

中国は日本に感謝し、靖国に参拝せよ

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内戦停止、農民・飢饉の救済、列強による分割の阻止…どれをとっても中国は日本に感謝こそすれ、批判すべき筋合いはない。侵略？冗談ではない。愚かな民族を隣人に持った不幸な日本に対して、謝罪すべきは中国である。

台湾での歴史認識

多くの日本人は、中国に対する感情はともかく、過去の「侵略」については謙虚に謝罪し、反省しなくてはならないと考えているようだ。

最近では日米戦争については日本の自衛戦争だったとの認識がいくらか広まりつつあるが、こと日中戦争に関しては、あくまで「侵略戦争だった」との認識があり、どうしても贖罪意識を拭えない。だが日本および日本人は、いったい日中戦争の何について反省しなければならないのだろうか。

日本軍は中国やアジア各国に対して侵略、虐殺、暴行、掠奪を働いたというのが中国側の主張であると同時に、戦後日本人の一般的な歴史認識でもあるが、台湾では違う。これは私自身、幼い頃から聞かされてきたことでもあるが、たいていの知日派知識人は、「日本は悪くなかった。悪かったことといえば戦争に負けたことだった」と考えている。

当時は列強の時代だった。「春秋に義戦なし」というが、この時代には弱肉強食こそが国際社会の法則だった。弱者は「悪」とみなされ、国家の進取、覚醒、自覚が時代の精神とされていた。「侵略」は第二次世界大戦まではむしろ美德とされていたのである。しかし、そのような時代にあっても、日本だけは「東亜の解放」というあまりに道義的な理念、目標を掲げて戦った。白人による世界的規模の植民地支配の時代における近代日本の最大の国家的課題は、いかに欧米列強の植民地支配を免れるかにあった。祖国防衛を図るうえで、もっとも望ましいのは欧米支配の桎梏 [手かせ足かせ] からアジアが解放されることだった。

この「東亜の解放」の理念は終戦後、まず連合国に否定された。それは当然である。欧米の植民地勢力にとって、これほど許容できないものはなかったからだ。そして東京裁判で「東亜の解放」とは「東亜への侵略」を正当化するための宣伝文句だったと断罪された。これを日本人は鵜呑みにしてそのまま今日に至っている。

だが台湾人は幸い、東京裁判史観に染まることがなかった。だから日本の戦争が、まさしくアジアのレコンキスタ(失地回復)であり、それによって欧米植民地勢力が駆逐された史実を素直に受け止め、「日本が負けたことが悪かった」というのである。

歴史は「勝者」のもの

中国の日本に対する歴史への干渉は、日本の歴史教科書の問題だけでなく、政治、外交にまで発展している。それは中国にはっきり「ノー」と言えない日本の自業自得だが、外国に対する中国の歴史観の押しつけは、そもそも歴史観の独善性のなせる業である。他者への押しつけを前提としている歴史観とでも言えはいいだろうか。それはまた、中国人の民族性をストレートに反映したものでもある。

中国には『史記』『漢書』から『元史』『明史』に至る正史(歴代朝廷が編纂した正式な歴史書)というものがある。これは易姓革命(天子の徳が衰えると天命も革まり、他の有徳者が新たに王朝を創始するという思想)によって天下を掌握した新王朝が自らの正統性を示すため、なぜ前王朝から政権を篡奪する必要があったかを記すものだ。つまり中国人からすれば、歴史とは勝者が書き、敗者がそれを受け入れ、学ぶべきものなのである。それが中国における「歴史の鉄則」なのだ。

日中戦争の真実は、それぞれ日本・英米・ソ連の後押しを受けた南京(江兆銘派国民党)・重慶(蒋介石派国民党)・延安(共産党)三政府の三つ巴の内戦であったが、たとえば中国共産党は、国共内戦で敗れた国民党は独自に歴史を語ってはならないと考えている。

「八年抗戦」(日中戦争)の中国側の主役は国民党軍であり、共産党軍などは脇役であった。いや、脇役というよりむしろ、日本軍との対決は国民党に任せ、自分たちはできるだけ真正面からの戦闘を回避し、来るべき国民党との戦いに備えて拠点作りにいそしんでいたというのが真実だ。だが戦後、天下を取った共産党は、「八年抗戦」について、あたかも共産党が人民を指導し、勝利した解放戦争であるかのように事実を捻じ曲げた。国民党の活躍にはできるだけ触れず「中国共産党がなければ今日の中国はなかった」と言っているのである。中国が日中戦争の勝利者である以上、敗者である日本は「歴史の鉄則」を受け入れなくてはならない。日中戦争をどう描こうと中国の勝手であり、日本人はそれに従っていればよい」と考えている。

歴史観の一方的な押しつけも、日本に対する当然の権利であると考え、内政干渉だという意識はない。むしろ、それを批判する日本人は不見識な輩であり、中国の権利を蹂躪していると怒るのである。「中国が創作した歴史だけを勉強すればいい。勝手にそれに反する歴史教科書を作るな」と言うだけではない。中国政府は「中国が教科書記述を指導することを、日本人は恩義に感じ、感謝しなければならない」「日本語の使用までは許しているのだから幸いと思え」とまで考えている。

事実、チベットや新疆内モンゴルなどは歴史教科書どころではなく、言語まで消滅させられようとしている。これらの地域では、民族言語は初等教育では多少使用が許されているものの、高等教育になると完全に中国語が用いられている。そのため内モンゴルでは、モンゴル語がしゃべれるのは三人に一人。モンゴル文字が書けるのは六人に一人となってしまう、まさに民族消滅の危機に瀕している。それに比べれば「日本などはまだ恵まれているぞ」という倒錯と傲慢をないまぜにしたような意識が中国にはあるのだ。

政治第一、史実は二の次

中国には御用学者しか存在しておらず、歴史研究といっても体制イデオロギーを前提にしたものである以上、史実は二の次なのだ。中国の「正しい歴史認識」とは、あくまで政治に奉仕するものなのである。

中国の言う「正しい歴史認識」とは、中国の独善的歴史観に基づいたものというより、むしろ内政・外交上の必要に応じて捏造したものがほとんどだといったほうがよい。だから共産党結党後の歴史になると、すべてが共産党栄光史観に基づいた内容となる。

そのことは国民党と共産党の教科書を見比べれば一目瞭然である。もちろん国民党側も国民党中心の捏造史観だが、「八年抗争」(日中戦争)に関しては共産党のものよりはるかに史実に近い。

日中戦争は世界のどの国から見ても日本軍・南京国民党軍 vs 重慶国民党軍の戦いであり、その点、日本への抗戦の主役が自分たちであったとする国民党史観は正しい。だが、共産党の歴史観

では、それが共産党だったことになるのである。

抗日戦争は国民党に任せ、自らは勢力温存を図るのが共産党の基本戦略だった。当時なら誰もが知っていたこの史実を、共産党は戦後、強引に否定した。なぜなら、「共産党の指導による抗日戦争の偉大なる勝利」の栄光を、共産党は政権獲得の正当性の根拠の一つにしているからだ。そして、抗日戦争が共産党軍 vs 日本侵略軍の戦いであったとの「正しい歴史認識」を民衆に押しつけたのである。

日本はアメリカ軍に負けたのであって、中国戦線ではほとんど連戦連勝、終戦時にも圧倒的に優勢な兵力を保っていた。その事実を共産党は否定し、抗日の英雄的戦いを強調したいばかりに、血湧き肉躍る小説もどきの戦争ストーリーを数々創作している。日本に押しつけられているのが、このような経緯で生まれた「正しい歴史認識」なのだ。

中国政府の「誤った」歴史観の押しつけは日本に対してだけではなく、アメリカにも行われている。

たとえば江沢民は訪米時に、中国のチベット侵略を農奴解放のためであったと言い張り、リンカーンの奴隷解放と同様の歴史的義挙であったなどと強弁していた。「台湾は中国の神聖不可分の固有領土」という主張も、国際社会に対する捏造された歴史観の押しつけの一つだ。

中国政府はこのようにすることで、共産党捏造の歴史が世界中から承認されている「正しい歴史認識」だと自国民に宣伝したいのである。

したがって、中国の史実を記述することは極めて難しい。歴史捏造の国であるだけに、ある程度の歴史的知識と冷静な洞察力がなければ、なかなかわからない。

中国人は史実をまとめた『三国志』より、フィクションの『三国志演義』のほうを好み、そこに描かれた人物像や事象が歴史常識として一般に定着している。このように「正史」の通説、「野史」の異説、そして小説の俗説に基づいて形成されたのが中国人の歴史観だ。現代ではさらに共産党大会における歴史決議の「決定」も歴史観の重要な要素となっている。史実というものを二の次、三の次に考える中国政府が、どうして歴史を正確に検証するだろうか。

中国人と違い、日本人には歴史というものは絶対捏造してはならないという「常識」がある。ことに戦後は、歴史解釈はとことん客観的に行うべきで、研究者の主観を少しでも入れることは許されないという極論すら珍しくない。だから「司馬遼太郎の著書は小説であって、歴史研究の参考にしてはならない」といった話も、何度か日本人から聞かされたことがある。まして国定歴史教科書が必要であるなどと言ったら、「政府の政治的意図が織り込まれ、歴史の書き換えが行われる」「皇国史観の戦前に逆戻りだ」と大騒ぎになるのではないだろうか。

アジアを裏切った中国

大東亜戦争は日清、日露、日中戦争の延長線上に発生したアジア防衛の戦争だった。西田幾多郎は、「米英帝国主義の桎梏を脱して東亜諸民族の繁栄を手にする道は、東亜諸民族自らが共通の敵、米英帝国主義の撃滅、根絶を期して結束する以外にない。すなわち、大東亜戦争を完遂して東亜を保全し、大東亜共栄圏を確立して共栄の樂を俱にする」ことこそ「現代東亜諸民族の第一の歴史的課題」であると言った。

このような認識は日本人だけでなく、西洋の植民地支配に苦しむアジア諸民族の共感を呼んだ。ただひとりそれに同調せず、逆にアジア侵略の列強と手を結んだのが中国人だ。これだけは、いくら強調しても足りない。

安定しない社会で近代経済社会の確立が不可能なのは常識である。百年以上にわたってカオス状態にあった東アジアに新秩序を再建することが日本の歴史的使命となった。アジアの解放による大東亜共栄圏構想も、まさにその延長線上にあった。

歴史は巨視的に見なければならぬ。外来民族が中華世界にとっては救世主だったという歴史の視点が重要なのである。日本を含む非漢民族の侵入や支配が果たした役割と貢献については、今日の近代ナショナリズムの視点、あるいは漢民族主義、中華民族主義の視点からでは決してわからない。

国際法無視の”革命外交”

戦前の日本民族の奮闘と努力が中国を救ったのである。祖国と民族を救われた中国人は、本来、日本にどんなに感謝を捧げても捧げ足りないはずなのだ。平成七年(一九九五)に村山富市首相が言ったような、日本が中国に「侵略」した「過去の一時期」というのは、中国の天下(中華世界)の崩壊期に当たり、複数の政府が乱立して軍閥内戦、国民党内戦、国共内戦が続く、まさにカオスの状態だった。どの政府も全中国を代表する、あるいは革命の大義を唱える正義・正統の政府と主張しながら、対外的に一国の政府としての責任を負うことができなかった。つまり中国は国家としての体をなしていなかったのである。

「中国は国家にあらず」という論が、この時代、日本の学界で唱えられていたが、それは謬見でも不見識でもなかった。日中間の戦争の本質を考えるなら、日中戦争にはじまる一連の衝突事件、事変、戦争は、決して近代国民国家間の国民戦争とはいえなかったのである。日清戦争における日本の相手は北洋大臣李鴻章の手持ちの私兵であり、満洲事変の相手は張学良の満洲軍閥であり、日中八年戦争は蒋介石の国民党軍が主力で、いずれも国軍・国民軍ではなかった。

このような国において、日本が日清戦争以来獲得してきた数々の権益—国際法上も認められた権益—は中国人によって無視され、否定され、脅かされつづけた。それどころか中国は国際法を無視する革命外交なるものまで展開し、日本は外交上振り回されるばかりであった。いわば日本は、中国群雄の独善的な私利私欲の狂奔に翻弄されつづけたということだ。

反日・排日の畏

中華民国は内戦つづきで、ほとんど単一政府を確立することができなかったため、日本は近代的国民国家として、中国での正当なる国家権利と国家権益を守るため、内戦の早期終結に向けてたとえば段祺瑞(袁世凱の後継者)の北京政権や、汪兆銘政権など親日勢力への加担やその内戦への介入をしなくてはならなかった。内戦状態の中国では日本をはじめ列強諸国の介入や加担は避けようがなかったことも忘れてはならない。このように日本は内戦に巻き込まれ、中国の泥沼にはまってしまい、人的・物的・金銭的に多大な犠牲を強いられ、最後には敗戦の憂き目に遭ったのである。

もし中華民国時代に中国の政府が一つだけであつたら、日中間に戦争は起こらなかつたかもしれない。どの戦いも、各政府、各勢力が自派の私利私欲のために対日挑発を行い、自派の軍隊は温存しながら、他派の勢力を戦争に駆り立てるように仕向けた結果である。そこに日中間の戦争の本質がある。これを「侵略」として非難するなら、大東亜戦争後の中国の各国への内戦介入、革命輸出、領海・領土侵犯などはいったい何だというのだろうか。

日中戦争の真因は、日本の「侵略」や「陰謀」などではなく、中国国内の各派勢力が次から次へと仕掛けた反日・排日の畏に日本がまんまと嵌ったことにある。「畏」は反日宣伝、排日デモ、反日教育、日貨排斥から日本居留民の虐殺まで、数えきれないほど仕掛けられた。このような度重なる挑発に、日本世論は「暴支膺懲」(暴虐な支那を懲らしめる)に燃え上がり、日本は本格的な戦争に突入していった。

そうした反日の挑発は、内戦をつづける各派が自己勢力の安泰を図るためであった。たとえば国民党の非主流派は最大勢力である蒋介石の国民政府に日本と戦わせ、その強大化と集権化を牽制し、あるいは蒋派の討伐から自分の勢力を温存しようと考えた。

各派勢力は対日挑発を繰り返しながら、日本からの非難や抗議にも自分では責任を負わず、みな他の勢力になすりつけていた。国共内戦で延安にまで追い詰められた共産党も、そうすることで崩壊を免れようとした。抗日統一戦線と呼びかけたのも、まさに自分たちが生き延びるためだった。時間的な長さからしても、悲惨さからしても、中国では対外戦争によるよりも内戦による犠牲者のほうが遥かに大きい。

中国の内戦を停止させた

清帝国が十八世紀半ばに東アジア世界の征服を終えた後も、各地で反乱、内戦が頻発し、その状態が中華民国時代、そして中華人民共和国時代まで百数十年にもわたって継続された。内戦、内乱の一つ一つを見ても、白蓮教徒の乱、太平天国の乱、回乱(イスラム教徒回族の反乱)、文化大革命などは十年以上つづいたし、犠牲者数も対外戦争とは比べ物にならないくらい大きかった。

たとえば太平天国の乱における犠牲者は五千万人から人口の五分之一にあたる八千万人に達したと見られ、回乱では四千万人が殺された。それに対して、日中戦争での中国側の犠牲者は三千五百万人と公表されているが、実際には三百万人ほどだったようだ。中国の対外戦争は、国内の矛盾をそらすためでなければ、内戦の一時緩和のために行われ、内戦による犠牲者数の減少という「役割」を果たしてきた。ことに日中戦争は、国共内戦およびその他各武装派勢力間の内証(内紛)を停止させるという歴史的貢献を果たしている。

それはたまたまそうだったとは決して言いきれない。日本は絶えず中国の国内安定、内戦停止を希求しながら関与してきた。そのためかえって内戦に引き込まれて日中戦争がはじまったわけだが、日本軍という強大な勢力の進出によって国共内戦は終息した。日本の占領地では、つねに日中平和の旗印の下、中国社会の治安維持と平和的再建に力が注がれるようになった。

以後は「共同抗日」のスローガンの下、国共の正面衝突は避けられ、せいぜい小競合い程度になった。国民党からの攻撃を避けるために日本軍を戦争に引き込んだ共産党の謀略が功を奏したということができる。そして日本軍が撤退すると、たちまち国共内戦は再燃したのだった。

中国の内戦を停止させたのが日本であったことは、世界の近現代史において特筆されるべきだ。しかも、日本軍の中国の平和回復への貢献は国共内戦を停止させたというだけにとどまらない。日本軍の進出によって、華北・華中では平和勢力が結集して地方自治政府が次々と誕生した。内戦武装勢力の解体があり、治安が確立されるや満洲国に続けとばかりに近代産業建設が着手された。

百五十年も続いた内戦を日本軍は一撃のもとに終結させ、人々に平和をもたらしたのである。中国人は靖国神社を憎悪するが、実は中国人こそ、靖国の社頭に額づき、日本軍の英霊に感謝の祈りを捧げなくてはならないのだ。

中国における中華帝国以来の苛斂誅求、そして飢饉や流民といった農民問題は、今日に至っても基本的にはほとんど解決されていない。それは中国の宿痾であると言える。

中国農民を救済

たとえば、日中間の衝突が激化の一途をたどりはじめた一九二〇年代からは、洪水、旱魃、蝗害（イナゴによる被害）といった自然災害が頻発した。災害を拡大したのは長年の内戦による水利組織の破壊である。水利事業は、強力な国家組織があつてはじめて行い得るものだ。だから古来中国では水利事業は帝王の事業と考えられてきた。しかし、中華民国時代には、そのような国家組織は存在しなかった。

その被害は日本人の想像を絶するものだ。日中戦争直前の一九二七～三五年にかけてはほぼ毎年のように大水害もしくは大旱魃が発生し、そのたびに一千万人から五千万人が罹災している。この八年間における自然災害で各地の農業は潰滅し、一家離散の悲劇だけでなく、深刻な飢饉によって多数の餓死者が出ている。被災者数は全人口の約四分の三だったといわれる。

中国は、平時でさえ食料の生産性が低く、完全な自給は困難であり、二十世紀に入ってから食料を輸入する状況だった。そして、労働人口の余剰によって年々数えきれないほどの餓死者が出た。戦後、毛沢東の「大躍進」政策の失敗で数千万人規模の餓死者が出たのも、決して不思議ではないのだ。

五千年もの農耕の歴史を持ち、人口の九割が農民である中国の、こうした奇怪千万な状況に対し、中国政府にかかわって農村を救済したのが日中戦争における日本軍民だった。

日中戦争勃発の年である昭和十二年（一九三七）正月の衆議院国会では、近衛文麿首相が「支那民衆の心を把握しなければ、東洋平和の確立、ひいては日支両国の提携はできない。支那は農業国であるから、支那農民と結び、農業の発展をわが国が手伝うことは極めて必要なことだ」と発言している。

当時の日本人にとって、隣国中国との提携を果たすには、まずはこの国の人口の圧倒的多数を占める農民を、悲惨な状況から救い出すしかないと考えたのはごくごく自然なことだろう。

民衆を犠牲にした中国軍

それに対して、日中戦争が始まると、日本軍の進撃を阻止したい中国軍は、農村の灌漑施設を破壊し、軍を養うため作物や家畜を収奪した。さらに、「拉夫」という強制連行によって労働力さえ奪ったのである。抗日ゲリラも食糧需給秩序の攪乱に狂奔した。つまり重慶政府も共産ゲリラも、国家防衛を口にしながら、相変わらず農民の生活と生命については無関心だったと言える。

重慶政府は、前線将兵からの食糧供給要請に「農民から徴発せよ」と答えているし、日本軍の進撃を防ぐためへ自らは戦うこともなく、黄河を決壊させて十一の都市と四千の村を水没させるような所業を平然と行っている。

進駐してきた日本は掠奪を行うどころか逆に、すでに台湾・朝鮮・満州で行ってきたように生産計画を立て、生産を指導・支援し、地主に苛斂誅求をやめさせ、土匪の襲撃から農村を守り、食糧の確保と農民の救援に躍起となっていたのである。

これは農村の近代化支援でもあつた。食糧増産を図っただけでなく、植林を行い、電力を供給し文化指導を行い、学校や病院を建て、医療人材の育成にも力を注いだ。また、鉄道、道路、港

湾建設などのほか、華北・華中の産業開発も大々的に振興させた。

一方、日本の非占領地である重慶政府支配地域では、豊作が続いたにもかかわらず食料品の急騰が続き、深刻な食糧恐慌に陥った。この奇妙な現象は、主に地主・大商人・官僚・軍人などが投機目的で食糧を買い占めた結果、起こった。このように権力者や有力者が私欲に走り、民衆の生活や生命を犠牲にするのが中国の伝統社会の一大特徴である。

日本軍は、中国伝統の農村経済システムを打破してまで農民の救済に取り組んだ。農村経済の近代化のために日本が指導したのが合作社運動だ。これは日本でいえば農協と産業組合を併せた機能を持つもので、村落間の抗争の仲裁から教育・技術指導・文化活動までを行って、無秩序状態にあった農村を経済的に組織化したのだった。

このような試みは、満洲国は例外としても、中国史上類例のないものだった。創意工夫の思考を持たない中国の伝統的為政者とは異なり、創意工夫だけで国家を支え、繁栄させてきた日本人は、中国を停滞から発展へと導いたのである。

かくして戦火のなかでも中国の農民たちは、数千年来の貧窮から脱し希望の光を見出すことができるようになったのだ。このことを中国政府は死んでも認めたがらないだろう。せめて日本人はこれを先人の歴史的偉業として心に刻み、中国の押しつける日本侵略史観を断固はねつけなくてはならない。

大飢饉の救済・教育も

二十世紀になると、戦乱と飢饉はさらに拡大の一途をたどった。満洲事変から日中戦争までのあいだ、水害と旱魃は大地を襲い、その被害者は億単位に上っている。たとえば一九三〇～三二年の西北大飢饉は、中華民国の広報によると餓死者は一千万人で、飢民のあいだでは共食いが起こり、流民も溢れ出ている。日本政府も事態の深刻さに調査団と救援団を派遣していた。日本の救援団は日中戦争のさなかにも戦場を駆けめぐって各地の深刻な大飢饉への救援活動を行っていた。

日本の敗戦後は国共内戦が全国規模へと拡大し、日中戦争以上の乱世となった。そして飢餓もいっそう深刻化した。中華人民共和国が樹立されると、局面は横の戦争から階級闘争という縦の闘争へと移った。ことに「大躍進政策」の失敗により、中国政府は二千万人から五千万人と推定される自国民を餓死させている。社会主義建設に失敗し、それによる犠牲者とその遺族に責任を取らざるを得なくなった中国政府は、中国の不幸はすべて日本の「侵略」のためだと、懸命に責任転嫁の日本叩きに遇進している。

「民は由らしむべし、知らしむべからず」とは孔子以来の中国「愚民」政策の根本思想だ。そもそも中国における学問とはいかに民を統治するかを知るためのものである。一部の支配者層がひたすら学問に励んだのは、官吏登用試験である科挙に合格するためであった。もちろんその学問も、体制の現状維持のためにあるものだから、そこでは独創や進歩というものが排斥されていた。

圧倒的多数の庶民にとって学問はまったく無縁のものであり、むしろ関係してはならないものであった。庶民は無学のまま、有徳とされる支配者の前で従順であれば、それで天下は治まると考えられたのだ。だから愚民でなければ政府から睨まれ、危険視されることになる。「反右派闘争」と「文化大革命」で知識人が弾圧されたのも同じことだ。毛沢東の革命事業は、群衆の狂気を利用しようというものであり、その「狂気」を「狂気」と批判しかねない知識人を危険視したのである。

二十世紀に入り、崩壊寸前の清国は、それまで馬鹿にしていた日本の富国強兵ぶりにあこがれ、

ようやく日本の近代制度の模倣と日本官民の指導の下で近代国家を目指す大改革に着手した。東夷日本の制度を導入できたのは、当時の清国政府が、日露戦争での日本の輝かしい戦勝を目の当たりにし、そのショックによって大中華思想を一時ながらも放棄できたからだ。

科挙の廃止と日本留学

その象徴が、科挙の廃止と、日本留学が官吏登用の条件となったことである。国民教育で国民一人一人の素養を高め、国家の富強を目指さなくてはならないことに、はじめて中国人は気がついたのである。それは伝統的な学問の概念の一大転換であり、これこそ真の意味での文化大革命だった。

明治二十九年(一八九六)に最初の清国留学生十三名を迎えて以来、日本の政府・軍部・教育界は、彼らのために学校を建て、カリキュラムをつくって熱心に教育した。当時の日本人が清国に望んでいたのは国家の近代化である。ことに、三国干渉(一八九五)以降の危機感の高まりから、清国が速やかに弱体・腐敗体質を改めて近代改革に着手し、日本との提携関係を構築することを切実に願っていた。そのために中国の若いエリートたちが日本で近代文化を吸収し、対日理解を深めて今後の提携の礎を築くことを切望したのである。

留学渡航者数は年々増加し、一九〇五年には八千人を超え、ピーク時の〇六年には一万人前後ともいわれ、あるいは二、三万人に達したとの資料もある。

一九〇五年を境に留学生が急増したのは、この年に科挙制度が廃止され、日本留学が官吏登用の条件となったこと、そして、日露戦争に日本が勝利したことによって、近代化のモデルが日本に定まったからである。「日本留学」が、千三百年以上つづいた科挙制度にかわる仕官への道となったことは中国文化史上、特筆されてよいことだ。もちろん、反日史観に凝り固まった今日の中国人が口に出せるはずもない。

清国の軍事留学生たちが関心をもち、あるいは感嘆してやまなかったのは日本の軍事力の大きさみならず、国民のあいだに漲る強烈な愛^{みなぎ}国心、国家防衛意識、そしてそこから生まれる団結心と滅私奉公の精神であった。これは留学生の手記からも十分にうかがい知ることができる。清国留学生たちは日本と日本人を崇拜し、信頼しながら懸命に学んだのである。これを当時の中国人は「師日」時代と呼び、「黄金の十年」とも言われた。

日本が近代中国の軍事的人材を育てた意義は大きい。これらの人材は帰国後、日本陸軍の軍事顧問と協力して中国軍の近代化を推進した。清末における清軍の急成長は目覚ましいものがあり、列強が脅威を感じたほどだった。それほど日本軍人の中国軍の近代化に注いだ情熱はなみなみならないものがあったのだ。

当時顧問をつとめた日本軍人は、やがて日中戦争が勃発すると、多くは中国人と戦っている。もし彼らが本当に「中国侵略」の陰謀を持っていたというのなら、中国軍の拡充と精鋭化になぜそこまで心血を注いだのかがまったく説明できなくなる。

北京大学設置に尽力

もちろん、日本人が情熱を傾けた中国の人材育成は軍事に限られたものではなく、政治・経済・教育など、あらゆる面において行われた。司法制度・警察制度においてもそうであった。社会科学・自然科学はもとより人文学・医学・建築等々、近代科学技術の人材育成に国を挙げて協力し

た。日本人教師も一時は一千人にも達していた。北京大学の設置も、日本人学者の努力抜きには語れない。

このような日本官民の情熱はどこからきたものかといえば、それは一つには「同文同種」という中国への親近感、同情心といった熱烈な感情からである。もう一つは、当時の日本人にあった時代の精神ともいべき興亜、アジア隆盛への使命感である。だが、日本官民の中国近代化に対する有形無形の声援、支援、協力、指導も、結局は中国人の内訌、内戦、あるいは日本への背信、裏切りによって潰えた。その後、中国では愚民政策が根本的に反省されることはなかった。

ついでに言うておけば、日本は中国にかわってその歴史文物を大切に保存してきた。

中国人は何かといえば遣隋使、遣唐使を持ち出して「日本に文化を教えたのは中国だ。中国文化を取り入れなければ日本人は未開人のままだった」と口にする。しかし、中国が日本に文化指導を行ってきたかのように言うのは間違いだ。遣唐使が日本に持ち帰った典籍は中国から高額で買い取ったものであり、日宋貿易の時代にも、宋が渡来を許していた日本人は僧侶だけだったから、各地の大名は密貿易を通じ、法外な値段で中国の文物を買っていた。

中国には五千年もの悠久の歴史があると自慢するが、中国人は世界に類を見ない伝統・歴史・文化の破壊者なのである。文革時代にすべての旧文化、旧風習、伝統をぶち壊す全国的運動が起こったことでも明らかだが、秦の始皇帝の「焚書坑儒」に代表されるように、易姓革命が起こるたび、中国人は前王朝を全面否定するためにその文化遺産を徹底的に破壊してきたのである。

遣隋使・遣唐使以降、日本が中国から輸入した^{おびただ}夥しい数の典籍のなかには、本土ではすでに失われたものが数多く含まれている。宋の時代にはすでに、日本が珍書、稀少本、逸書の宝庫であることが知られていた。明治維新後に日清間の往来がはじまると、そのことが再び中国人に知られることとなり、失われた典籍の逆輸入が行われた。それは中国における学術研究の空白を大きく埋めることになった。本国で失われた書を探し求め、清国の学者が大挙日本を押し寄せたのは一八八〇～九〇年代である。

近代文化だけではない。伝統文化においても「恩恵を蒙った」のは日本ではなく、むしろ中国のほうである。

「対華二十一カ条」の真相

中華民国後の日中関係が急速に悪化した大きな原因としてしばしば指摘されるのが、日本によるいわゆる「二十一カ条要求」である。

「二十一カ条要求」は一九一五年(大正四年)一月、大隈重信内閣が中華民国大総統袁世凱に提出したもので、今日では日本でも中国でも、「中国主権を著しく侵害する要求で、最後通牒を突きつけてむりやり承諾させた」というのが定説になっている。

だが、当時の日本政府は、それらの要求が他の列強諸国に比してとくに過酷なものとは考えていなかったし、実際そのとおりだった。「二十一カ条要求」は第一号から第五号までであるが、たとえば第二号にある「租借期限の九十九年延長」は、香港の租借に関して英中間で同様の取り決めを行っていたし、第三号の「漢冶洋公司の日中合弁」についても、漢冶洋公司(中華民国最大の製鉄会社)はすでに日本と提携関係にあったのである。

つまり日本は中国における政治経済活動の「西洋列強並み」を求めたにすぎない。日本の中国進出は他の列強諸国とは違い、まさに国家の死活問題だった。日清戦争以降、何かにつけ列強各国から妨害を受けて不安定な状況にあった中国での既得権益を、第一次大戦で各国が中国を顧み

ないあいだに整理・設定してしまおうとしたのが、この「二十一カ条要求」の狙いだった。

主権侵害として中国側からもっとも非難されたのは第五号である。その内容は以下のようなのだ。

1、日本人の政・財・軍顧問の起用、2、日本人の病院・寺院・学校への土地所有権附与、3、一部警察の日中合弁、4、日本からの武器輸入、日本からの兵器購入と日中合弁の兵器工場設立、5、華南での鉄道敷設権、福建省の鉄道・港湾・鉱山における優先権、7、日本人の布教権などを求める七項目。

これに限っては、日本の「要求」というより「希望」に過ぎなかったし、最終的に中国への配慮から大きく譲歩して同年五月に締結された「日華条約」では、この第五号の七項目はすべて削除されているのである。

日本が最後通牒を行ったことにしても、それは袁世凱が英米などに日本に対する圧力をかけさせようと交渉を引き延ばしたため、そこで断固たる措置をとらなければ排日勢力が増長することを懸念したからだ。また、国内の反対派に配慮した袁世凱が、逆に「最後通牒」を求めてきたという説も有力である。

故意に歪めて伝える

そして、袁世凱政府をはじめとする中国人は、「二十一カ条要求」の交渉中から、その内容を故意に歪めて国内外に伝えていた。例を挙げれば、「中国の学校では必ず日本語を教授しなくてはならない」「中国で内乱が発生したときは日本の軍隊に援助を求め、日本によって治安を維持しなければならない」「全国を日本人に開放し、その自由営業を認めなければならない」「中国陸海軍は日本人教官を招聘しなければならない」「南満洲の警察権と行政権を日本に譲渡すること」など、いずれも原文には見当たらないでっち上げだ。このようなものを内外に宣伝することで内においては排日運動を巻き起こし(条約締結の五月九日は「国辱記念日」に指定された)、外においては列強に対日圧力をかけさせた。こうしたパターンの反日工作はその後も継続され、それが満州事変、支那事変の原因となった。

袁世凱にとっても「二十一カ条」は理解できない内容ではなかったはずだし、孫文は白人に対抗するため「日中の親善を図るうえで妥当なものだ」と考えていた。だから、中国政府による「二十一カ条」への反発は、袁世凱の策略という側面があった。一つは反日運動を利用して国民の団結を図り、一つは「夷をもって夷を刺す」という狙いがあった。つまり外国同士を対立させて、それをコントロールしようとしたのである。

列強から中国を救った

列強の時代においては、インドや東南アジアが植民地化されて、アジアで最後に残された独立国家は、タイを除けば日本と清国だけであった。しかし、その清国も英仏独露によって分割される運命にあったのである。

そのような運命から中国を救ったのが日本だった。日本は西欧による植民地化という世界潮流のなかにあって、逆に短期間のうちに列強の仲間入りができた。時代へのこの対応力は実に驚く

べきものだった。日本は文明開化、殖産興業という西洋文明への改宗に成功し、そして日清・日露戦争で国家存亡の危機をみごとに乗り越えたのである。

ことに日露戦争については、国家防衛の戦いというだけでなく、アジア防衛、有色人種防衛のための戦いであった。このことは、もし日本が戦いに敗れていたら世界はどうなったかを考えてみればよく理解できるはずだ。

ところが中国の歴史学者は日露戦争を、単に「日本の中国侵略」としか見ない。当時の世界潮流、列強間の力学的関係をいっさい見ようとはせず、日本の「侵略の野心」を論ずるのみである。政治の道具にすぎない中国の歴史学においては、「真実」は重要ではないどころか、時と場合によっては「真実」が最大の敵となる。

もし日露戦争に敗れていたら、日本はロシアの植民地になっていたであろう。すると大陸はどうなったかといえば、日本というアジアの抵抗勢力がいなくなった以上、ロシアは当初の計画どおりに満洲・朝鮮を版図に組み入れた。清国も西欧列強によって分割が進められたことだろう。ロシアはものすごい勢いで南下し、中国には大混乱がもたらされたはずだ。中国人は日本という近代化支援者を失い、立ち上がる機会は何度と与えられなかったに違いない。日本以外に列強の植民地勢力に対してアジア解放の戦いを挑むことのできる国など現れるはずもなかった。

日露戦争における日本の勝利が、中国を亡国の危機から救ったのである。たまたま日本が勝ち、ロシアが負けたから結果的にそうだったということでは絶対でない。それは、中国、アジアを救出しなくてはならないという、当時の日本人の使命感によるものだったのである。

黒船来航後、黄色人種 vs 白色人種の対立図式をいち早くみてとった日本では、東アジア諸民族が同文同種、同俗同習であるという共感と親近感もあって、官民を問わず、「大アジア主義」とでも言うべきアジア共同防衛の構想が形成された。日本の国益だけを追求するのではなく、「アジアは一つ」の信念の下で、何としても中国の分割を阻止したい、中国を保全してその再興を待ち、共同でアジアを守りたいというのが当時の日本人の念願だったのである。これだけは、いくら否定したくとも否定できない史実である。

ところが、「支那保全」を目指す日本は、「支那分割」を狙う他の列強諸国とは異なり、欧化した日本を「中華文明の背教者」として蔑んでいた中国人の反日・侮日の嵐に見舞われ、その中国政策は必ずしもスムーズにはいかなかった。

国家主義運動の指導者だった内田良平は、『保全』といった心やさしい姿勢では、かえって中国人の侮りを受けるだけだ。むしろイギリスのような冷酷で高圧的な態度で臨まない限り、中国人とはつきあえない」という意見書を政府に提出しているが、それは正論であった。「やさしさ」を「弱さ」と判断する中国人は、日本人を与し易しと見たのである。

心やさしい民族性から、亡国の危機にある中国を救おうとし、中国から愚弄・翻弄されても騙されても、「夷をもって夷を制す」という中国の外交的戦略に乗せられても、お人好しにもただひたすら中国の「覚醒」を信じつづけて、結局、戦争に負けたのが日本という国であった。

日本は蒋介石に対し、アジアの和平の確立を訴えつづけてきた。しかし、中国はあくまで自国内戦の都合から、アジアの和平どころか、英米植民地勢力を引きこんで日本と対立させ、さらには自国内戦に日本勢力を巻き込んでアジアを混乱の淵に陥れたのである。

なぜ中国は自国の分割を阻んでくれた日本に反抗し、分割の野心を抱いていた西欧列強にばかり歩み寄っていたのだろうか。それは、中国人には国家防衛の大義というものがまったくわかっていなかったからだ。

このような愚かな民族を隣人に持ったことは、日本にとって大きな不幸だった。「謝罪」すべ

きなのは日本ではなく中国なのである。

A Grateful China Should Also Pay Respect To Yasukuni Shrine

By Huang Wenxiong (Ko Bunyu), commentator

Stopping the civil war, famine relief and relief for farmers, preventing China's dismemberment by the great powers... No matter how you look at it, China should be thanking the Japanese rather than criticizing them. Accusing Japan of waging a war of aggression on China is nonsense. Instead China should show gratitude to Japan, a country which was burdened by its foolish neighbor.

Historical perception in Taiwan

Many Japanese people, regardless of their feelings toward China, do seem to think that the "aggression" perpetrated by Japan against China calls for a humble apology and soul-searching on the part of the Japanese.

Recently, Japanese people are increasingly recognizing that the war with the United States was a war of self-defense, but by contrast the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) is still unambiguously seen as a "war of aggression". Japan has been completely unable to erase its feelings of guilt towards China. But what is it exactly about the Second Sino-Japanese War that Japan and the Japanese people are supposed to repent?

China has alleged that the Japanese Army was responsible for aggression, massacres, rape, and pillage directed against the Chinese and other Asian peoples, and since the end of the war this is also what people in Japan have generally believed. However, this is not what people think in Taiwan where most intellectuals knowledgeable of Japan are, instead, of the belief that, "Japan did not do wrong. Japan's only sin was that it lost the war." I myself have heard people say that since childhood.

Back then, the world belonged to the great powers of the West. The great Confucian philosopher Mencius once commented on the nonexistence of "righteous wars", and indeed, at that time the only real international law was "might makes right". The ones who were called the "bad guys" were the weaker party, and the ethos of the time was one of national self-awakening and aggrandizement. Until the Second World War, "aggression" was considered something of a virtue.

And yet, in that brutal era the one country fighting in the name of a truly righteous goal and ideal was Japan, which sought the liberation of East Asia. At a time when white men controlled colonial empires of global scope, Japan's most important national priority in the 19th century was to find a way to avoid being subjugated as a colony of the Western powers. For the Japanese, the best way to ensure the protection of their own country was for all of Asia to be freed from the shackles of Western imperialism.

After the end of the Second World War, the Allied Powers proclaimed their victory by denying that the "liberation of East Asia" had been Japan's objective, but that should go without saying. The Western colonial powers were not going to admit anything that called their own motives into question. During the Tokyo War Crimes Trials (1946-1948), the language of "liberation" was denounced as propaganda to justify Japan's "aggressive wars" in East Asia. The Japanese people simply accepted what the Allied Powers told them, without attempting to question it, and that continues to be the situation to this day.

Thankfully, the people of Taiwan were never indoctrinated by the version of history promoted at the Tokyo War Crimes Trials. Because of this, the people of Taiwan lamented that Japan lost the war, and we had no problem in accepting the historical fact that Japan's true objective in fighting the war was to take back Asia and rid it of the invasive colonial powers.

History belongs to the victors

China's meddling with Japanese history is not just a matter of Japan's history textbooks, but has also extended to politics and diplomacy.

This is really Japan's own fault, the natural consequence of its inability to unambiguously say "no" to China, but still, China's imposition of its own version of history on other nations is originally the product of the self-righteous way of writing history prevalent in China itself. It is perhaps fair to say that official history is written in China under the assumption that it will be imposed on other people, and this is a clear reflection of the cultural traditions of the Chinese people.

In China, official histories were compiled by each successive dynasty that came to power, ranging from the ancient Shiji and Hanshu up to the Yuan Dynasty's Yuanshi and the Ming Dynasty's Mingshi. There is a time-honored Chinese tradition called Yixing Revolution, which means that when the Emperor no longer rules in a virtuous manner he would also lose the mandate of heaven and a more virtuous man would found a new dynasty. Accordingly, the new dynasty would, as a means to legitimize its own authority, record the reasons why it needed to seize the throne from the old dynasty. In other words, from the Chinese perspective the victors write the history and the losers are expected to accept and learn what the victors have written. This is the "iron law of Chinese history".

The truth about the Second Sino-Japanese War is that it was a civil war between the Nanking Government of the Nationalist Party's Wang Jingwei faction, the Chongqing Government of the Nationalist Party's Chiang Kai-shek faction, and the Yanan Government of the Communist Party, with each government supported respectively by Japan, the Anglo-American powers, and the Soviet Union. However, the Chinese Communists, who ultimately won the civil war, felt that they had to write the history of the Second Sino-Japanese War in their own way.

The major player on the Chinese side of the war, known in China as the Eight Years War of Resistance, was the Nationalist Army, whereas the Communist Army played a supporting role. But rather than actually supporting the Nationalists, it would be more accurate to say that the Communists let the Nationalists fight Japan for them while they themselves avoided frontal attacks as much as possible and focused on building up their bases in preparation for the coming confrontation with the Nationalists. In spite of this, after the war the ruling Communists would brandish their "heavenly mandate" in order to rewrite the reality of the conflict and portray themselves as the leaders of a popular liberation war. The Communists avoided mentioning the activities of the Nationalists whenever they could, and claimed that, "If the Chinese Communist Party had never existed, today there would be no China."

Because China was the victor of the Second Sino-Japanese War, that meant that the loser, Japan, would have to accept the "iron law of Chinese history". It was up to China to decide how to write the history of the war, and the Japanese people didn't think they had any choice but to obey.

In China, the one-sided imposition of one's own version of history is seen as a natural right of the victors, not as interference in the affairs of other countries. Quite the contrary, Japanese people who criticize this state of affairs are seen as sore losers who are violating China's rights, and China is not hesitant to show its displeasure at this.

China's leaders are saying that, "The Japanese should study only the history that we create, and must not write their own history textbooks contradicting us", but they aren't stopping there. What runs through the mind of the Chinese government is that the Japanese ought to feel indebted and grateful to China for its role in controlling the contents of Japanese history books, and that the Japanese ought to be happy that China even lets them use the Japanese language.

For you see, in the Chinese-controlled regions of Tibet, Xinjiang, and Inner Mongolia, efforts are being made to go well beyond history textbooks and to wipe out the native languages themselves. Children in elementary schools are permitted to use their own languages to some degree, but higher education is entirely in Chinese. Consequently, only one in three people in Inner Mongolia are able to speak Mongolian, and only one in six are able to write in the Mongolian script. Thus, an entire people are truly on the verge of an existential crisis. Some in China believe that, compared to people like the Inner Mongolians, the Japanese of today should consider themselves lucky, but that is a warped and arrogant sentiment.

Prioritizing politics over historical facts

In China, all "scholars" are government mouthpieces, and what is called "historical research" subordinates the facts of history to the ideology of the regime. In China a "correct perception of history" is the one which fully conforms to the objectives of the government.

What China refers to as a "correct perception of history" is not so much based on China's self-righteous style of history, but rather is most often something which the government has fabricated out of whole cloth in response to a national or international political need. Accordingly, when it comes to the history of China since the founding of the Chinese Communist Party, all the details of this history must glorify the Communists.

If you compare the textbooks put out by the Communist Party and the Nationalist Party, all this becomes very clear. Of course the Nationalist Party also advocates a distorted, Nationalist-centered view of history, but with regard to the Second Sino-Japanese War, it is far closer to the truth than that of the Communist Party.

No matter from which national perspective you look at it, the Second Sino-Japanese War was a fight between Japan and the Nanking Nationalists on the one side and the Chongqing Nationalists on the other, and here the Nationalists get it right by portraying themselves as the main force standing in Japan's way. According to the Communist view of history, it was they who played this role.

During the Second Sino-Japanese War the basic strategy of the Communist Party was to leave the fighting to the Nationalists in order to preserve their own fighting strength. This historical fact, which everyone knew at the time, was aggressively denied by the Communists after the end of the war. They did this because the Communist Party was building up the legitimacy of its new regime on the foundation of the myth of their own "glorious victory" over Japan. And so, the Communists imposed on their own people a "correct perception of history" in which the Second Sino-Japanese War became a showdown between the Communists' Red Army and the Japanese invaders.

The fact is that Japan was defeated by the United States. On the Chinese front the Japanese mostly scored victories and even by the time the war ended they maintained an overwhelming advantage in force of arms. The Communists denied these facts and, because they wanted to emphasize their heroic exploits against Japan, they wrote up many war stories which were framed like thrilling adventure novels. The "correct" version of history born in this manner was then imposed on Japan.

But the Chinese government has sought to foist its own warped historical views not only on Japan, but on the United States as well.

For example, when Jiang Zemin visited the United States he insisted that China's invasion of Tibet was a noble act intended to free the serfs of Tibet from bondage, and he even engaged in some fancy apologetics by equating it with Abraham Lincoln's emancipation of the slaves. China's assertion that Taiwan is a "sacred and inviolable" part of their territory is just one more example of China forcing its own homemade historical fabrications onto international society.

By doing this, the Chinese government wants to be able to tout to its own people that the "correct perception of history" concocted by the Communist Party is also the one accepted by international society.

Consequently, describing the facts of Chinese history is a very challenging task. Amidst all the misinformation circulating in China, one can know very little without a fair amount of historical knowledge and a critical but objective eye.

For instance, the Chinese people favor the fictional novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* over the history book *Records of the Three Kingdoms*, and so the personalities and the events described in the former have become widely embedded in their historical consciousness. What the people of China think they know about their history is actually a mix of established official history, non-mainstream unofficial history, and popular history gleaned from novels. In modern times one more important component of their perception of history has been the history resolutions passed by the Communist Party at their National Congresses, but since the Chinese government gives such low priority to historical facts, one has to wonder how it can possibly investigate its own history accurately.

In contrast with China, in Japan it is universally accepted that historical fact must never be confused with historical fiction. Especially since the end of the Second World War, the Japanese people have tended to be rather extreme in their insistence that any analysis of their own history be purely objective, without even a hint of the researcher's personal opinions. That is the reason why you can commonly hear Japanese people say things like, "Shiba Ryotaro's popular books are just historical novels, not something which can be cited as actual historical research." I suppose it's not surprising then, that whenever anyone in Japan proposes something like government-written textbooks, there is suddenly an uproar from people alleging that history will be rewritten to suit the whims of politicians or that the emperor worship of the prewar days will be revived.

China's betrayal of Asia

The Second World War in Asia, which was and should still be referred to as the "Greater East Asian War", was fought in defense of Asia and was a direct extension of the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), and the Second Sino-Japanese War. The Japanese philosopher Nishida Kitaro once said that, "The many races of East Asia can cast off the shackles of Anglo-American imperialism and achieve prosperity only if they themselves unite together against our common enemy of Anglo-American imperialism and destroy it completely. In other words, the peoples of East Asia will partake in the fruits of co-prosperity only through the successful prosecution of the Greater East Asian War, the preservation of East Asia, and the establishment of the East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." "This", Nishida declared, "is the foremost historical task facing the peoples of East Asia in modern times."

Such ideas appealed not only to the Japanese, but also to all the other Asian peoples who were groaning under the boot of Western colonial rule.

The only nation which refused to join in, and which instead allied itself with the great powers conquering Asia, was China. This is something that I cannot stress enough.

Naturally, the establishment of a modernized economic system cannot take place in an unstable society, and Japan's historical mission was to construct a new order in a continent that had been in chaos for over one hundred years. The notion of liberating Asia and founding the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was the logical extension of this.

Here, one needs to look at history in the grand scheme of things. Throughout Chinese history, peoples of foreign origin who have intruded on and ruled over China have been seen as saviors. However, the role played by and the contributions made by these non-Han Chinese peoples, including the Japanese, is impossible to understand through the prism of modern-day nationalism including Chinese nationalism and Han Chinese ethnocentrism.

"Revolutionary diplomacy" that ignored international law

China was saved through the strenuous efforts made by the Japanese people before World War II. One would think, therefore, that the people of China whose homeland and race were saved would not be able to thank the Japanese enough for this.

In 1995 former Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi apologized for Japan's "colonial rule and aggression" at "a certain period in the not too distant past", but he failed to mention that this was the same period when all central authority in China had broken down. It was a time of true chaos when multiple governments competed for power and constant civil wars were fought amongst the warlords, between the Communists and the Nationalists, and within the Nationalist Party itself. Each government asserted its own righteousness and legitimacy to represent all of China and to preach the values of the revolution, but none were able to assume their responsibilities abroad as the sole government of China. In other words, China was still a long way from being able to call itself a full-fledged nation-state.

At that time, the scholarly community in Japan did argue that China did not constitute a nation-state, and that idea was neither glib or fallacious. When one thinks about the essence of the Sino-Japanese conflict, one cannot say that any of the confrontations, crises, and wars that started with the First Sino-Japanese War were true national wars between modern-day nation-states. In the First Sino-Japanese War the side opposing Japan was actually the private army of Northern Commissioner Li Hongzhang, in the Manchurian Incident it was the soldiers of regional warlord Zhang Xueliang, and in the Second Sino-Japanese War it was the main force of the army of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Party. None of these were national armies.

It was in this context that Japan began to acquire many rights and interests in China following the end of the First Sino-Japanese War. But though these rights and interests were recognized internationally, they were continuously disregarded, denied, and threatened by the Chinese, and indeed, China would begin to ignore international law entirely under the moniker of "revolutionary diplomacy". Diplomatically, Japan was again and again being trifled with by China. Japan was constantly at the mercy of what I would call the unchecked and self-righteous pursuit of pure self-interest by rival governments in China.

The anti-Japanese trap

Meanwhile, in China, the civil war continued with no sign that a unified government would be able to come into being. Because of this, Japan, as a modern nation-state, had no choice but to follow a policy of intervention in the civil war as a means to protect its legitimate national rights and interests in China. In order to bring the war to an early conclusion, Japan supported pro-Japanese elements fighting in the war, including the Beiyang Government of Duan Qirui, who was the successor to Yuan Shikai, and the government of Wang Jingwei. It is important to remember that, in a country like China wracked by civil war, it was inevitable that all the great powers, including Japan, would intervene and take sides.

That was how Japan first got involved in China's civil war. From there Japan was pulled into a quagmire on the Chinese continent, and, after having accepted tremendous human, material, and financial sacrifices, was finally made to taste the bitterness of defeat.

If, in the era of the Republic, only one government had existed in China, perhaps there would have been no war between China and Japan. However, because this was not the case, at each turn, every power and every government in China provoked Japan based on their own, individual self-interest and induced the other factions to go to war while preserving their own strength at the same time. That is what the war between Japan and China was really all about. If we condemn Japan's acts as being a "war of aggression", then what exactly should we call Communist China's interventions in other country's civil wars, or its attempts to export its own revolution, or its land and sea incursions into foreign territories?

What really started the Second Sino-Japanese War was not a "conspiracy" or an "act of aggression" on Japan's part, it was that Japan artlessly fell for one of the many "anti-Japanese traps" set up by the various warring factions of China. These "traps" came in countless forms, from anti-Japanese propaganda, education, demonstrations, and boycotts up to even massacres of Japanese residents. These constant provocations inflamed the emotions of the Japanese people, who demanded that China be "punished," and drove the country into full-scale war with China.

Various Chinese factions engineered these anti-Japanese provocations as a means of taking pressure off themselves. For instance, the non-mainstream factions of the Nationalist Party wanted to force the Nationalist Government, dominated by Chiang Kai-shek, into a war with Japan, thereby curbing the

concentration of power around Chiang and preventing Chiang from engaging in campaigns that would deplete their own forces.

However, the factions that continuously provoked Japan did not take responsibility when Japan protested or confronted them. Instead, the factions pinned the blame elsewhere. The Communists, who had been driven into Yanan likewise found this to be a good way to avert their own collapse. Even their calls for a United Front against Japan were calculated to extend their own lifespan.

Stopping the civil war in China

Civil wars in China last longer, are more destructive, and leave behind far more victims than any war China has ever fought against an external enemy.

Even after the Manchus completed their conquest of the East Asian world in the middle of the 18th century, insurrections and civil wars were commonplace events throughout China, and this situation continued to hold true for well over one hundred years, through the subsequent Republican era (1912-1949) and into the era of the communist People's Republic. Even if we examine these civil conflicts individually, there were a number that lasted over ten years including the White Lotus Rebellion, the Taiping Rebellion, the Dungan Revolt of Hui Muslims, and the Cultural Revolution, each of which exacted a huge death toll incomparable with any of China's foreign wars. For example, the number of victims of the Taiping Rebellion is believed to have been between fifty and eighty million people, the latter figure representing one fifth of China's total population at the time. During the Dungan Revolt forty million were killed.

By comparison, it seems that about three million Chinese were killed during the Second Sino-Japanese War, though the government has officially claimed a death toll of thirty-five million.

In China, wars against external enemies are undertaken, if not to paper over internal contradictions, to at least provide temporary respite from civil war, and the role they have played is to decrease the number of casualties due to civil war. The effect of the Second Sino-Japanese War in Chinese history was to halt China's domestic strife between the Communists and Nationalists and between miscellaneous armed factions.

We certainly cannot say that this effect was produced by accident. When Japan intervened in China it was always with the strong intention of stabilizing the country and reining in its civil war. It was contrary to expectation that Japan itself was dragged into the war as a result, thus launching the Second Sino-Japanese War, but the advance of the powerful Japanese Army did put an end to the fighting between the Communists and Nationalists. Then, in the territories that it occupied, Japan adopted the slogan of "Sino-Japanese peace" and made heroic efforts to maintain public security and promote peaceful reconstruction in Chinese communities.

The Nationalists and Communists used the slogan of "joint resistance against Japan" as an excuse to avoid any further direct confrontations with one another, and from then on the civil war was reduced to the level of skirmishes. It seemed that the Communist Party's strategy of drawing Japan into the war to keep the Nationalists off its back paid off. However, once the Japanese Army was defeated, the civil war in China immediately restarted.

The fact that it was Japan that ended China's civil war is something that deserves special mention in the context of modern history, but ending the civil war was not the Japanese Army's only contribution to the restoration of peace in China. Along with the advance of the Japanese Army, pro-peace groups came together and formed a number of autonomous governments in North China and Central China, the armed factions fighting the civil war there were dissolved, and once law and order was established, modern industry began to develop just like in Manchukuo.

The Japanese Army had brought an end to China's 150-year-long civil war in one stroke and finally brought peace to the people of China. The Chinese may hate Yasukuni Shrine, but actually it's the Chinese above all who must bow and pray before the precincts of the shrine in gratitude to the Japanese soldiers who died to bring them peace.

Helping the Chinese farmers

The fundamental problems of the farmers of China, who have suffered through famine, displacement, and crushing taxation since imperial times, have yet to be resolved even today. One might even call this China's "chronic illness".

For example, from the time Japan and China started down their collision course in the 1920's, the rural masses of China were hit by a rash of natural disasters including floods, drought, and plagues of locusts. These natural disasters were exacerbated by the destruction of irrigation networks during the long civil war. A water-management system is only possible under strong national management, and for this reason irrigation in ancient China was viewed as an imperial undertaking. However, in Republican China, no such national management system was ever introduced.

The destruction caused was beyond imagination. Between 1927 and 1935, right before the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War, major floods or droughts occurred almost every year, and each time between ten million and fifty million people fell victim. The disasters of those eight years wiped out agriculture across China and led not only to the tragic separation of families, but also the loss of countless lives through famine-induced starvation. The number of people affected was said to be about three-quarters of China's whole population.

Even in peacetime, China's agricultural productivity was low and producing enough food for its own people was a challenge. China was importing food even into the 20th century, but every year innumerable people died of starvation due to a surplus of laborers. Although the failure of Mao

Zedong's "Great Leap Forward" is well known for producing a famine that killed several tens of millions, this was not at all an unusual event for China.

It was very strange that such calamity would befall a nation like China with a 5,000-year history of agriculture and a ninety percent rural population, but ultimately the ones who leaped to the rescue of China's rural communities in place of China's own government were the soldiers and civilians of Japan stationed in China during the Second Sino-Japanese War.

In January of 1937, the same year the war started, future Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro declared before the House of Representatives that, "If we do not fully understand the soul of the Chinese people, then the establishment of peace in East Asia, and by extension Sino-Japanese cooperation, will be impossible. China is a nation of farmers, and therefore, it is absolutely imperative that we join hands with the farmers of China and aid in the development of Chinese agriculture."

It's quite natural that the Japanese people of the time believed that the only way to achieve cooperation with their neighbor China was through first relieving the farmers of China, the overwhelming majority of the population, of their misery.

The Chinese Army sacrificed its own people

By contrast, at the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War the Chinese Army worked to stymie the Japanese attack by destroying irrigation equipment in rural villages and by stealing crops and livestock to feed its own soldiers. The Chinese Army even press-ganged civilians into service as laborers, a practice called *lafu* in Chinese, and anti-Japanese guerrillas also wantonly disrupted the production and distribution of food. In short, while the Chongqing Government and the communist guerrillas were preaching national defense, they, as usual, showed no concern whatsoever for the lives and livelihoods of the farmers.

Chinese soldiers on the frontlines requesting food supplies were told by their government in Chongqing to commandeer them from the farmers and, in order to block the Japanese Army's advance without having to fight it, they showed little hesitation in blowing up the dams on the Yellow River, flooding eleven cities and four thousand villages.

On the other hand, the Japanese, far from plundering China, instead created agricultural production plans similar to those already implemented in Taiwan, Korea, and Manchukuo. In China, the Japanese guided and supported production, ended oppressive taxation by landlords, protected villages from local bandits, and enthusiastically helped farmers and made their food supplies secure.

Japan promoted the modernization of rural life in China. Not limiting itself to raising agricultural productivity, Japan also planted trees, supplied electricity to villages, carried out cultural instruction, built schools and hospitals, and devoted considerable energy towards training capable medical workers.

On top of this, Japan constructed new roads, railways, and ports, and made impressive headway on developing industry in North China and Central China.

However, while Japanese-occupied China was enjoying bountiful harvests, the zone controlled by the Chongqing Government was in crisis and food prices were spiraling out of control. The reason behind this sharp contrast was mostly because food was being hoarded in the territory of the Chongqing Government by landowners, wealthy merchants, bureaucrats, and soldiers seeking to line their own pockets through speculation. This sort of unbridled selfishness on the part of the rich and powerful and their brutal exploitation of the people are major defining characteristics of traditional Chinese society.

The Japanese Army would even overturn the whole traditional economy of the rural villages while coming to grips with saving their farmers. In order to modernize the rural economy, Japan promoted a movement of co-ops, or *hezuoshe*, as they are known in China. From the Japanese perspective, the *hezuoshe* were crosses between an agricultural co-op and an industrial association. They did everything from arbitrating disputes among villages to cultural activities, education, and technological training, and they brought economic order to the chaotic Chinese countryside.

Outside of Manchukuo, this was unprecedented in Chinese history. Whereas China's traditional rulers were completely lacking in any original or innovative ideas, the Japanese who had propped up and revitalized their own nation through ingenuity alone had now led China from stagnation to growth.

Thus, even amidst the chaos of war, the farmers of China had finally managed to find salvation and to free themselves from thousands of years of grinding poverty. This is something that the Chinese government will probably never be willing to admit, but at very least the people of Japan ought to cherish it as a historic accomplishment of their forbearers and to adamantly reject the claims of a "Japanese war of aggression" which China has been thrusting upon them.

Famine relief and education

At the turn of the twentieth century, more and more devastation was being brought upon China through war and famine. In the space of time between the Manchurian Incident of 1931 and the Second Sino-Japanese War, flooding and drought had attacked the land and claimed hundreds of millions of victims. For instance, the Great Northwestern Famine of 1930 to 1932 left ten million dead, according to the official statements of the Nationalist Government. Starving citizens resorted to cannibalism and scores of people were displaced. In response to the seriousness of the situation the Japanese government dispatched a humanitarian mission and an investigation team. Even during the Second Sino-Japanese War, Japanese humanitarian missions would rush onto battlefields and carry out relief work anywhere there was a serious famine.

After Japan's defeat, the civil war between the Nationalists and Communists exploded across China, sparking more violence than the Second Sino-Japanese War ever did. Famines too became even more severe. Then, after the People's Republic of China came into being in 1949, conventional warfare

transformed into vertical class warfare. Due to the failure of the Great Leap Forward, the Chinese government starved to death an estimated twenty million to fifty million of its own people.

However, the Chinese government still had to take responsibility for all those who had died and who had lost family members due to its failure to build a socialist society. The Chinese government was eager to find a suitable scapegoat, and so it told the people that it was Japan's "war of aggression" which was to blame for all their woes.

Confucius once said, "You just need to tell people what to do, but you don't have to tell them why", and since his time that has been the basic policy through which the Chinese government has controlled its "ignorant masses". Right from the beginning, learning in China had centered around how to control the people. Segments of China's ruling elite studied assiduously in order to pass the Imperial Examination which was prerequisite for appointment into the civil service, but naturally, what they were learning was how to preserve the existing system, and so any progressive or independent ideas were forbidden.

For the overwhelming majority of Chinese commoners, education had no impact on their lives and in fact was something they were actively discouraged from having. It was believed that the land would be at peace as long as the ignorant masses remained obedient to their more virtuous rulers, whereas an educated populace might question the government and was therefore viewed as a danger. Both Mao Zedong's Anti-Rightist Movement and his Cultural Revolution were anti-intellectual campaigns of this variety. Mao said that his revolutionary undertaking would harness the madness of the people, and so the intellectuals, the people who were most likely to criticize madness for what it was, were a threat to him.

It was at the turn of the twentieth century that the Manchu Qing Dynasty of China, then on the verge of collapse, began to admire the prosperity and the strong army of Japan, a country that it had before then belittled. The Qing finally embarked on a huge reform effort seeking to modernize China in the same way Japan had with the help of Japanese officials and ordinary people. The Qing government was able to introduce the institutions of the "eastern barbarians" of Japan to China because of the shock it had received from witnessing Japan's incredible victory over Russia in the Russo-Japanese War. The Qing managed, albeit momentarily, to abandon their revered Sino-centric worldview.

Abolishing the Imperial Examination and studying abroad in Japan

Two symbols of the new reform were the abolition of the Imperial Examination and the declaration that studying abroad in Japan would be a condition for bureaucratic appointment. This was the first time the Chinese had realized that they had to strive for wealth and power by increasing the knowledge of every person through national education. It was a major reversal in China's traditional concept of learning, a "Cultural Revolution" in the true sense of the term.

From the year 1896, when the first thirteen Chinese international students arrived in Japan, Japanese government officials, soldiers, and teachers worked wholeheartedly to give them a proper education.

They built schools and established curricula for their benefit. What these Japanese wanted was to modernize Qing China. A sense of crisis had been filling Japan, especially since the 1895 Triple Intervention of Russia, Germany, and France, and they were desperate to see China quickly correct its weakness and decay through a modern reform program so that China could serve as a strong ally to Japan. Thus, their sincere hope was that a strong foundation for future Sino-Japanese cooperation would be built as China's youthful elite absorbed modern culture in Japan and deepened their appreciation for Japan.

The number of Chinese who crossed over to Japan to study increased annually, surpassing 8,000 people in the year 1905. Some say that at its peak in the year 1906 the number hit about 10,000, but there are also sources which argue that it reached 20,000 to 30,000.

The number of Chinese international students in Japan surged from 1905 after Japan was held up as a model of modernization. That was the year that the Imperial Examination system was done away with, that overseas study in Japan became a condition for bureaucratic appointment, and that Japan achieved victory in the Russo-Japanese War. Learning in Japan had replaced the 1,300-year-old Imperial Examination system as the key to getting a government post, a fact noteworthy as a turning point in the cultural history of China. Of course, the Chinese who have been steeped in an anti-Japanese historical worldview are not likely to mention this.

For China's military overseas students, what interested them about Japan, and what they sincerely admired about Japan, was not only the level of Japan's military might, but also the people of Japan. The people had a strong awareness of national defense and were brimming with patriotism, and from this was born their common spirit of solidarity and self-sacrifice. One can get a good idea about how the Chinese international students really felt about this from reading their own personal accounts. These students studied hard while trusting and idolizing Japan and the Japanese people. Back then they called this "the age of the Japanese teachers", and it was also referred to as "the golden decade".

The modern military training that Japan provided to Chinese students had a big impact on China. When they returned to China they accelerated the modernization of the Chinese Army in cooperation with Japanese military advisers, and in the closing years of the Qing Dynasty the Chinese Army grew so rapidly that even the great powers felt threatened. This proves just how passionate Japan's soldiers really were to see the Chinese Army modernize.

Not long thereafter when the Second Sino-Japanese War broke out, most of these very same Japanese military advisers fought against China. If these men had really been plotting to launch a "war of aggression" against China, then it's rather inexplicable why they had exhausted so much effort to train and augment China's army.

Founding Peking University

Of course, Japan's zealous cultivation of talented Chinese students was not limited to the military side of things, but also extended to many other domains including politics, economics, and education. China's judiciary and police system received the same support. People across Japan worked to ensure that the Chinese had access to the latest scientific know-how, not only in social and natural sciences, but also in medicine, literature, architecture, and other fields. At one point there were 1,000 Japanese doing teaching work, and even in the founding of Peking University the help of Japanese scholars was indispensable.

Why were Japanese people from both inside and outside the government so eager to come to the aid of the Chinese? One reason was the notion that China was Japan's sister nation with "the same writing and the same race", which made the Japanese feel a strong emotional attachment to and sympathy for the Chinese. Another reason was the sense of mission, which was felt widely by Japanese people at the time, that it was their national duty to give Asia back its pride and prosperity. Even so, all the moral and material guidance, cooperation, support, and encouragement that Japan lent to China was ultimately shattered through civil strife within China and China's betrayal of Japan. From that point on, China never again reconsidered its fundamental policy of telling its "ignorant masses" what to do but not why.

As an aside, Japan has also taken more care than China in preserving China's own historical antiquities.

Chinese people love to bring into conversation the envoys Japan sent to China's Sui and Tang Dynasties, and to talk about how China bequeathed its culture upon Japan and how, without the adaptation of Chinese culture, the Japanese people would still have no civilization. However, it is not correct to talk as if the Chinese taught culture to the Japanese. Texts of the Chinese classics which were brought back to Japan by its envoys to the Tang Dynasty were actually purchased by the envoys at great cost. During the Song Dynasty the only Japanese visitors allowed into China were Buddhist priests, so Japan's feudal lords had to have the products of Chinese civilization smuggled into Japan by paying exorbitant rates for them.

China boasts about its everlasting, five-thousand-year history, but the Chinese are also the world's greatest destroyers of Chinese tradition, culture, and history. Everyone knows about the Cultural Revolution, the national communist movement to destroy "old customs, old habits, old culture, and old ideas", but actually, as epitomized by Emperor Qin Shihuang's burning of books and burying of scholars, every new Chinese dynasty sought to thoroughly demolish the cultural heritage of the previous dynasty as a means of erasing it from history.

Among the countless Chinese books imported into Japan since the time of the Sui and Tang Dynasties, there are a great many which have been completely lost in their native land, and by the time of the Song Dynasty, Japan was already well known as a treasure trove of lost, unusual, and rare books. When exchanges between Qing China and Japan began following the Meiji Restoration of 1868 this fact was rediscovered by the Chinese. These lost works were then re-imported back to China, filling a huge void that had existed in Chinese academic research up to then. Between 1880 and 1890 droves of

Chinese scholars descended upon Japan in search of books which no longer existed in their own country.

Therefore, Japan did not bring only modern culture to China. For traditional culture as well, it is not Japan that owes a debt to China, but, rather, China that owes a debt to Japan.

The truth about the Twenty-One Demands

One of the most commonly-cited major reasons for the dramatic downturn in Sino-Japanese relations after the foundation of the Republic in 1912 is Japan's so-called "Twenty-One Demands".

The Twenty-One Demands were presented by the cabinet of Japanese Prime Minister Okuma Shigenobu to Chinese President Yuan Shikai in January of 1915. Today it is widely accepted in both China and Japan that the demands infringed flagrantly on China's sovereignty and were thrust upon China as an ultimatum that it had no choice but to accept.

The Twenty-One Demands were split into five groups in total, but actually the Japanese government of the time did not view these demands as being especially harsh in comparison to the ones which had already been made by the other great powers. Group 2 contained a demand for an extended ninety-nine year lease on Port Arthur and Dalian, but that was the same deal China had signed with Great Britain concerning its lease on Hong Kong. Group 3 contained a demand for joint Sino-Japanese ownership of the Hanyeping Company, China's largest iron-manufacturing firm, but that company was already cooperating closely with Japan.

Essentially, Japan was mere asking that its political and economic activities be given the same treatment as those of the Western powers, but Japan's penetration of China, in sharp contrast with that of the other great powers, was truly a matter of national survival. Since the time of the First Sino-Japanese War, Japan's established interests in China had been under threat from the instability prevailing in China and from all manner of interference from the great powers. The purpose of the Twenty-One Demands was to firmly consolidate these interests while the great powers were still preoccupied by the First World War.

The demands that the Chinese criticized most strongly as being an infringement on their sovereignty were Group 5, which included the following seven articles.

"The Chinese Central Government is to engage influential Japanese as political, financial, and military advisers; The Chinese Government is to grant the Japanese hospitals, temples, and schools in the interior of China the right to own land; The police in localities in China, where such arrangement are necessary, are to be placed under joint Japanese and Chinese administration; China is to obtain from Japan supply of a certain quantity of arms, or to establish an arsenal in China under joint Japanese and Chinese management; China is to agree to give to Japan the right of constructing a railway in South China; Japan is to be consulted first whenever foreign capital is needed in connection with the railways,

mines, and harbour works (including dockyards) in the Province of Fujian; China is to grant to Japanese subjects the right of preaching in China."

This last group was actually more like a list of "wishes" rather than "demands", and ultimately Japan took China's concerns into consideration and made a big concession by dropping all seven articles of Group 5 from the final treaty which was signed in May of 1915.

Although Japan decided to put out an ultimatum, this was only because Yuan Shikai had already been dragging negotiations as a means of evoking British and American intervention, and Japan was worried that anti-Japanese forces in China would grow in strength unless strong action was taken. There is also a popular theory that Yuan himself requested an "ultimatum", being concerned that acceding to anything else would spark Chinese opposition to his own government.

Deliberate distortions

Chinese people, starting with members of Yuan Shikai's own government, disseminated flagrant distortions both inside and outside of China about the details of the demands while they were still under negotiation. Some "demands" were pure inventions that never were in the original, such as "Chinese schools must teach the Japanese language", "when internal disturbances break out in China, China must request Japanese military support to maintain law and order", "China must open its borders to Japanese nationals and recognize their right to unrestricted trade", "the Chinese Army and Navy must invite in Japanese instructors", and "China must cede its administrative and police authority in northern Manchuria to Japan". Within China the result of this propaganda was the advent of an anti-Japanese movement, which declared May 9, the date the treaty was signed, as a "Day of National Humiliation". Outside China, the propaganda prompted the great powers to apply pressure on Japan. Later, when anti-Japanese operations following this pattern were repeated, they would spark the Manchurian Incident and the Second Sino-Japanese War.

I would not doubt that Yuan Shikai understood what the Twenty-One Demands were about, and even Sun Yat-sen deemed them "an appropriate measure" to build Sino-Japanese amity and confront the Europeans. Therefore, the Chinese government's opposition to the Twenty-One Demands was to some extent a part of Yuan's bigger scheme. His aims were, on the one hand, to use the anti-Japanese movement to unify the country, and also, on the other hand, to "use barbarians to control barbarians". The latter meant pitting foreign countries against one another and controlling them.

Saving China from the imperial powers

In the age of imperialism, India and Southeast Asia were made into colonies, leaving only Japan and China, plus Thailand, as Asia's last remaining independent nations. However, even China was fated to be partitioned between Great Britain, France, Germany, and Russia.

It was Japan that saved China from this fate. Amid the trend towards Western colonial domination of the world, Japan was for a brief time actually welcomed into the club of great powers. Japan's

responsiveness to the trends of the time had been truly remarkable. Japan had succeeded in embracing Western civilization, including modernization and industrialization, and then, in the First Sino-Japanese War and Russo-Japanese War, Japan fought for and won its own survival in a spectacular manner.

But concerning the Russo-Japanese War in particular, the Japanese were not only fighting to defend their own country, but also to defend all of Asia and the nonwhite peoples of the world. Just think of what the world might be like if Japan had lost the war.

And yet despite this, Chinese historians still see the Russo-Japanese War as just another "war of aggression" by Japan against China. They discuss it only in terms of Japan's "imperialistic ambitions", without even bothering to take into consideration the global trends of the time and the dynamic interactions between the great powers. In China, the study of history is nothing more than a political tool, and it is not sufficient to merely say that the "truth" is unimportant. Sometimes the "truth" can be China's greatest enemy.

If Japan had lost the war, Japan would probably have become a colony of Russia. Then, without Japan to stand in its way in continental Asia, Russia would have incorporated Manchuria and Korea into its empire just as it had initially planned to. The dismemberment of China by the Western powers would also have proceeded apace. I'm sure that the Russians would have marched south like a mighty avalanche and wreaked havoc across China, and the Chinese, having lost the one country that was supporting their modernization, would not possibly have gotten another chance to stand on their own two feet again. Without Japan, no other country with the strength to challenge the great imperial powers and liberate Asia could possibly have emerged.

Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War saved China from destruction, and no one can say that things only incidentally turned out that way because Japan just happened to be the winner and Russia the loser. It turned out that way because of the sense of mission which had been imbued in the Japanese people, that it was their duty to rescue China and free Asia.

After Commodore Perry's black ships arrived in Japan in 1853, the Japanese quickly became aware that the battle lines of the future would be drawn between the white race and the yellow race. The Japanese felt a shared identity with the other peoples of Asia under the doctrines of "same writing, same race" and "same culture, same land", and because of this both government officials and private civilians worked to construct a common defense concept for Asia which was sometimes called "greater pan-Asianism". Here the Japanese were not just pursuing national self-interest, but rather were doing everything they could, with the conviction that "Asia is one", to prevent the partition of their neighbor China. The earnest desire of the Japanese people of the time was for Japan to keep China intact, wait for it to modernize, and then fight alongside it in defense of Asia. No matter what some Chinese might say, this is an undeniable historical fact.

Even though Japan was trying to preserve China in contrast to the other great powers who were trying to carve it up, the anti-Japanese movement in China nevertheless despised the newly-Westernized Japan as being a "traitor to Chinese civilization". Japan became the victim of this anti-Japanese frenzy and never had an easy time trying to form a strong bond with China.

The nationalist leader Uchida Ryohei wrote an opinion paper for the Japanese government which stated, "The kind policy of 'preserving' China has actually earned us nothing but derision from the Chinese. We won't be able to have any relations with the Chinese unless we instead adopt the same firm and merciless attitude that Great Britain has." Uchida's assessment of the situation was spot-on. China interpreted Japan's kindness as weakness and became convinced that the Japanese can be easily taken advantage of.

Out of compassion and racial affinity, the Japanese wanted to pull China from the brink of disaster, and for that the Japanese were scorned, trifled with, and deceived by China, and then entrapped by China's diplomatic ploy of "using barbarians to control barbarians". Still, the good-hearted and naive people of Japan never stopped fervently believing that China would "awaken" before they themselves were defeated in war.

Japan had gone forward preaching the path of peace in Asia to Chiang Kai-shek, but under strain of its own civil wars, China, far from promoting peace in Asia, instead dragged Asia further and further into the abyss by drawing the Anglo-American imperial powers into Asia, having them confront Japan, and then embroiling Japan in China's own internal wars.

Why is it that China fought against Japan, which helped to avert China's partition, and instead carried the favor of the Western imperial powers which sought to partition it? It is because the Chinese people never completely understood the meaning of national defense. Japan was unfortunate in having had such a foolish neighbor. Thus, there is no need for Japan to apologize to China, and indeed, China is the one that should be apologizing to Japan.

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