹¹⁰ For example, for law, see Mitsuma Shinzō 三瀨信三, *Doitsu hōritsu ruigo idōben* 『獨逸法律類語異同辨』 *Synonymisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Rechtssprache* (Tokyo: Yūhikaku 有斐閣, 1938); for mechanical engineering, see Tsuboi Michizō 坪井道三 and Okabe Noboru 岡部昇, *Kikai Doitsugo kaishaku kenkyū* 『機械獨逸語解釋・究』 (Tokyo: Taiyōdō Shoten, 1935); for aviation, see Kobayashi Yasutarō 小林保太郎, *Hikōki kikai no chishiki* 『飛行機 機械の知識』 *Flugzeug, Doitsugo bunko* ドイツ語文庫 Bibliotheca Germanica (Tokyo: Shōbundō, 1936); for economics, see Haruta Ikuzō 春田伊久藏, *Doitsugo nyūmon sōsho 3 seiji keizai Doitsugo nyūmon* 『獨逸語入門叢書 第三編 政治經濟ドイツ語入門』 *Elementares Deutsch in politischen und wirtschaftlichen Lesestücken Sammlung Hakusui Nr. 1* (Tokyo: Hakusuisha 白水社, 1935); and for music, see Satō Tsunehisa 佐藤恒久, ed., *Doitsugo kyōhon ongaku gakkōyō* 『獨逸語教本 音樂學校用』 (Tokyo: Musashino Ongaku Gakkō 武藏野音樂學校, 1941).

institutions that aroused curiosity and required analysis in Japan. Particularly to those Japanese who saw their country threatened politically, economically, and militarily in the 1920s and 1930s, the experience of Germany seemed to offer lessons for Japan and thus gave them a fresh, urgent incentive for studying German.

Unsurprisingly the Japanese specialists on German harbored a generally positive view of Germany and projected it in their works to their students. After all, these experts admired the language and by extension its speakers and country enough to devote their lives to its studies. Although Japan and Germany fought on opposing sides during World War I, actual combat ended quickly and bequeathed no bitter legacy between the two peoples. Accordingly, the language books published immediately after the war exhibited no ill will toward Germany, and no evidence suggests that Japanese students picked the language with any expectation of employing it for intelligence or security purposes against its country (unlike, say, learning Russian in America during the Cold War). In the early interwar years, despite the dramatic events taking place in and around Germany, the language books remained relatively free of specific editorial comments, and German learning in Japan occupied an apolitical role.

Nevertheless, the absence of explicit commentary on current events did not necessarily indicate the experts' lack of political views on Germany, for they certainly, perhaps subconsciously, painted a particular picture of the country in their language books. At first glance, lessons on the alphabet, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary may not leave much leeway for value judgment or generalization, but many writers found enough room to use the German language as a proxy tool for interpreting the German nation. In this chapter we have already seen numerous specialists conclude that the peculiarities of written

and printed German revealed not only a certain uprightness but also obstinacy and inflexibility on the part of the German folk, while the sounds of spoken German evoked for many the image of a virile, rugged, and disciplined people. The clearly demarcated tenses in German seemed to indicate a particularly German, precise understanding of time, while some saw grammatical rules such as inherent noun gender and the subjunctive mood as products of a dogmatic and arbitrary national character. One, Sekiguchi, outdid all others in extrapolation by singling out relative pronouns as a key for the success of not only the Germans but also the whole white race. For those experts bent on pontificating on politics through language lessons, where there's a will there's a way.

Seen under this light, the martial exhortations to students and comparisons between military campaigns and German acquisition no longer appear so random or incongruous, for war indeed loomed large in the minds of the specialists and consequently in their works. Taniguchi, writing in 1926 in the latest version of the best-selling textbook since the Meiji era, reminisced that he and his coauthors labored on the first edition during the Sino-Japanese War, which led to multiple references to war in the book.¹¹¹ For example, the book presented readers with homework exercises for translation that read, “The enemy has fled,” “The enemy will have vacated the field,” and “The officer was captured alongside the soldiers.”¹¹²

If a brief conflict in the late nineteenth century not involving Germany could leave a heritage

¹¹¹ 「回顧すれば明治廿七年の夏期休暇中に同人三人が神田西小川町なる舊獨逸學協會學校の會議室に會合して本書の編纂に従事した當時は偶々日清戰爭の最中で、號外賣りの威勢のよい聲が・外に響き、小使が駈け出して買つて來た一葉に三人の眼が集注して我軍の進展を歡んだり、捷報に接しては仕事をそつち除けで忽ち祝杯を呼んだりしたものであつた。本書に戰爭に關する例題等の比較的多いのは此の影響である。」 in Ōmura Jintarō, Yamaguchi Kotarō 山口小太郎 and Taniguchi Hidetarō, *Doitsu bunpō kyōkasho 1* 『獨逸文法教科書 前編』 *Lehrbuch der deutschen Grammatik* (Tokyo: Nichidoku Shoin, 1927), Introduction. By 1927 Ōmura and Yamaguchi had long since passed away, but their classic, popular textbook, first sold in 1894, remained a best-seller well into the 1920s, totaling more than 70 editions. The three authors were popularly and affectionately known as the “three Tarōs.”

¹¹² Respectively, 「敵が(der Feind)逃げました(*Perf.*)」, 「敵が戰場から(vom Felde)避けたでせう(*Futur II*)」, and 「將校(der Offizier)并に兵卒等が捕へられました(*gefangen nehmen*)」 in *ibid*, 50, 52, 165.

of martial words in a book on German in the 1920s, then the interwar period, when by definition people lived constantly in memory or in fear of a war, should witness a deluge of works colored by war.

Indeed warfare shadowed the image of Germany in numerous language books in Japan, as references to combat, the military, weapons and the like marched into lessons on German.¹¹³ Certainly, not every book mentioned war in the same breath as it taught German, and those that did, did not do so on every page, but war appeared far too frequently to be considered accidentally chosen. In other words, many specialists on German had war on their minds when they composed the books. Thus, from the 1920s to the 1940s Japanese students of German found themselves being taught military-related words of limited general usage in practice or on tests such as *Panzerkreuzer* 装甲巡洋艦 (armored cruiser), *Feldlazarett* 野戰病院 (field hospital), *schweres Geschütz* 大砲 (heavy artillery), and *Hochverrat* 國事犯 (high treason).¹¹⁴ Beyond vocabulary, sample sentences and homework exercises gave the experts even more space to show their bias for military German. For instance, a question on the past tense had readers translate into German the incongruous and impractical sentence, “The barbed wire fence hindered the enemy’s assault.”¹¹⁵ Other gems elsewhere included

¹¹³ Judging from my personal experience, German textbooks in Japan and America today, as well as Japanese textbooks in Germany and America, seem sanitized in terms of controversial or weighty subjects. If one learned about modern Germany or Japan only through these textbooks one would not get a clear picture of the two countries’ contemporary history or politics—there certainly are no lessons on military-related terms.

¹¹⁴ Examples taken from Yamaguchi Miki 山口造酒, *Doitsugo kaitei* 『ドイツ語階梯』 *Systematische Anleitung zur Erlernung der deutschen Sprache* (Tokyo: Kanasashi Hōryūdō 金刺芳流堂, 1931); Hayakawa Bun’ya 早川文哉, *Kanyō Doitsu bunten* 『簡要獨逸文典』 *Kurzgefaßte Deutsche Grammatik* (Tokyo: Nanzandō Shoten, 1927); Tsuzumi Tsuneyoshi, *Kihon Doitsu bupō* 『基本獨逸文法』 (Tokyo: Daigakushorin, 1933); Kamei Tōtarō, *Jitsuyō Doitsu bupō kōgi* 『實用獨逸文法講義』 (Tokyo: Kanasashi Hōryūdō, 1931).

¹¹⁵ 「鐵條網 pl. (Drahthindernis n.)は敵軍 pl. (Feind m.)の攻撃(Angriff m.)を妨げた(hindern)。」 in Aoki Shōkichi, *Shokyū shō Doku bunten* 『初級小獨逸文典』 *Kleine deutsche Grammatik für Anfänger* (Tokyo: Nanzandō Shoten, 1937), 15–16.

“The German soldiers fought extremely bravely in the Battle of Verdun,” “If the enemies confront us, then our aircraft will come and help us from the sky and in the end we will prevail as usual,” and “The deeds of those who liberated our fatherland from the enemy’s hands are immortal.”¹¹⁶ Where the specialists could indulge in the most editorial liberty, namely in the selection of passages for reading comprehension, they demonstrated a preference for a military or patriotic theme. Therefore students came into contact with stories like “Mehr brauche ich nicht zu wissen!” (“I Do Not Need to Know More!”), which told the tale of a soldier at the Battle of Nations in 1813 who lost both eyes and both legs but cared only about the outcome of the battle. When told that “Germany” had triumphed, he passed away in peace and satisfaction.¹¹⁷ Other passages featured the exploits of Frederick the Great, Bismarck, field posts by fallen German soldiers in WWI, and Kaiser Wilhelm II’s musings on the Great War. War might not have constituted a predominant theme in all the language books, but many authors, and presumably their readers, saw warfare and Germany fitting enough that talk of war served as a vehicle of sorts for teaching German.

Speaking of the Kaiser, if His Majesty made but frequent guest appearances in the newspapers, then he played a leading role in the teaching of German in textbooks. As discussed in Chapter Five, Wilhelm II, though long marginalized even by his own subjects well before his abdication, somehow maintained his celebrity status in Japan. Indeed, the

¹¹⁶ Respectively, 「獨逸兵ハ Verdun ノ戦ニ於テ非常ニ勇敢ニ戦ツタ。」 in Yamagishi, *Shotō Doitsu bunten*, 72; “Wenn uns die Feinde begegnen, dann kommen unsere Flugzeuge, helfen uns aus der Luft und am Ende siegen wir gewöhnlich,” in Sekiguchi, *Hyōjun shotō Doitsugo kōza II* 『標準初等ドイツ語講座 中巻』 *Deutsch für Anfänger Band II* (Tokyo: Tachibana Shoten, 1933), 41; and 「Die Taten derer, die unser Vaterland aus Feindeshand befreit haben, sind unsterblich. 我が祖國を敵手より救ひし人々の功績は不朽である。」 in Aoki Ichirō 青木一郎, *Sūgaku butsurigaku kagaku wo manabu hito no Doitsugo kontei* 『數學・物理學・化學を學ぶ人の獨逸語根柢』 *Grundriss der deutschen Sprache zum Selbst-Unterricht für Mathematiker, Physiker und Chemiker* (Tokyo: Tōkyō Butsuri Gakkō Dōsōkai 東京物理學校同窓會, 1935), 141.

¹¹⁷ Aoki Ichirō, *Shin Doitsu shōdokuhon* 『新獨逸小讀本』 *Neuer deutscher Leitfaden* (Tokyo: Nanzandō Shoten, 1943), 26.

language books mentioned Wilhelm II and used him as a conduit for illustrating German grammar more than any other German personality. For example, students being introduced to the four cases in German would see their application to Kaiser Wilhelm with and without definite article in the following chart:¹¹⁸

| | | |
|------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Nominative | der Kaiser Wilhelm | Kaiser Wilhelm |
| Genitive | des Kaisers Wilhelm | Kaiser Wilhelms |
| Dative | dem Kaiser Wilhelm | Kaiser Wilhelm |
| Accusative | den Kaiser Wilhelm | Kaiser Wilhelm |

A few other books went a step further by adding the complicating factor of the suffix “the Second” to the name:¹¹⁹

| | | |
|------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Nominative | der Kaiser Wilhelm der Zweite | Kaiser Wilhelm der Zweite |
| Genitive | des Kaisers Wilhelm des Zweiten | Kaiser Wilhelms des Zweiten |
| Dative | dem Kaiser Wilhelm dem Zweiten | Kaiser Wilhelm dem Zweiten |
| Accusative | den Kaiser Wilhelm den Zweiten | Kaiser Wilhelm den Zweiten |

In addition to noun cases, the Kaiser also appeared in countless sample sentences and homework questions. As a matter of fact, the one statement that students would encounter in almost every language book was some variety of “Long live the Kaiser.” From these works they could learn at least eight different ways in German to wish the Kaiser well:¹²⁰

Lang **lebe** der Kaiser! (Long live the Kaiser!)
Möge der Kaiser lange leben! (May the Kaiser live long!)
 Seine Majestät der Kaiser **lebe** hoch! (Long live his majesty the Kaiser!)
 Hoch **lebe** der Kaiser! (Long live the Kaiser!)
 Der Kaiser **soll** leben! (May the Kaiser live!)

¹¹⁸ Matsuoka, *Sōyō Doitsu bunten*, 36.

¹¹⁹ Aoki Ichirō, *Meikai Doku bunten* 『明解獨文典』 *Leichtfaßliche Deutsche Grammatik* (Tokyo: Nanzandō Shoten, 1936), 179; and Iwamoto, 189–190.

¹²⁰ One may reasonably think that these exclamations for an emperor’s health amounted to a German counterpart to the Japanese cheer *banzai*, but there are subtle differences between the two forms. By itself *banzai*, though literally meaning “ten-thousand years,” did not necessarily connote the spirit of wishing the emperor long life. Unless specifically preceded by “His Majesty the Tennō” (天皇陛下), *banzai* is merely a celebratory cheer, similar to “Hurrah” or “Bravo” in German. Also, though a few language books translated “Tennō” as “Kaiser,” the vast majority used “Kaiser” to refer to any emperor and not specifically the Japanese one.

Es **lebe** der Kaiser! (Long live the Kaiser!)
Gott **erhalte** unsern gnädigen Kaiser! (God look after our merciful Kaiser!)
Möge Gott den Kaiser behüten! (May God shield the Kaiser!)

These exclamations had actual grammar lessons to offer. Some illustrated the function of the imperative mood for giving command while others demonstrated the use of the subjunctive I mood for expressing wishes. Despite the self-proclaimed mission of many language experts to teach real-life, everyday German, their blind obsession with German royalty belied their claims of practicality. Unless the Japanese students planned to converse solely with diehard East Prussian royalists, they would find cheers invoking the Kaiser distinctly useless in Germany under the Weimar Republic and certainly the Nazi regime.

The gratuitously military, patriotic, and monarchist image of Germany and German provoked a small group of committed specialists to counterbalance their right-leaning colleagues by teaching a different version of the language. In a sense they viewed the mainstream German being instructed, with its abundant references to war, nation and Kaiser, as merely a subdivision of the language—say, German for militarists or nationalists—not much different from German for chemists or physicians. In reaction they produced or reproduced works that reflected a vision of Germany not found in standard German textbooks. This chapter has already mentioned one such effort, namely the translation of books like *Die deutsche Ideologie* (*The German Ideology*), *Der deutsche Bauernkrieg* (*The Peasant War in Germany*), *Das Kapital* (*The Capital*), and the complete works of Marx and Engels. After all, Germany did not only raise Wilhelm and Bismarck, and Ludendorff and Hindenburg, but it also produced Marx and Engels, and Luxemburg and Liebknecht.

In order for the Japanese to understand and appreciate German socialism, some language experts took to teaching them socialist German. One edited a book on German for

social science that featured only passages and excerpts by prominent socialists on topics as varied as the first Five-Year Plan, materialism, and the world economic crisis.¹²¹ Another compiled a quintilingual (Japanese-German-French-English-Russian) dictionary for social-science that drew heavily from socialist vocabulary.¹²² Most notably, the leftist economist Ikumi Takuichi 井汲卓一 penned an entire book on German for the proletariat. Like his colleagues who believed that learning German and from Germany could provide Japan a way out of its predicament, Ikumi stated that language studies could serve as a weapon and solution for the Japanese proletariat, especially since it suffered from insularity and lack of international networking.¹²³ Passion for communism and hostility to anything to its right (with particular venom reserved for social democrats) colored the content throughout the book. For instance, *Kaiser* was still used as an example of a word with two syllables, but followed tellingly by another two-syllable word, *sterben* (to die). The vocabulary taught included mostly ideologically loaded terms such as *Klassenfeind* 階級敵 (class enemy), *Genosse* 同志 (comrade), *Expropriateur* 收奪者 (expropriator), and *ausbeuten* 搾取する (to exploit). To those who emphasized a nationalist Germany, Ikumi answered with a quotation

¹²¹ Katsuya Arito 勝谷在登, ed., *Shakai kagaku Doitsugo kenkyū* 『社會科學獨逸語・究』 *Zum Studium des Sozialwissenschaftlich-Deutschen [sic]* (Tokyo: Ryūshōkaku 隆章閣, 1933). In the early 1930s there seemed to be much overlap between socialism and social science.

¹²² Kinoshita Hanji 木下半治, ed., *Shakai kagaku tangoshū Nichi Doku Futsu Ei Ro taishō* 『社會科學單語集 日・獨・佛・英・露對照』 (Tokyo: Daigakushorin, 1934).

¹²³ 「語學はプロレタリアートの闘争の武器だと云はれる。それは、語學を獲得することによつて、從來、日本プロレタリアートの缺點とされてゐた國際的狹隘性を打破し、更に進んで、國際プロレタリアートの經驗をば、その歪められざる形に於いて攝取する事を得しむるが故である（翻譯のみでは抹消、誤譯、拙譯等のために十分ではない）。語學を以て唯一の『赤化』の原因と看做す近眼者流の見地（例へば、前民政党内閣の中等學校外國語教授廢止案、日本新聞の外國語撲滅論、等々）の如きは、固より笑ふべきではあるが、かゝる論議が白晝大眞面目に行はれてゐるのを見ても、如何に語學がプロレタリアートにとつて有力な武器であるかが分ると思ふ。」 in Ikumi Takuichi, *Puroretaria gogaku sōsho I Doitsugo hen* 『プロレタリア語學叢書 第1 獨逸語篇』 *Sprachen zum Proletariat Band I* (Tokyo: Nanboku Shoin 南北書院, 1932), Foreword.

by Marx, “The proletarians have no fatherland.”¹²⁴ Whereas most Japanese got a lesson on the four noun cases from Kaiser Wilhelm, readers of this book would see them applied instead to a mini-pantheon of German communism:¹²⁵

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------|---------|-------|---------|
| Nominative | Liebknecht | Marx | Rosa | Luise |
| Genitive | Liebknechts | Marxens | Rosas | Luisens |
| Dative | Liebknecht | Marx | Rosa | Luise |
| Accusative | Liebknecht | Marx | Rosa | Luise |

Moreover, rather than practicing the imperative and subjunctive I moods with chants wishing the Kaiser long life and health, Ikumi’s intended students of peasants and workers would learn them through their own socialist slogans:¹²⁶

Proletariat aller Länder, **vereinigt** euch! (Workers of the world, unite!)
 Es **lebe** die Internationale! (Long live the Internationale!)
 Es **lebe** die internationale Verbrüderung der Arbeiter gegen den Chauvinismus und den Patriotismus der Bourgeoisie aller Länder! (Long live the international unity of the workers against the chauvinism and patriotism of the bourgeoisie of the world!)

Finally, as expected, the book ended with reading exercises from selected excerpts from the communist canons by Marx and Engels, as well as works by Lenin, Bukharin, and Eleanor Marx specially rendered into German.

Although the specialists dictated the portrayals of Germany by choosing the words, sentences, passages, and images in the language books to represent the country, their control did have limitations. In the interwar era German became a tool for political struggles within Germany and often arrived in Japan with pre-existing ideological baggage not of the experts’ making. Consider the example of the depictions of Jews in German in Japan. Though none of

¹²⁴ 「Die Proletarier haben kein Vaterland. プロレタリアは祖國を持たぬ。」, *ibid*, 19.

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, 42. Karl Liebkecht and Rosa Luxemburg were leaders of the Spartacist League. The Luise mentioned here likely referred to Luise Kautsky, wife of the Marxist philosopher Karl Kautsky.

¹²⁶ Respectively, 「萬國の労働者、團結せよ！」 「インタナショナル萬・！」 「萬國のブルジョアの排外主義と愛國主義に對する労働者の國際的團結萬・！」, *ibid*, 85, 191. The first, famous exhortation is uttered by Marx, and the last is attributed to Grigory Zinoviev.

the linguists had any ground to adopt anti-Semitic views, Jews in language books could still appear in a derogatory light by dint of the latent bias within German—even in dictionaries, which left little room for spin. Already in 1919 Japanese students could find in the dictionary compiled by the pioneering Germanist Tobari Chikufū 登張竹風 the word *jüdeln*, defined as “to haggle like a Jew, to cheat other people.”¹²⁷ In another popular dictionary in 1929 by the authoritative Katayama Masao, users again encountered the term *jüdeln*, meaning “to act like a Jew, to become a Jew, figuratively to practice usury, or to speak with a Jewish accent.”¹²⁸ *Jude* (Jew) carried the rhetorical burden of “usurer, greedy or dishonest merchant,” and *jüdisch* (Jewish) was synonymous with “niggardly, urban, voracious or vulgar.”¹²⁹ Jews were even said to have their own type of face (*Judengesicht*) and beard (*Judenbart*). Kanokogi’s collection of German idioms included “to give Judas’ kiss” and “to pay Judas blood money,” both referring to traitorous, treacherous behaviors.¹³⁰ Reading about such an alien and loathsome race, Japanese readers, who vicariously derived their knowledge on Jews solely from materials not much better than printed hearsay, might well begin to understand why some Germans warned of a menacing *Judenfrage* (Jewish question). When the most rabid among these fear-mongers, Hitler, built a movement, the *Hitlerbewegung*, that gained enough dominance in Germany, Gonda felt it imperative to include the term in his new standard

¹²⁷ 「**jü’deln** ...[jüdisch feilschen] 猶太人の如く商ふ、他人を瞞ます」 in Tobari Chikufū, ed., *Shinshiki Dokuwa daijiten* 『新式獨和大辭典』 *Tobari Deutsch-Japanisches Wörterbuch*, 32nd ed., (Tokyo: Ōkura Shoten, 1919), 1117.

¹²⁸ 「**jü’deln** 1. (wie ein Jude sich benehmen, leben) 猶太人風な行ひ（生活）をする、猶太人化する；[比] (wuchern) 高利を貸す；(feilschen) 商賣に懸引する、ひどく値切る。2. (wie ein Jude sprechen) 猶太人の如き訛がある、猶太訛を話す。」 in Katayama Masao, *Sōkai Dokuwa daijiten* (1929), 1073.

¹²⁹ 「**Ju’d** ... 2. [比] (Wucherer) 高利貸、慾深商人、奸商。」 and 「**jü’disch** ... [比] (schachernd) 緇錙の利を争ふ、町人根性の；(wuchernd) 高利をる貪る；(schäbig) 卑陋の」 *ibid.*

¹³⁰ 「Einen **Judaskuss** geben. 腹黒い偽りの接吻、愛の表現。Den **Judaslohn** geben. 裏切に對しての報酬を與へる。」 in Kanokogi, 126.

German-Japanese dictionary.¹³¹ Indeed, if the lexicographers merely passively reiterated the anti-Semitism long embedded within the language, then the ascension of Nazism would present the linguists with a chance to react to the changes to Germany and German taking place before their eyes.

Remarkably, the Japanese experts on German responded to Nazism in much the same way the German population at large did. A few, mostly on the left, fought back, as with books on socialist or proletarian German, but were soon overwhelmed. The majority, generally conservative leaning and supportive of the military and nation, accepted the Hitler regime as a *fait accompli* (or at least a necessary evil) and stayed away from overt politicking in their works. Some, multiplying in number after January 1933, enthusiastically echoed the ideology and welcomed its implementation across the country. Upon receiving power the Nazis immediately set about to Nazify all facets of life in Germany and to establish totalitarian rule through *Gleichschaltung* (coordination). The campaign usually relied on centralized fiat from above, as in the abolishment of parties deemed hostile to Nazism, the persecution of political enemies and Jews, and the usurpation of local authority. Yet sometimes the populace conformed of its own volition, so that some groups dissolved themselves, professionals joined Nazi-affiliated guilds before membership became mandatory, and all self-censored their own utterances and actions. Within a short time *Gleichschaltung* penetrated Germany and its language so thoroughly that it concocted a Nazi-speak that differentiated members of German society on racial grounds (“half” or “quarter”

¹³¹ 「**Hitler-bewegung** 「ヒットラー運動」」 in Gonda Yasunosuke, ed., *Gonda Dokuwa shin jiten* 『ゴンドラ獨和新辭典』 *Gondas Neues Wörterbuch (Deutsch-japanisch)* (Tokyo: Yūhōdō, 1937), 578. The dictionary also defined the Hitler salute, 「**Hitler-gruß** 「ヒットラー」式敬禮（右腕ヲ斜ニ高ク揚グルモノ）」 in *ibid.*

Jews), regulated interpersonal greeting (*Heil Hitler!*),¹³² and subsumed concepts like *Führerprinzip* (leadership principle) and *Volksgemeinschaft* (people's community) into the national consciousness.¹³³

Faced with the wholesale Nazification of German, several Japanese specialists on the language aligned themselves with Nazism, or their imagination thereof, and propagated it in their works—in likely the only case of voluntary Gleichschaltung by non-Germans.¹³⁴

¹³² A few books introduced the salute to Japanese readers. One used the phrase to demonstrate the exclamatory tone, in 「感嘆詞一例、„Heil“ Hitler! ヒトラー「萬・！」」 in Inuma Hajime 飯沼元, *Denki kiso Doitsugo* 『電気基礎ドイツ語』 (Tokyo: Rajio Kagakusha ラヂオ科学社, 1940), 48. Another book in 1937 informed students that Germans commonly uttered the greeting but cautioned against Japanese using it, 「現代獨逸に於ては、朝夕の挨拶又は別れの挨拶には、好んで **Heil Hitler!** が此等の言葉に代つて用ひられてゐるが、日本などで獨逸人と話しする場合は、之を用ひない方が寧ろ穩當でなからうかと思ふ。」 in Komura Minoru, *Ikeru Doitsugo kaiwa* 『生ける獨逸語會話』 *Deutsche Umgangssprache auf schnellstem Wege* (Tokyo: Taiyōdō Shoten, 1937), 116. For more on the so-called Hitler greeting, see Tilman Allert, *The Hitler Salute: On the Meaning of a Gesture*, trans. Jefferson Chase (New York: Picador, 2008).

¹³³ For an example of a study on the politicization of everyday behaviors, see Andrew Stuart Bergerson, *Ordinary Germans in Extraordinary Times: The Nazi Revolution in Hildesheim* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004). For more on the Nazification of language and linguistics, see the classic Victor Klemperer, *The Language of the Third Reich: LTI – Lingua Tertii Imperii: A Philologist's Notebook*, trans. Martin Brady (London: The Athlone Press, 2000); Thomas Pegelow Kaplan, *The Language of Nazi Genocide: Linguistic Violence and the Struggle of Germans of Jewish Ancestry* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Christopher M. Hutton, *Linguistics and the Third Reich: Mother-Tongue Fascism, Race and the Science of Language* (New York: Routledge, 1999); Michael Hinne, ed., *Nationalsozialismus und deutsche Sprache: Arbeitsmaterialien zum deutschen Sprachgebrauch während der nationalsozialistischen Herrschaft* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Moritz Diesterweg, 1981); Senya Müller, *Sprachwörterbücher im Nationalsozialismus: Die ideologische Beeinflussung von Duden, Sprach-Brockhaus und anderen Nachschlagewerken während des „Dritten Reichs“* (Stuttgart: M und P, Verl. für Wiss. und Forschung, 1994); Siegfried Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache: Tendenzen nationalsozialistischer Sprachregelung* (Bern: Franke Verlag, 1970); and Konrad Ehlich, ed., *Sprache im Faschismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989). Though race determined membership in Nazi Germany, so that Jews from families with centuries of heritage in the German lands suddenly found themselves aliens in their homeland, language and culture did play a role in some cases. For ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) in Eastern Europe, their ability to speak some remnant of German could help them prove their German ancestry and thus open a door to all the benefits of the Thousand Year Reich. Special thanks to Dr. Eric Steinhart for clarifying to me the qualifications for ethnic Germans for inclusion and participation in Nazi-dominated Eastern Europe.

¹³⁴ The myriad, subtly different renditions of National Socialism into Japanese may provide some insight into the ways the experts struggled to make sense of the alien ideology. Most used either the phrase “National Socialism” (國民社會主義) or “Nation-State Socialism” (國家社會主義), but many also labeled it “Ethnic Socialism” (民族社會主義), “National Essence Socialism” (國粹社會主義) or “People's Socialism” (民國社會主義). Some sidestepped the challenge of interpreting the ideology by resorting to transliteration to result in “Nazis” (ナチス), while others named the movement after its leader “Hitlerism” (ヒトラー主義). The confusion over the proper naming of National Socialism mirrored the problem of translating the nebulous

Certainly the politicization of textbooks within Nazi Germany constituted no surprise, but self-Nazification by foreigners under no pressure whatsoever to comply amounted to a different phenomenon altogether.¹³⁵ Japanese interest in German political developments from the late 1920s onward, as reflected in the language books, appeared to germinate innocently enough with the publication of works to help readers understand German newspapers.¹³⁶ To some experts Germany at the time seemed a pioneer in the political and social realms, and so Japan could benefit by learning from these innovations much like it did in chemistry and medicine. For example, Gonda thought it important that Japanese students keep up with the “new German” arising in the new German society by reading newspapers,¹³⁷ while another author saw the press as a microcosm of society as a whole, so that understanding German newspapers would help Japanese make sense of current events in Germany.¹³⁸ Although the

Fascism, which appeared only in transliteration in Japan. In contrast, terms like communism and capitalism had meaningful and widely accepted translations.

¹³⁵ As one would suspect, the Nazi worldview corrupted a number of academic fields in Germany. Obvious targets like biology, German and history quickly fell victim, while new areas of studies like racial theory and “German physics” (as opposed to “Jewish physics”) were created. Even mathematics became infused with Nazi ideology, so that arithmetic textbooks asked students to contrast the high cost of caring for the mentally ill and criminal with the low wages of earned by productive civil servants and workers, or to calculate the effectiveness of bombers dropping incendiary bombs on targets. See Document No. 316 in Jeremy Noakes and Geoffrey Pridham, eds., *Nazism 1919–1945 Volume 2: State, Economy and Society 1933–1939* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1997), 437–9.

¹³⁶ For example, 『獨逸新聞・究』 (*Studying German Newspapers*), 『最も實際的な新聞獨逸語の読み方』 (*The Most Practical Way of Reading Newspaper German*), 『ドイツ新聞の譯解』 (*German Newspapers Translated and Explained*) and 『ドイツ新聞の読み方』 (*Method of Reading German Newspapers*).

¹³⁷ 「本冊は獨逸の新聞紙に現はるゝ文體を、各部門に就いて濫獵して、此處に之を紹介し、以て潑漑たる社會事象の活舞臺を反映する活きつゝ又動きつゝある新しい獨逸語を解讀するの資料を讀書子に提供せんとするものである。もしそれ、新獨逸の社會事象と、新獨逸の獨逸語と、兩々相結んで讀書子が興味を目覺ますことを得れば、私のみの幸ではない。」 in Gonda, *Doitsu shinbun kenkyū*, Foreword.

¹³⁸ 「それは新聞が社會の縮圖であつて、社會はまた新聞の擴大だと云ふ新聞學者の言葉を其まゝ裏書く。…併せてドイツの國情を透察し得る事をも目的として編まれたのである。」 in Uenishi Hanzaburō 上西半三郎, *Mottomo jissaitekina shinbun Doitsugo no yomikata* 『最も實際的な新聞獨逸語の読み方』 (Tokyo: Taimusu Shuppansha, 1932), Introduction and Foreword.

works from the early 1930s did not always mention Nazism,¹³⁹ by 1935 a handbook on political and economic vocabulary showcased only excerpts of passages by Nazi bigwigs such as Hitler, Rosenberg, Frick, Darré, and Schacht.¹⁴⁰ Then, a few years later, a text on newspapers contained nothing but articles on Nazi policies like punishment for racial defilement or wartime prohibition of dancing.¹⁴¹ Indeed, the Nazi lingo infiltrated German so thoroughly that Gonda felt obliged to incorporate terms such as the Hitler salute, NSDAP, and SA into his German-Japanese dictionary.¹⁴²

If the Japanese experts could be forgiven for merely reporting the ideological content of the increasingly Nazified press in Germany, then no excuse other than their political biases could explain the introduction of Nazism into general language texts. After all, the specialists had much more editorial say in these works and the arbitrary allusion to Nazism, much like the gratuitous repetition of references to war and the Kaiser previously, did nothing to help students acquire German. Already in 1933, less than a year after the Nazis came to power, Sekiguchi penned a homework question mentioning the chancellorship of Hitler and its

¹³⁹ Even though the works themselves did not mention Nazism extensively, some Japanese students had the ideology in mind when they used the books. For instance, someone—it is impossible to know who or when—scribbled “Heil Hitler” on the title page of the National Diet Library’s copy of *Dokubun Sekai Shichō Henshūbu* 獨文世界思潮編輯部, ed., *Doitsu shinbun no yakkai* 『ドイツ新聞の譯解』 (Tokyo: Tachibana Shoten, 1933).

¹⁴⁰ For example, “Der Ausdruck des Volkswillens” (民意の表現) by Adolf Hitler, “Die Juden” (猶太人) by Alfred Rosenberg, “Familienleben” (家族生活) by Wilhelm Frick, “Bauerntum” (農村社會) by R. Walter Darré and “Rede auf Schlußsitzung der Weltwirtschaftskonferenz in London” (倫敦世界經濟會議最終會議に於ける演説) by Hjalmar Schacht, in Haruta.

¹⁴¹ 「人種汚辱者の有罪宣告」；「全般的ダンス禁止」 in Aoki Shigetaka 青木重孝, *Doitsu shinbun no yomikata* 『ドイツ新聞の読み方』 *Wie liest man deutsche Zeitungen?* (Tokyo: Daigakushorin, 1941), 93, 67.

¹⁴² 「然るに最近に於ける人間生活の精神的並びに物質的側面の夫々に現はるる變轉と複雑化とは著しいものがあり、殊に歐洲大戰後の、而して更らにナチス政權出現以降の獨逸の政治・經濟・社會の方面に、機械・技術の分野に、學術・思想の範圍に出現し來つた新事象は驚歎にさへ値する。其處に新しい言葉が續々として生れる。... BGB. HGB.や Schupo SA. N.S.D.A.P.の如きを知らずして、如何でか之を理解することが出来やう。」 in Gonda, *Gonda Dokuwa shin jiten*, Introduction 2, 4.

dominance over Germany. He also had students translate the statement, “The solution of the Nazis, i.e. National Socialists, for elevating the nation in 1933 was ‘Germany, awake! Judas, go to hell!’”¹⁴³ A grammar textbook from 1935 had the sample sentence, “Right now all Germans gladly support the Hitler regime.”¹⁴⁴ Another text asked readers to render into German, “Hitler says, ‘Jewishness is un-German and only Germanness is sacred.’”¹⁴⁵ For students who found Nazism overly aggressive and violent, the author rejoined with “The Nazis are all patriots. They are not always militarists.”¹⁴⁶ In case any reader still harbored faith in liberal democracy, one specialist countered, “Democracy again? Who still thinks of it as a spiritual factor today? The era of National Socialism is now marching forth in Germany!”¹⁴⁷ Remarkably, only a few years after the rise of Nazism, these teachers of German in Japan had already succumbed to its spell and seduction to advertise on their own accord for the ideology and to portray a favorable image of Nazi Germany in their works.

From the mid-1930s onward the phenomenon of voluntary Gleichschaltung by Japanese Germanists intensified further, spurred and spurred by the official rapprochement

¹⁴³ 「聯邦宰相(Reichskanzler, m.)Hitler がドイツ國を支配(regieren)してゐる。」; and “Die Losung [sic] der Nazis, d.h. Nationalsozialisten, bei der nationalen Erhebung im Jahre 1933 hieß: „Deutschland erwache, Judas verrecke!“” in Sekiguchi Tsugio, *Hyōjun Doitsu bunpō teisoku ikkatsu* 『標準獨逸文法 定則一括』 *Normal-Lehrbuch der Deutschen Grammatik* (Tokyo: Shōbundō, 1933), 35, 109.

¹⁴⁴ 「全獨逸國民が今やよろこんで Hitler 政府を支持して居る。」 in Tanaka Kōichi 田中康一, *Doitsu bunpō kyōkasho* 『獨逸文法教科書』 *Lehrbuch der deutschen Grammatik* (Tokyo: Hakusuisha, 1935), 86.

¹⁴⁵ 「Hitler は言ふ、「ユダヤ的な(jüdisch)ものは非ドイツ的な(undeutsch)ものである、而してドイツ的なもののみが神聖なものである。」と。」 in Hashimoto Fumio 橋本文夫, *Shin Doitsu bunpō* 『新獨逸語文法』 *Neue deutsche Grammatik für Anfänger* (Tokyo: Shōbundō, 1936), 52.

¹⁴⁶ „Die Nazis sind alle Patrioten. Sie sind nicht immer Militaristen,“ in *ibid.*, 29.

¹⁴⁷ „Wieder die Demokratie? Wer halt sie heute noch für einen Seelenfaktor! Es bricht jetzt in Deutschland die neue Aera des Nationalsozialismus hervor!“ in Takakuwa Sumio 高桑純夫, *Teiyō Doitsu shōbunten* 『提要獨逸小文典』 *Kurzgefaßte Grammatik mit Leseübungen* (Tokyo: Nanzandō Shoten, 1936), 42.

between the two countries. As a result, a book on the use of articles chose the three Axis capitals to demonstrate the four cases in German:¹⁴⁸

| | | | |
|------------|---------|--------|------|
| Nominative | Berlin | Tokio | Rom |
| Genitive | Berlins | Tokios | Roms |
| Dative | Berlin | Tokio | Rom |
| Accusative | Berlin | Tokio | Rom |

Along the same vein, just as the Kaiser had been conscripted to serve as a teaching tool earlier, the Führer appeared with increasing frequency in the language books to demonstrate German grammar. Thus readers learned to distinguish the different pronunciations of the spelling *er* as in *Hitler* and *vergessen* (to forget).¹⁴⁹ In another book students could practice expressing dates in German with exercise sentences such as “After the death of President Hindenburg, Hitler was elected as the Führer in a referendum on 19 August 1934,” or “Adolf Hitler, the Führer of the German nation, was born on 20 April 1898 in Braunau am Inn as the son of the Austrian customs official Alois Hitler.”¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, many textbooks elevated Hitler’s writings and other Nazi publications to the level of great works that deserved to be studied thoroughly, often alongside and sometimes even in lieu of genuine classics. Although in the 1920s the linguists had already filled the language books with excerpts extolling the German homeland, in the 1930s they outdid themselves by replacing romantic patriotism with combative nationalism. Instead of reading “Mein Vaterland” (My Fatherland) and “Die Wacht am Rhein” (The Watch on the Rhine), respectively by nineteenth-century poets Theodor Körner and Max Schneckenburger, students encountered *Mein Kampf* and the Nazi

¹⁴⁸ Okamoto, 89.

¹⁴⁹ Komura, *Ikeru Doitsugo kaiwa*, 28–29.

¹⁵⁰ 「Hindenburg 大統領の死後 Hitler は千九百三十四年八月十九日の人民投票(die Volksabstimmung)によつて獨逸國民の總統(der Führer)に選ばれた(zu – wählen)」; and „Adolf Hitler, Führer des deutschen Volkes, wurde am 20. April 1898 als Sohn des österreichischen Zollbeamten Alois Hitler in Braunau am Inn geboren,“ in Aoki Ichirō, *Meikai Doku bunten*, 150, 162.

anthem “Horst-Wessel-Lied” (Horst Wessel Song).¹⁵¹ To mark the complete transformation of Germany under Nazism, one book informed its pupils that “before the world war Germany was an empire and after the war a republic, but now it is a Führer state.”¹⁵² Even the normally dull examination guides became tainted with ideology, as terms like *Rassenhygieniker* 人種衛生學者 (racial hygienist) seeped into German proficiency tests.¹⁵³

Impressively, self-Nazification influenced even the visual appearance of German in the books. At least a handful of authors stated that their (reasonable but mistaken) belief that the ultranationalist Nazi regime favored Fraktur led to their choice to print their works in blackletter.¹⁵⁴ A Germanist somehow thought it relevant to decorate the pages between the table of contents and lesson on the alphabet with photographs of Hitler with his admirers and a gathering of Nazis at a rally.¹⁵⁵ Not to be outdone, another expert put an image of the Führer and Duce on the front page.¹⁵⁶ One book on spoken German juxtaposed a photograph of a Nazi party rally next to a sample conversation, while another carried a large swastika on

¹⁵¹ “Mein Vaterland 我が祖國” and “Die Wacht am Rhein 愛國歌「ラインの守」” in Akimoto, 236; 240. For example of excerpts of *Mein Kampf*, see Aoki Ichirō, *Shin Doitsu bunpō dokuhon*, 109; and of Horst-Wessel-Lied, see Sakuma Masakazu 佐久間政一, *Doitsugo shin kyōten* 『獨逸語新教典』 (Tokyo: Ikubundō Shoten, 1940).

¹⁵² „Vor dem Weltkrieg war Deutschland ein Kaiserreich und nach dem Krieg eine Republik, aber jetzt ist es ein Führerstaat,” in Tenri daini chūgakkō Doitsugoka 天理第二中學校獨逸語科, ed., *Chūtō Doitsu dokuhon I* 『中等獨逸讀本 卷1』 *Lesebuch für Mittelschüler Band I* (Tanbaichi 丹波市: Tenri Daini Chūgakkō Doitsugoka, 1940), 76.

¹⁵³ Sakurada Tsunehisa 櫻田常久, *Doitsugo nyūshi mondai kaitō* 『獨逸語入試問題解答』 *Deutsche Examenaufgaben der Immatrikulation mit Antworten und Anmerkungen* (Tokyo: Shōbundō, 1937), 9. Students also had to know initials of Nazi innovations like KdF, DAF, BDM and HJ.

¹⁵⁴ 「尚ほ本書に於てはこゝ數年來の趨勢に従ひ拉典文字で統一しようと思つたが、現今の國粹主義の擡頭と共に獨逸文字が復活しつゝあるので、全篇を獨逸文字で統一し」 in Tanaka Mitsuharu, Preface 4–5; and Shō, 3 (cf. Footnote 31).

¹⁵⁵ Okada, Front Leaves.

¹⁵⁶ Aoki Ichirō, *Shin Doitsu bunpō dokuhon* 『新獨逸文法讀本』 *Neues grammatisches Lesebuch* (Tokyo: Nanzandō Shoten, 1941), Front Leaf.

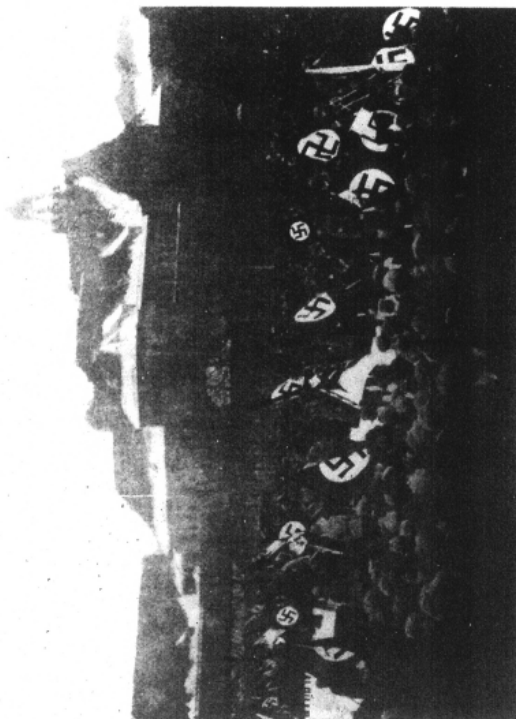
岡田獨逸語講座

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Fig. 8.5a Hitler and his followers next to the table of contents of a language book.



Deutsches Alphabet.

| | | |
|-----|---|------------------|
| A a |  | Apfel, der |
| Ä ä |  | Äpfel |
| B b |  | Birne, die |
| B b |  | Birne |
| C c |  | Citrone, die |
| C c |  | Litron |
| D d |  | Dattelpalme, die |
| D d |  | Dattal |

Fig. 8.5b A Nazi gathering juxtaposed incongruously with the alphabet.

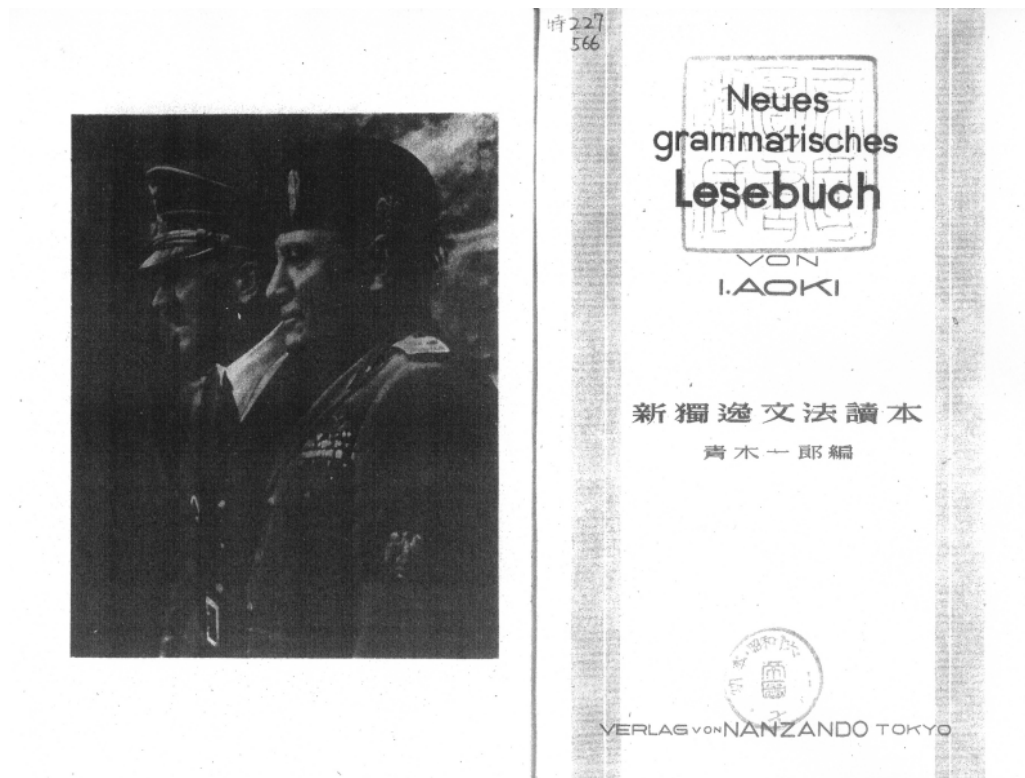


Fig. 8.6 The Führer and the Duce mysteriously gracing the front leaf of a language book.

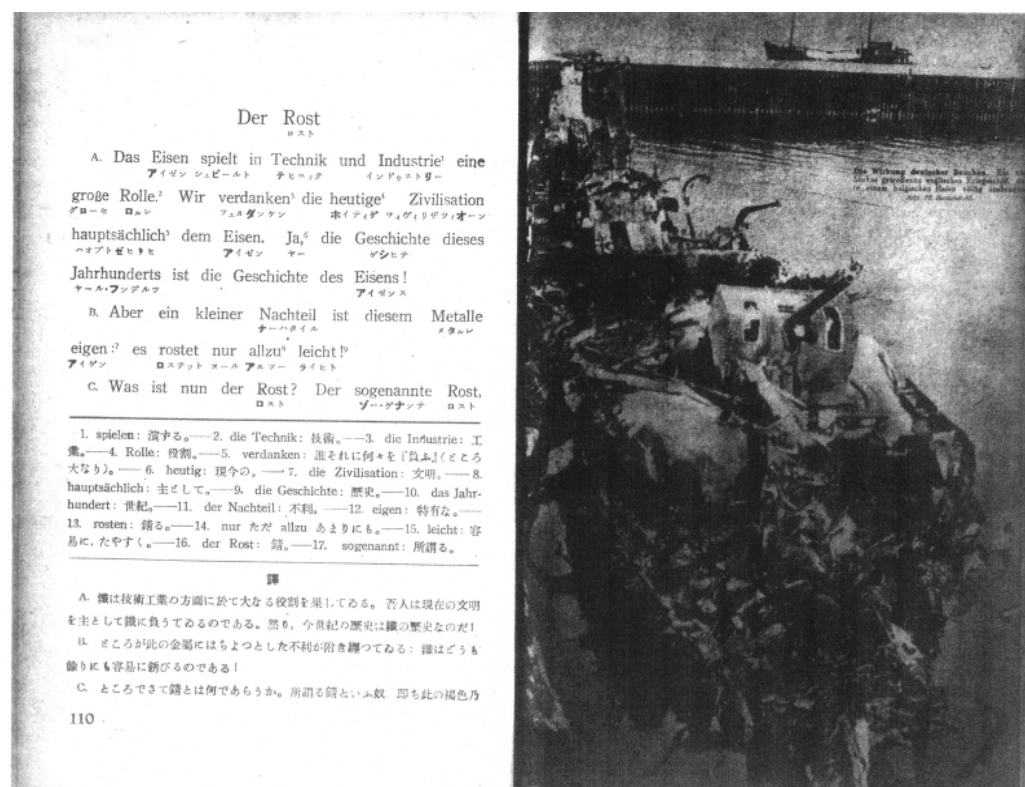
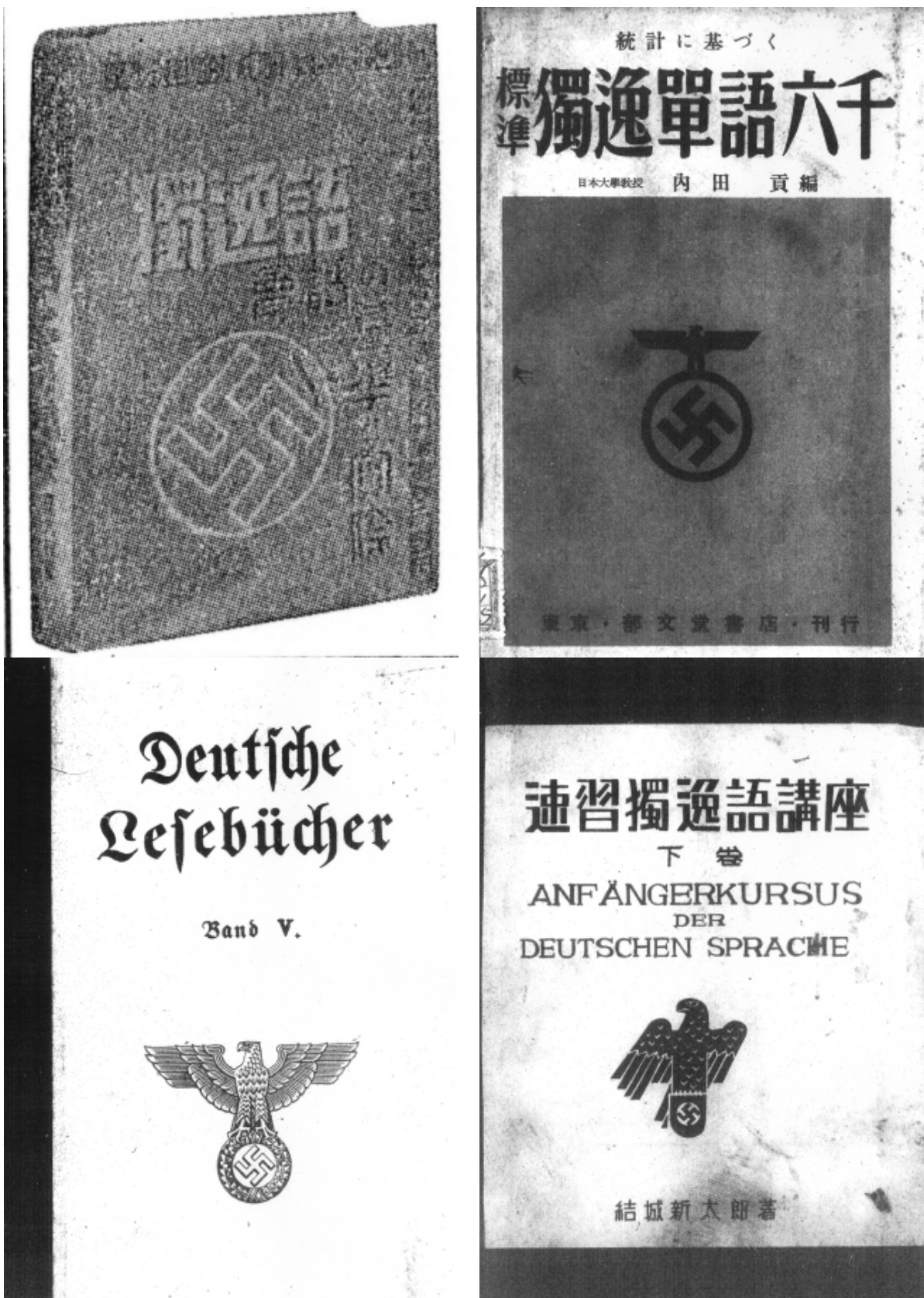


Fig. 8.7 The photograph of a British warship destroyed by the Luftwaffe juxtaposed alongside a text for reading exercise.



Figs. 8.8, 8.9, 8.10, 8.11 Various texts with the Nazi swastika on their covers.

its cover.¹⁵⁷ As a matter of fact, the Nazi symbol of an eagle clutching a swastika came to dominate the covers of several language books.¹⁵⁸ By the time World War II spread throughout the entire European continent and the world, the self-Nazification of many authors stood complete, and they liberally peppered the language books with photographs of German soldiers and war machines triumphing on the battlefield.¹⁵⁹

German in Japan

“How to learn German?” Just like any other endeavor, acquiring a language takes intense enthusiasm... If one is committed, then time should not pose any problem. The transition from secondary school to higher education may consume so much time that many people cannot find the leisure to learn a tongue, but if one really has the will one should manage to gain command of a language in one year’s time. Yet, intermittent bursts of dedication for language studies will not bear fruit. When one is in the process of learning a language, one should invest in the subject the same fanaticism Germany is displaying in its headlong assaults on Leningrad.¹⁶⁰

So advised the introductory language book *The ABC German Course (Doitsugo ABC kōza*

『ドイツ語 ABC 講座』) its readers as it appeared in bookstores in Japan on 20 December

¹⁵⁷ Komura, *Ikeru Doitsugo kaiwa*, 64; Advertisement.

¹⁵⁸ For example, Uchida Mitsugi, *Tōkei ni motozuku hyōjun Doitsu tango 6000* 『統計に基づく標準獨逸單語六千』 (Tokyo: Ikubundō Shoten, 1938), Cover; Nihon bunka kenkyūkai Doitsugobu 日本文化・究會獨逸語部, ed., *Doitsugo dokuhon 5* 『獨逸語讀本 卷5』 *Deutsche Lesebücher Band V* (Tanbaichi: Tenri Jihōsha 天理時報社, 1941), Cover; and Yūki Shintarō 結城新太郎, *Sokushū Doitsugo kōza 3* 『速習・獨逸語講座 下卷』 *Anfängerkursus der deutschen Sprache* (Tokyo: Taiyōdō Shoten, 1942), Cover.

¹⁵⁹ For example, Aoki Ichirō, *Shin Doitsu shōdokuhan*; and Sekiguchi Tsugio, *Nyūmon kagakusha no Doitsugo 1* 『入門科學者のドイツ語 上卷』 *Anfangsdeutsch für Naturwissenschaftler* (Tokyo: Sanshūsha, 1943); and Sumi Hidesuke 角英祐, *Shokyū Doitsugo dokuhon* 『初級獨逸語讀本』 *Deutsches Lesebuch für Anfänger* (Tokyo: Nanzandō Shoten, 1942).

¹⁶⁰ 「**Wie um Deutsche zu lernen? 如何にして獨逸語を學ぶべきか** 一つの語學を獲得するには、それがどんなことでも同じでせうが、その語學に猛烈な熱を持つことです。...熱がありさへすれば時間は問題ではありません。中學から大學へ通じて尨大な時間を使ひ乍ら、一つの語學さへものにならない人も随分あるでせうが、本當に熱をもつてゐれば、一ヶ年位で、大體一つの語學をものに出る事が出來のです。併しこの語學熱も間隔的では効果なく、一つの語學をやりかけたら、獨逸のレニングラード攻略の様に熱を上げて遮二無二に突撃するのです。」 in Heigensha, ed., *Doitsugo ABC kōza* (Tokyo: Heigensha, 1941), 1.

1941. Of course, the book's editors could not have known that the siege of Leningrad would turn out a catastrophe for the Axis, and that the attackers become the attacked, the pursuers the pursued. Drunk with *German* victory, the Japanese experts urged students to imitate the German way of war even in language studies. For the students, "conquering" German did resemble the Leningrad campaign in an unintended way—they could go no further, as no amount of fervor, willpower, or fanaticism could help them overcome the concrete distance between them and their physical destinations. Moreover, within a few years, the very war these specialists cheered on, fought by the very alliance they precipitated, and launched by the very ideology and leader they praised, would ultimately bring about the wholesale destruction of their handiwork, namely the propagation of German learning in their homeland. Despite their significant talent and exertion the linguists built no lasting monument to their achievement in modern Japan, where English reigns as the undisputed foreign language of choice. Today few Japanese doctors and even fewer chemists *need* to know German, which lingers mostly in the memory of older generations of academics and professionals, in enclaves such as philosophy and classical music, or as individual words long since absorbed into everyday Japanese.¹⁶¹

German might have left few recognizable traces in Japan nowadays, but this chapter has shown that in the interwar period it occupied a high profile and commanded the energy and attention of a crucial segment of Japanese society. Though hobbled by the travails of World War I and evoking specters of obstacles and suffering in the minds of many,¹⁶²

¹⁶¹ In general Japanese medical schools require English classes for all students in the first year and offer German or French as an elective language. Some schools also run classes on medical English or English conversation for doctors.

¹⁶² German, then as now, was of course not alone as a language with a reputation. A book on German for dentistry in 1929 opined that people who studied French or Russian could become susceptible to communism or nihilism: 「彼の佛蘭西語や露語を學ぶ者によく共・主義や・無主義の傳染を受くる者の如きは之を物

German studies regained its dominance in the 1920s and thrived in the 1930s at the capable and productive hands of numerous Germanists, most notably the brilliant Sekiguchi and Gonda.¹⁶³ They crafted all the language learning tools that students used to acquire enough German to advance in their studies and career, since, except for a very few interested individuals, German served not as the end but merely the means toward further goals. Quintessentially, two of the most common types of language texts neatly embodied aspects of German learning in Japan—self-taught books represented the students’ (often unrealistic) dream of learning German rapidly and without help, and bilingual dictionaries indicated the singular task of textual translation that test-takers had to master. Indeed, German held such key and sometimes unassailable positions in chemistry, medicine, and several other professional fields that most Japanese seeking higher education would have to study the language and prove their proficiency in an examination. Few Japanese could aspire to become engineers or physicists, much less chemists or physicians, without first learning some degree of German and thereby learning about its country. In other words, climbing the step pyramid of acquiring knowledge on Germany often also meant gaining upward social

語る一分子である。」, in Shimada and Kokubu, Preface 1. Nowadays some people still relate German with military orderliness. Many believe French is not just a Romance language but the language of romance. The apparent difficultness of Arabic seemingly condemns its speakers and their homeland as mysterious and inscrutable. Even within the same language different accents can arouse different reactions in listeners. The Queen’s English exudes an air of properness. An accent associated with the American South disarms many with friendliness, while a way of speaking linked to parts of New York City may have the exact opposite effect. Chinese may not strike some as a language at all, as some observational studies in neuroscience seem to indicate that non-speakers’ brains process pitch changes in Mandarin in a way more similar to their treatment of music than of language. Special thanks to Mr. Brian Mathias of the Sequence Production Lab at McGill University for enlightening me on the fascinating subject of language and the mind.

¹⁶³ In some ways Sekiguchi and Gonda were unlikely leaders in the field. Unlike most of his colleagues and competitors, Sekiguchi never set foot outside Japan, let alone studying in or even visiting Germany. Gonda devoted much of his professional energy to sociology and the studies of popular entertainment, so that his works on German were somewhat of a sideshow. That despite these drawbacks the two scholars still produced top-quality works is a testament to their linguistic genius. For more on Sekiguchi, see his Festschrift, Araki Shigeo 荒木茂男, Manabe Ryōichi 真鍋良一, and Fujita Sakae 藤田栄, eds., *Sekiguchi Tsugio no shōgai to gyōseki* 『関口存男の生涯と業績』 (Tokyo: Sanshūsha, 1967).

mobility in Japan, so that learning more of the language could lead to a better career and a larger income. Once the students broke through the language ceiling to reach the pyramid's peak, they had unconstrained access to all the information that Germany had to offer in its native tongue without having to rely on middlemen like Japanese publishers or translators. The more extroverted language learners could even venture to Yokohama or Kobe to try their luck in encountering Germans to put their book-learning to practical use. Years later, some would compose the next generation of books on German; the students, at last, had become the teachers.

Yet the likelihood, or rather unlikelihood, of meeting Germans should remind us that, before we make too much of the prominence of German studies and its significance to Japanese-German relations, the language at best played second fiddle to English in interwar Japan. At any point between 1919 and 1937 at least twice as many native English speakers as German ones resided in Japan, and far more Japanese traveled to English-speaking lands than anywhere else outside Asia, whether as students or emigrants. Not only did more Japanese study English than German,¹⁶⁴ they also studied English before they would even consider German, so much so that several language books made use of readers' foreknowledge of English to help them understand German grammar.¹⁶⁵ Many institutions of higher learning did require a German test, but all required students to have some knowledge of English. If German was dominant in interwar Japan, then English was predominant.

¹⁶⁴ Precise figures of language students are almost impossible to obtain, since neither English nor German was taught as a compulsory subject in middle school or high school, so enrollment records are of little use. The "colleges" did mandate English, and some required German as well. The problem is made more difficult by the fact that many Japanese attempted to teach themselves foreign languages, and no statistics could account for these self-learners. In any case, all circumstantial evidence points to a Japanese preference for English to German as first foreign language.

¹⁶⁵ Interestingly, both Gonda and Sekiguchi compared German and English and explained the relations between the two languages in their works to help readers understand some features of German.

Just as the popularity of English studies in Japan could not keep the country from plunging into war against the British Empire and the United States, the prevalence of German did not single-handedly bring about diplomatic rapprochement between Japan and Germany.¹⁶⁶ Above all, we must view this “prevalence” of German in context, for although most students in higher education had to learn some German, most Japanese could not aspire to attend universities or afford to learn the language seriously on their own. Seen this way, even the mere opportunity to acquire German in order to open other doors amounted to a privilege of sorts, and the increasing difficulty and requirement of money, time, and dedication in ascending the step pyramid whittled down the student population further. In short, German was as highly priced as it was prized. That despite suffering from major drawbacks German studies still attracted much attention in Japan certainly attested to the language’s influence and stature, but it touched the lives of only a small number of Japanese.

Still, this thin slice of the Japanese demographic—the elites—exercised an outsized impact in politics, culture, society, and economics. The students would go on to become bureaucrats and officers, artists and scientists, and academics and businessmen. What they learned of Germany through their language studies must have shaped their imagination of the country and its people to a certain extent. Consider the case of Japanese anti-Semitism, an imported ideology since historically Japan had negligible experience with Jews. In the interwar years most Japanese, lay and educated alike, did not know *a Jew*, but many knew of *the Jews*—a situation not entirely different from that in Germany itself. In Japan Jewish

¹⁶⁶ As Japan and Germany became friendlier diplomatically, the number of Japanese studying German must also have increased correspondingly, since closer ties to Germany would open doors to careers in academia, the military, commerce, politics, law and civil service. Yet the degree of growth paled next to that experienced by German studies in France after its defeat in 1940. For example, by November 1941 Berlitz had over eight times as many French students of German as it did in 1939, while those of English declined by three quarters. See Richard Cobb, *French and Germans, Germans and French: A Personal Interpretation of France under Two Occupations 1914–1918/1940–1944* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1983), 125.

individuals such as Einstein and Haber commanded much goodwill (their ancestry did not arouse any attention until the Nazis made it a cause for persecution, and even then Japanese society reacted with remarkable sympathy and eagerness to help), but Jews collectively as an abstraction suffered from the same stereotypes commonly found in Germany. A small but loud group of copycat Japanese anti-Semites decided to parrot western anti-Semitism in their works, and thus readers of the newspapers in Chapter Five, the pamphlets in Chapter Six, the books in Chapter Seven and the language texts in this chapter came into contact with the so-called Jewish question. Surely one cannot prove with absolute certainty that any Japanese became convinced anti-Semites through exposure to bigoted phrases in German, but in an absence of firsthand familiarity with Jews some readers conceivably internalized a degree of suspicion or even loathing toward the Jews.

Likewise, the image of Germany at large went through a series of filters and colored lenses, some deliberate, some not, installed by the specialists before appearing in the language books. As a result, in the 1920s students in Japan read an awful lot about war, nation and the Kaiser, then from the mid-1930s onward they read about even more war, Nazism and the Führer. Strikingly this apparently seamless, uninterrupted “upgrade” from the Second to the Third Reich in the texts toed closely the line the Nazis themselves were pushing to the German people and the world. In addition, the politicized German language and politicization of German learning had the detrimental side effect of lowering the quality of the language lessons through the inclusion of incongruous sample sentences and passages, and impractical vocabularies and expressions, as seen in the many forms of hailing the Kaiser. What is more, the language books seemed to have hatched a conspiracy of silence against German democracy by marginalizing or ignoring altogether the achievements, perhaps even

existence, of the Weimar Republic. Readers were never told of the republic's successes in putting down putsches (including Hitler's), in tempering hyperinflation, in reintegrating Germany into the world, and in nursing an economic recovery. Nor did they have a chance to sample the groundbreaking works by Weimar maestros such as Brecht, Mann, Kafka, Döblin, and Remarque. Instead, in one moment they learned German from romantic nationalists, and in the next they studied the language of the National Socialists, as the focus of the linguists jumped from Wilhelm to Hitler (not punctuated by Ebert or even Hindenburg), and from nineteenth-century patriotism to twentieth-century ultra-nationalism. Several Germanists talked enthusiastically of the establishment of a "New Germany" in 1933, but virtually none discussed the foundation of another "new Germany" in 1919. The language book authors gave short shrift to the episodes of democratic experiments in 1848 and the 1920s, so that if few Germans defended the republic in its hour of need, even fewer Japanese mourned its demise in 1933. Only those on the far left attempted to mount a desperate counteroffensive with proletarian German.

The sharpness of the right-left ideological divide found among some of these works should not obscure the unevenness of the political division. The nationalist, martial, and personality-driven imagination of Germany far outweighed the internationalist, peaceful, and democratic one, so much so that the former functioned as the mainstream norm familiar to most Japanese students. This simplistic portrayal of German politics, however, did not accurately reflect realities in Weimar Germany, where the two Marxist parties enjoyed substantial popular support. What spawned the erroneous, skewed perception of the political situation in Germany in the books was the ideology and experience of the experts themselves. Their formative and impressionable years coincided with the golden age of the Kaiserreich.

Particularly for those who studied in Germany in the late 1800s and early 1900s, Imperial Berlin must have caught their imagination. Small wonder then, that in the freewheeling 1920s they hankered for the good old Wilhelmine days. Consequently, regardless of the fact that center-left coalitions governed Germany for most of the 1920s or that the Kaiser had long lost any relevance in German public life, the language specialists kept teaching students salutations for his majesty's health. The Japanese cultural intermediaries had a certain idea of Germany and chose to see a conservative version of the country even though it deviated from reality.

Therefore, when a rightist movement finally took over Germany, several of the Japanese specialists jumped at the chance to accommodate the regime by voluntarily aligning themselves and their works with its ideology and leadership. Though thoroughly totalitarian, Nazi Germany never cared or controlled how people learned German in Japan, and at no point did it exert pressure on the authors to portray the country positively or to incorporate Nazism into their teaching. Rather, several linguists fell into line of their own volition and actively sought ways to highlight National Socialism and Hitler in the language texts. Just when the Nazi movement ruthlessly attempted to coordinate the populace so as to equate Germany with Nazism and vice versa, some Japanese Germanists, failing or unwilling to differentiate the regime from the nation (much like their inability to distinguish the Kaiserreich and Germany as separate entities), simultaneously but independently collaborated with Gleichschaltung by introducing Nazi jargon, symbols, rituals, and concepts to their students. Since many Japanese already believed that Japan could benefit from learning from Germany through its language, it did not take much of a logical leap to rationalize that Japan could gain from imitating and befriending the seemingly resurgent New

Germany. Though one should not exaggerate the role and impact of the language experts in the alliance building process between Tokyo and Berlin, they most certainly did help pave the way by serving as trailblazing harbingers of favorable views of Nazi Germany in Japan.

CONCLUSION

IN THE END WERE ALSO THE WORDS

This dissertation began with a discussion on a punctuation mark and shall, appropriately enough, end with one on another. If the hyphen serves as a reminder of the obstacles in bridging Germany and Japan in the interwar era, then a pair of em (“long”) dashes can summarize the place that the alliance occupies in the long-term history of the bilateral interactions, as in: In the last century-and-a-half or so of modern Japanese-German relations, the two nations largely maintained—with the exception of the Axis years—formal, friendly engagements in which neither country represented a top priority for the other. Nowadays, Germany is once again negotiating its proper role in the European continent, while Japan is still preoccupied with balancing itself between the United States and China. The Berlin-Tokyo Axis, once so intimidating, had left no monuments or ruins marking its existence. It lacks even a “negative” memorial like the Berlin Wall that was born out of the dissolved American-Soviet marriage of convenience. Today, the only evidence for the presence of the Axis once upon a time rests either as rusting hulls of submarines on the ocean floor or as words on documents and in publications stashed in archives and libraries, accessed by only a few interested researchers. Likewise, the historiography on post-1945 Japan and Germany, almost exclusively comparative rather than relational, hardly hints at the formerly fateful ties. It does not seem to strain one’s credulity to imagine that, had a German and a Japanese in 1912 been transported in a time machine to 2012, they likely would never have suspected that their countries had once struck an alliance.

After examining the mutual portrayals of Germany and Japan in their mass media in the interwar years, we are ready to answer the questions raised in the Introduction. First, how exactly did Japan and Germany, and more specifically, Germans and Japanese, engage each other in the 1920s and 1930s? In the 1920s and 1930s up until the Anti-Comintern Pact, to the extent that the populations thought of the other at all, the two countries interacted with each other as ideas. To be sure, the two nations upheld certain fundamental levels of interplay in diplomacy and commerce, but most Japanese and Germans never had the chance to know the other firsthand. Rather, they learned of each other as fine prints in newspapers, moving pictures on screens, uttered sounds captured in pamphlets, words and images printed and bound in books, activities conducted in voluntary associations, and vocabulary and grammar memorized in language studies. The German and Japanese governments could do, and did, relatively little to control the appearances of their own nations in the other. Instead, Japanese opinion makers shaped the depictions of Germany in Japan, and German commentators molded the portrayals of Japan in Germany.

Second, how was Germany discussed in Japan in its mass media, and vice versa? In the interwar years, the German mass media propagated a static but schizophrenic image of Japan—"a country of juxtaposition" torn between West and East, new and old, war and peace, familiar and exotic, integration and isolation, etc. The popular German conceptualization of Japan from the 1920s to the late 1930s in the press, the cinema, publications, and interest clubs underwent no great drastic changes. Clichés and stereotypes such as "land of the rising sun," geisha and samurai, and the homogeneous island nation were applied throughout the interwar era to describe Japan. These multiple and malleable ideations of Japan allowed the German opinion makers and eventually the government to highlight specific aspects of Japan

to suit their political needs at any time. Meanwhile, the Japanese mass media reported on Germany selectively, pining nostalgically for the Kaiserreich, downplaying the Weimar Republic, and then trumpeting the Third Reich. In all the conduits of information—newspapers, lectures and pamphlets, books, and language texts—Germany was articulated as a country of science, order, and progress, and the Germans as a willful, persevering folk in the face of catastrophes. In contrast to the unchanging portrait of Japan in Germany, the one of Germany in Japan followed a narrative of a country spiraling downward in the 1920s and rising in redemption in the 1930s.

Third, how did German and Japanese opinion-makers respond to the changes in their own and each other's countries in the early to mid-1930s? Beginning in the early 1930s, independent but simultaneous changes within Japan and Germany prompted a small but vocal clique of Japanese intellectuals, echoed by their German counterparts, to paint an increasingly rosy but distorted portrait of each other's country. The Japanese pundits substituted the extant notion of a modern, progressive, and culturally diverse Germany with one romanticizing and exaggerating its past battlefield heroics, martial ethos, and radical ideologies. Meanwhile, the German commentators replaced the pre-existing stereotype of a quaint, traditional, and geisha-filled Japan with one populated by warriors and glorifying its embrace of political violence, defiance of international order, and offensive war.

Beyond the narrow confines of interwar bilateral relations, the dissertation also sheds light on aspects of the histories of Germany and Japan, of intercultural relations, and of the link between knowledge and power. The evidence presented in the chapters illustrates the imbalance of mutual recognition between Japan and Germany, and between East and West in general. On every layer of the mass media examined, a Japanese person would know and

could learn far more about Germany than a German counterpart using a comparable source for information. In other words, the Japanese step pyramid of acquiring knowledge about Germany was far wider and taller than the German one about Japan. At any point in the interwar era, more of the Japanese population and mass media discussed Germany and with greater sophistication than the other way around. At the risk of repetition: Japanese newspapers informed their readers more thoroughly than their German equivalents. Japanese lectures and pamphlets discussed Germany in more detail and nuance than the stereotype-filled German motion pictures. Japanese books contained more, and more diverse, facts about Germany than German ones on Japan, though one must also acknowledge that the best German publications on Japan could stand toe to toe with Japanese ones. Lastly, Germany could boast of nothing like the phenomenon in Japan of German-learning by individuals of many walks of life and of German as a path for social mobility. On the pinnacle of the German step pyramid, the German climber might have the chance to meet Japanese visitors in the social setting of a voluntary association and thereby find out about Japan firsthand. At the peak of the Japanese step pyramid, the Japanese student would have internalized a bit of Germany by studying its language, which opened the door to the entire corpus of accumulated knowledge published in German. With luck, the student might even dream in the foreign language—a sure sign of acculturation that few Germans could ever aspire to regarding Japan. In short, one would find it unsurprising that by and large Japanese went to Germany to learn, but Germans went to Japan to teach or preach.

In addition, the phenomenon of progressively more militant German-Japanese mutual conceptualizations offers a fascinating example in intercultural intellectual relations. It represents an instance of a population mentally empowering a foreign people to commit

violent acts and gravitating toward such acts, unlike the more conventional cases of one fantasizing one's dominance over foreign groups or believing in the superiority of one's own country. To wit, that many Germans became German ultranationalists and Japanese became imperialists should not raise an eyebrow, but the processes through which Germans became boosters of Japanese expansion and Japanese became fans of German aggression do demand an explanation. The dissertation argues that the intellectuals and opinion-makers in Japan and Germany developed and broached the subject of bilateral cooperation and articulated it in politico-military terms. They voiced support for the alliance before it was formed and furnished defense for it afterward. They, in other words, helped transform the idea of the other country into diplomatic reality by seeding the public and official consciousness with rhetoric and imagery glamorizing war.

Lastly, the dissertation highlights the power that knowledgeable people could exercise through advocacy in the mass media. We have witnessed how the hawkish intellectuals positioned themselves to preside over all channels of information in their societies to mold public and even official opinions regarding the other country as a reliably ruthless and belligerent partner in the coming war that some Germans and Japanese anticipated and even welcomed. Although these self-appointed cultural intermediaries did not quite amount to a conspiratorial cabal bent on world domination, they did work in concert to lay the mental groundwork for the eventual alliance by conjuring an alternative reality of sorts in which violence became a virtue and aggression ranked as an achievement. Therefore, when Berlin and Tokyo each turn itself into an international pariah through its revisionist and bombastic diplomacy, Japan and Germany appeared to each other as a ready, suitable comrade-in-arms. We may better appreciate the influence of these opinion-makers in drawing

two physically and culturally distant countries together by contemplating the difficulties that the contemporary Roosevelt administration encountered in dragging his fellow Americans to come to the aid of Britain—so much for the “special relationship.” In contrast, some German and Japanese commentators had already begun collaborating in joint publications some time before the regimes caught up by signing the Anti-Comintern Pact. In short, while the pundits in interwar Japan and Germany did not control traditional sources of power like the armed forces, bureaucracy, noble lineages, party machines, or great wealth, they wielded their knowledge of the outside world as power and helped transform their fantasy into reality. To wit, they wielded the pen as the sword.

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