

ples in the nineteenth century (and indeed, long after) lay in their views of order and, as a corollary, their views of the role their national governments played in maintaining that order. Tocqueville was amazed at the ever restless, ever-climbing-upward Americans: "All are constantly seeking to acquire property, power, and reputation," but "few contemplate these things on a great scale." The poet Walt Whitman bragged in midcentury that "Yankeedoodledom is going ahead with the resistless energy of a sixty-five-hundred-thousand-horsepower steam engine." Scarcely, if ever, was American society more changing, expansive, explosively pluralistic, and open to the different cultures and practices of new immigrants. Americans, indeed, not only rushed westward but rushed toward civil war.⁵

They were free to follow this headlong pursuit of wealth for a number of reasons. Americans believed they had quite literally been born free—that is, that they were born, or had come to live, in a land free of feudal institutions (guilds, orders, religious and governmental institutions) and other restraints found in Europe after 1200. Lacking a feudal history, Americans wondered why peoples in Europe or Asia were not similarly unrestrained. Moreover, Americans in the mid-nineteenth century ruled a vast land that seemed endlessly open for settlement and exploitation. Several million Indians had stood in the way, but they were being systematically exterminated or contained on reservations. The central government's role in all this was not to regulate, restrain, or harmonize the society, but to release it—to provide the highways, canals, currency policy, tariffs, and military protection required for the expansion of Whitman's "Yankeedoodledom." Midcentury America reveled in the relentless, individualistic, acquisition-for-ascent that Tocqueville had recorded with jaw-dropping wonder.⁶

Japan belonged to a different world. A Japanese "constitution" of 604, attributed to Prince Shotoku, stated in its first article that harmony, above all, was most to be valued. That early—and forever after—Japanese emphasized harmony, or *wa*, over acquisition-for-ascent. Not that passivity was tolerated. Prince Shotoku's document had as Article VIII: "Let the ministers and functionaries attend the court early in the morning and retire late. The business of the State does not admit remissness, and the whole day is hardly enough for its accomplishments." For more than a thousand years Japanese practiced a strong work ethic. It was an ethic, unlike the American, exercised within feudal institutions that formed during the next twelve hundred years, and over a constricted territory rather than limitless frontiers. Within this space and these institutions, Japanese leaders believed, *wa* alone held back disorder, anarchy, and destruction.⁷

Not that disorder disappeared. Japanese history is pockmarked by uprisings, riots, and assassinations. In 1942, a *New York Times* reporter entitled a book about Japan *Government by Assassination*. For fifteen years after Japan opened to the West, periodic wars, even civil war, occurred—one reason why then and later leading Japanese linked Western influence and internal disorder. But before and after that era, the Japanese fervently assumed that society and their own happiness advanced on the wheels of consensus and harmony, much as Americans credited their success to openness and acquisition-for-ascent. The Americans liked to say, "The squeaking wheel gets the grease." The Japanese proverb ran, "The nail that sticks up will be hammered down." Long before 1800, officials had discouraged nails from sticking up. As Buddhism grew after its introduction from China in the seventh century, so too did its principles of discipline and mediation. By 1100 a new military class, the *samurai* ("one who serves"), became the right hand of the Shogun, a military ruler living in Edo, the present Tokyo. The Shogun was the center of power. But he and all Japanese swore their allegiance to the Emperor, whose divine origins extended back to Jimmu Tenno, although his actual power—exercised from his throne in the magnificent and isolated city of Kyoto—was mostly ceremonial. The Shogun presided over a system whose key agents were about 260 feudal lords, or *daimyo*, who ruled over provincial centers where Japanese daily life was both focused and governed.⁸

First Encounters with a New West

Propelled outward by the search for gold and Christian converts, and often guided by the technological discoveries of the Renaissance, explorers from a new Western Europe moved across the globe in the early sixteenth century. In 1542, storm-tossed Portuguese sailors landed in southern Kyushu. They carried firearms which Japanese had never seen. Seven years later, Jesuit missionaries appeared; the Japanese allowed them to proselytize. By 1582, the missionaries claimed 150,000 converts, despite considerable language barriers. Suddenly in 1587 the great military ruler Hideyoshi threw out the missionaries. To make his point clear, he crucified both foreign and Japanese Christians. Hideyoshi then tightened his political links with the samurai and undertook a "sword hunt" in which all weapons were seized from everyone except the samurai. Forever after, the holding of firearms by private citizens was considered unacceptable by the society, and one crucial contribution to *wa* was in place.⁹

In 1603, the powerful Tokugawa family began its rule as Shogun, a rule that lasted for two and a half centuries. In 1640, as if by premonition, the Tokugawas decided that *wa* could best be maintained by closing Japan to the West. Any Japanese trying to leave or return to the islands could receive the death penalty. To lessen the temptation further, the Shogun ended all construction of oceangoing ships. Other than selected Asians, only a few Dutch traders were allowed contact, and then only through the artificial island of Deshima, built offshore near Nagasaki. Trade with China did continue, and government-to-government relations developed with Korea. Otherwise the Japanese followed the "closed country" (*sakoku*) policy. A trigger for this rapid closing had been a revolt of 1637-38 led by Japanese Roman Catholics. Trade and Christianity were now defined as disruptive and evil.

As a century of contact with the new Western Europe suddenly stopped, an interesting paradox appeared: the vigorous people of an island nation, surrounded by water and possessing ships comparable to Europe's finest, voluntarily gave up trade routes that already stretched into Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean, outlawed the making of profit (or the taking of new weapons) from Westerners, and largely closed itself off for the sake of internal peace. This closing off, however, did not mean stagnation. To the contrary: the Tokugawa energetically set about defining an orderly Japanese society as the center of Asia. scholars now see the Tokugawa era as the base of post-1890s, and especially 1930s, Japanese expansion over Asia. As the less civilized Manchus swept over China in the seventeenth century, Japan saw itself as the old China, that is, as Japan-as-central-kingdom. The Tokugawa gave refuge to Chinese scholars, and even set up a form of tribute system in which Korean, Ryukyu, and Dutch envoys paid homage to the Shogun. Japanese self-isolation before the 1850s thus ironically led to a self-definition and identity in the handling of foreign relations that helped propel Japanese expansion over Asia after the 1890s.¹⁰

The Tokugawa Shogun based his power largely on military capability and control of about one-quarter of the nation's rice crop. Peace was rampant throughout the land that the samurai, with Tokugawa encouragement, evolved from uneducated, brave warriors into learned and highly competitive bureaucrats. This pillar of post-1868 Japan thus began forming a century earlier. But the bureaucracy and the polity of *sakoku* did not mean a lack of creativity. A flourishing middle-class culture bloomed that produced Kabuki theater, imaginative fashions, influential painters, and lasting poetry. Important parts of this culture were centralized in Nagasaki, where Japanese officials kept track of Western developments through the Dutch traders.¹¹

Until 1800, foreign powers all but ignored Japan. The most aggressive and powerful, Great Britain, disdained the tea and silk trade conducted by the Dutch, a trade paltry compared with the British profits from India, the Americas, and parts of Southeast Asia. In 1814, one British official examined the record and flatly declared "that the Trade with Japan can never become an object of attention for the Manufactures and produce of Great Britain." Other foreign warships, however, now cruised Japan's coasts, and the captains were not primarily interested in trade.

Most ominous were the Russians. As they moved across Siberia into the Amur River region and over to Alaska during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, they clashed with fishermen from Japan's northern islands. Both the Kurile Islands and Sakhalin were soon contested by Russians and Japanese. In 1804 the Russian-American Company asked officials at Nagasaki for permission to trade with Japan so the company could supply the expanding Russian settlements to the north. The Japanese flatly rejected the request. The Russians decided during 1806-07 to teach the Tokugawa a lesson by raiding villages in the northern islands. The Japanese did not back down. Instead, they captured a Russian official in 1811 and held him for two years until the tsar's officials finally apologized for the raids. Meanwhile, Japanese writers began to warn that Russia posed the major threat to their country's security. By the 1840s and 1850s, this feeling grew intense as Japan watched the Europeans exploit China. After Great Britain's victory over China in the 1840-42 Opium War, a war that unsettled much of the Pacific's western rim, the powers scrambled for concessions. The Russians dispatched Rear Admiral Evfimii Putiatin in 1842-43 to open trade with Japan, but Japanese resistance and the trade's skimpy rewards led Putiatin to put his considerable talents to work elsewhere. Ten years later, Putiatin was again ordered to open Japan. When he entered Nagasaki Harbor in August 1853, he found he was too late. The Americans had sailed into the bay at Edo two weeks earlier.¹²

The Appearance of the Americans

These visitors had been propelled across the Pacific by their national credo of "manifest destiny," their growing desire to conquer Asian markets, and—paradoxically—a fear of deepening internal crisis. The slogan of "manifest destiny" had appeared in a feverishly expansionist Democratic Party newspaper in 1845 that demanded the conquering of Oregon, even if it meant war with Great Britain which also claimed

the territory. The slogan came to mean that Americans ("with the calm confidence of a Christian holding 4 aces," as frontier writer Mark Twain later phrased it) believed they had God-given rights to spread both their new political institutions and successful commerce across the continent, then into Latin America, and to uplift, among others, the benighted Europeans and Asians.

Driven by principle, Americans aimed also to gain profits. God and Mammon, the larger purpose and the individual's earthly success, were seldom far apart in mainstream American society. (In Japan, to the contrary, when a larger purpose—a Japanese manifest destiny—did emerge, it was seldom confused with individual acquisition.)

Between 1790 and 1853 at least twenty-seven U.S. ships (including three warships) visited Japan, only to be turned away. In 1832, as part of his epochal navigation of the Pacific, Edmund Roberts received orders from the Andrew Jackson administration to make a treaty with Japan, but he died before reaching the islands. Five years later, the *Morrison*, owned by Americans in Canton, tried to enter Japan with the excuse that it was returning shipwrecked Japanese sailors. The crew, however, hoped to Christianize Japanese as well as "trade a little." When shore cannon opened fire, the *Morrison* beat it back to China. In 1846, Commodore James Biddle, head of the newly created U.S. East Asia squadron, carried on heated talks with Japanese officials near Tokyo Bay, only to have them emphasize they had no interest in trading with him and that he need not try a second time. To demonstrate their point, when Biddle tried to force his way onto a Japanese ship a crew member knocked him down.¹³

Meanwhile U.S. whaling vessels worked the rich Japanese coastal waters and often (as in 1848) forced their shipwrecked sailors on the unkind mercies of Japanese villagers. Whaling became a metaphor for the American crossing of the last great frontier of the Pacific, and the hubris that compelled individuals to challenge those frontiers, when Herman Melville published *Moby-Dick* in 1851. (Later, when Commodore Matthew C. Perry wanted a writer to tell the story of how he opened Japan to the West, Nathaniel Hawthorne recommended Melville. Some 140 years later, Melville's work shaped both United States and Japanese literary studies.)¹⁴

Japan moved into still sharper focus after 1840 when Shanghai was opened to trade. U.S. ship captains followed the shorter way from California to Shanghai via the north circle route that brought them close to Japan. The 1846–48 conquests of California ports, along with an accelerating industrial and agricultural economic revolution, opened a his-

toric opportunity—but also a potential trap. The opportunity was noted by Secretary of the Treasury Robert Walker in 1848: "By our recent acquisitions in the Pacific, Asia has suddenly become our neighbor, with a placid intervening ocean inviting our steamships upon the track of a commerce greater than that of all Europe combined." In 1851, *Hunt's Merchant Magazine* warned that U.S. production was already furnishing "us with a potential danger: constantly augmenting capital that must seek for new channels of employment." The showdown, *Hunt's* believed, would be against the equally aggressive British and result, happily, in American control of "the whole Oriental trade."¹⁵

But manifest destiny had its dark side. As vast new territory was rapidly annexed, bitter debate erupted between a pro-slave South and anti-slave North over which section would control the newly conquered West and its ports. When Congress passed the Compromise of 1850, the problem seemed resolved. But many, including Secretary of State Daniel Webster, feared the crisis had been only papered over. In 1850–51, Webster even resorted to blowing up a very minor problem with Austria into a diplomatic crisis so, as he later admitted, he could take American minds off internal dangers and put them on less divisive foreign problems. Webster, moreover, had long been a leader of the Whig Party, whose most powerful members included large mercantile houses deeply involved in international trade. During earlier debates over whether to annex Texas, Webster caught Whig foreign policy priorities perfectly when he proclaimed that one San Francisco was worth twenty Texases. Using U.S. ports as the springboards to Asia became a Websterian principle. As Secretary of State in 1843, he had written the instructions that led to the first U.S. trade treaty with China in 1844. In 1842, moreover, he had penned a declaration, duly announced by President John Tyler, that Hawaii was to be treated by other powers as a special U.S. reserve. Webster was creating the first American policy for the Pacific and China. Japan was next.¹⁶

In May 1851, Webster heard from Captain John H. Aulick, who was to take command of the East Asia squadron, that the return of seven-teen shipwrecked Japanese then in San Francisco might provide the opportunity for "opening commercial relations with Japan." The Secretary of State put Aulick in charge of the mission. Captain James Glynn, an experienced Asian hand, gave President Millard Fillmore and Aulick good advice: do not treat Japanese "as being less civilized than ourselves," do not get into arguments over treatment of U.S. sailors, and do focus only on obtaining a trade treaty. Moreover, Glynn shrewdly added, do not ask for exclusive U.S. privileges, but for access to Japan

all nations. Thus the powerful British will have reason to support, rather than oppose, the American demands.¹⁷

On May 10, 1851, Webster drafted a letter from President Fillmore to the Japanese Emperor. Assuring the Emperor that Aulick was on no religious enterprise, the letter asked for "friendship and commerce," as well as help (especially coal) for ships that used the northern route to China. Of special interest, Webster's draft of the note emphasized recent U.S. triumphs on land and in technology:

You know [Fillmore told the Emperor] that the United States of America now extend from sea to sea; that the great countries of Oregon & California are parts of the United States; and that from these countries, which are rich in gold & silver & precious stones, our steamers can reach the shores of your happy land in less than twenty days. . . .

[These ships] must pass along the Coast of your Empire; storms & winds may cause them to be wrecked on your shores, and we ask & expect from your kindness & your greatness, kindness for our men.

We wish that our people may be permitted to trade with your people, but we shall not authorize them to break any laws of your Empire.

Your Empire has a great abundance of coal; this is an article which our Steamships, in going from California to China, must use.

As Webster phrased it to Aulick, "The moment is near, when the first link in the chain of oceanic steam-navigation is to be formed," and our enterprising merchants [should] supply [that] last link in that great chain, which unites all nations of the world." Such a dream propelled many powerful Americans westward across the Pacific after as well as before 1900.¹⁸

The opening of Japan thus resulted from both the U.S. quest for China's trade and the technological breakthroughs (especially steam) of the 1840s. Japan, as Webster nicely phrased it to a friend, was the key because God had placed coal "in the depths of the Japanese islands for the benefit of the human family." Aulick, however, fumbled his chance to become famous. Charged with mistreating a Brazilian diplomat, Aulick was replaced by Fillmore with Commodore Matthew C. Perry. The commodore initially protested: he preferred commanding the U.S. Mediterranean squadron instead of trying to make yet another attempt to open Japan. Born in Rhode Island in 1794, Perry had served in the War of 1812 under his famous brother, Oliver Hazard Perry (who after

one battle in 1813, issued the succinct, soon-to-be-famous announcement: "We have met the enemy, and they are ours"). By 1837 Matthew had risen through the ranks and commanded one of the first U.S. steam warships. During the Mexican War he won some fame for helping to conquer Vera Cruz.

After overcoming his reluctance to become Webster's battering ram against Japan, Perry prepared thoroughly. He especially carried on extensive talks with business figures interested in Asian trade. The commodore also demanded greater latitude in his orders from Webster, a demand the Secretary of State granted just before his death in October 1852. Perry sailed for Japan with "full and discretionary powers," in Webster's words, but the commodore was to "be held to a strict responsibility" for his actions. The "discretionary powers" included possible use of force if the Japanese tried to treat him as they had the unfortunate Commodore Biddle.¹⁹

Perry's four ships, the *Susquehanna*, *Mississippi* (both the new steam type), *Plymouth*, and *Saratoga*, took the long traditional route along the Atlantic, around the Cape of Good Hope, through the Indian Ocean, then to Singapore, Hong Kong, and Shanghai, before approaching Japan. Then they returned briefly to the China coast and, finally, moved into Edo (Tokyo) Bay on July 8, 1853. The Dutch had warned the Shogun's government, the *bakufu*, that Americans were coming, but the Japanese were nevertheless surprised that Perry appeared so soon. Their surprise mounted when the commodore ignored low-level officials and insisted—pointedly as he stood beneath the cannons of his warship—on dealing only with *bugyo* (that is, someone given specific powers directly by the Shogun). Their surprise changed into near horror when they further learned that President Fillmore's letter was addressed to the Emperor as if Emperor Komei were a mere equal. The stunned *bakufu* decided to play for time by sending two *bugyo* to accept the letter on July 14. They also used their women to appease and distract the powerful. One U.S. officer recorded that "the inhabitants . . . by the most unmistakable signs invited our intercourse with their women." As the historian Ian Buruma explains, "The Americans had guns, the Japanese lifted their skirts." (A similar drama would be played out in late 1945.) Despite the diversion, Perry rightly feared that the Japanese might stall until he ran short of water and provisions; he would then have to sail away in disgrace. The commodore therefore declared he was departing for China, but promised to return a year later—with force—to receive the Japanese response.²⁰

The next move was up to Abe Masahiro, leader of the Shogun's coun-

cil. A *daimyo* (and hence known and trusted by most other powerful lords of these more than one hundred fiefdoms), Abe was a gentle, well-liked man so shrewd that he had entered the council at age twenty-four in 1843. A politician who sometimes bent too easily and quickly to prevailing political winds, he carefully sounded out the *daimyo* about the proper response to Perry. These men divided. Some knew nothing of dangerous international situations in the western Pacific. But all seemed to agree that under no circumstances could Japan open its empire to foreign traders: their goods would upset the nation's internal order. But how to inform Perry of this when he returned with his warships? Some of the more powerful *daimyo* advised stalling while the *bakufu* built a modern military to deal with the commodore on Japanese terms. A number, indeed, were willing to go to war with the United States—after proper preparations.

These *daimyo* demonstrated a fascinating confidence that Japan could quickly match the West's military technology, as well as perhaps profit from that technology in international trade. ("We have reason to believe that the Americans and Russians have recently learned the art of navigation," a typically confident *daimyo* told Abe; "in what way would the keen and wise men of our empire appear inferior to the Westerners if they got into training from today?") Abe knew that the West, most immediately Perry, would not give Japan the needed time. Any doubt of that disappeared when Admiral Putiatin again led his four Russian ships into Nagasaki harbor just after Perry left Edo. The convenient death of the Shogun gave Abe an excuse to put off Putiatin's demands for a treaty. At the same time, however, Abe removed a two-century rule against building large ships and named an admiral of the new Shogun's navy. A different Japan was beginning to stir.²¹

Putiatin finally departed just before Perry reappeared on February 24, 1854. This time he brought seven impressive ships and sailed straight into sight of Edo—before the edgy Japanese talked him into moving some forty-five miles west to Kanagawa. As the *bakufu* examined the commodore's demands, the two sides demonstrated their friendship by exchanging gifts. Perry's legendary gifts included a telegraph machine, books, maps, and a miniature steam train that the Japanese delighted in operating. On the last day of March 1854, Perry and the Japanese signed a treaty of Kanagawa that contained a dozen provisions. The first promised eternal peace between Japan and America. Another clause opened to U.S. vessels two ports, Shimoda and Hakodate, where shipwrecked sailors could also be taken in. Americans could move around within a roughly fifty-mile radius of these two ports.

The *bakufu* agreed to accept a U.S. consul in Japan. But—pointedly—nothing was stated explicitly about trade. Allowing entry into Japan's market was so complex, the Shogun's officials told Perry, that a decision required a great deal of time. The Japanese, in other words, had no intention of following the downhill slide of China into dependency on the wishes and products of foreigners.²²

After two centuries of dealing only with the Dutch, the 250-year-old Tokugawa Shogunate opened itself—carefully, narrowly, and fearfully—to the recently born United States. In late 1854, the British, Russians, and Dutch issued successful demands for access to ports that would allow them to match Perry's victory. Again, however, the Europeans received no trading rights. (When Putiatin had to build a vessel to replace one of his Russian warships damaged at sea, the Japanese watched intently and soon afterward produced an exact copy.) The news of Perry's success reached the United States via the *Sanitoga*, which made the fastest trip yet between Japan and America. The *New York Times* bragged that the United States had opened Japan to the West, and upstaged the Europeans as well, by using "peaceful diplomacy, to overcome obstacles hitherto considered insurmountable," despite "the sneers, the ridicule, and the contempt" of shortsighted European and American newspapers.²³

The *Times*, however, was also puzzled. The Japanese "seemed remarkably conversant with the affairs of the United States—knew all about the Mexican War, its occasion and results." Quite true. Even when Perry felt, in the words of a later historian, "like a combination Santa Claus and conjurer" as he demonstrated the toy railroad, the Japanese actually knew all about railways from the *Illustrated London News*, to which the Shogun himself regularly subscribed.²⁴

More important, the Japanese had kept up with American affairs since 1797 when officials discovered that the Dutch, short of their own ships, were sneaking U.S. vessels into Nagasaki under the Dutch flag. The Shogunate demanded information about these Americans. The Dutch responded with history lessons that featured the revolt against the British in 1776 (because, the Dutch emphasized, of cruel treatment by the British), the 1787 Constitution, the great George Washington ("a very capable general" whose name has been given to "a new city"), and Thomas Jefferson. The Dutch had supported the new nation in the 1770s, so the Shogun heard a pro-American version of the history. By the 1840s, Japanese used the Dutch to acquire good world geographies, as well as histories, and exploited their contacts with China, where U.S. missionaries were publishing material, to obtain fresh information.

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Then, too, a few Japanese who had lived in the United States returned home and, as one reported in 1851, announced that Americans were "lewd by nature, but otherwise well-behaved." Japan might have chosen isolation, but its people, including peasants, were about as well educated as the British (and more so than the general French population), and in reality they were not isolated. By 1839 one group of intellectuals was so active in learning from the Dutch and spreading the information that several committed suicide fearing their activities embarrassed their *daimyo* master in the eyes of the Shogun.²⁵

The tension illustrated by these suicides—the tension created between the seeking of outside news to protect Japan, yet the fear that spreading of such foreign influence could create disorder, perhaps civil war—shaped the background that foreigners such as Perry never understood. For two centuries, after all, the Tokugawa Shogun had assumed that the tightest relationship existed between foreign and domestic policies. The government had announced, on the basis of its bitter sixteenth-century experience, that Japan's survival and the maintenance of internal order required cutting off the inherently disorderly—and usually uncontrollable—affairs of the outside world. A powerful and influential argument was made by a scholar from the domain of Mito, two days travel from Edo. In 1825, Aizawa Seishisai wrote *New Proposals* (*Shinron*). His work had been triggered by a Shogunate decree that again, to Aizawa's great satisfaction, banned foreign ships. Aizawa warned that Japanese weakness "for novel gadgets" could "lure ignorant people" to the spell of "treacherous foreigners." The result, he concluded, would be the internal corruption and decay of Japanese society, or outright foreign conquest.²⁶

Aizawa had reason to worry. Not only were foreigners trying to penetrate Japan. Of equal importance, his own domain of Mito had long suffered from low agricultural production, natural disasters, and increased taxation. Famine and revolt threatened to spread. After 1750 especially, these economic problems, including natural disasters, forced the Shogun (who was living beyond his means anyway) to tax and borrow. The *daimyo* did the same, and thus the peasants and samurai paid and suffered even more exploitation. A new merchant class (*chonin*) meanwhile arose to provide goods for the nation's growing population—and also make loans to the once-proud samurai. The *chonin* began to break apart the feudal restrictions on trade, land transfer, and certain kinds of new production. Mito's changes and unrest encapsulated only a small case study of immense Japanese social problems by 1850. The samurai, for example, became dissatisfied and restless as the Shogun

turned them into bureaucrats. *Chonin* also grew restless; they wanted to ripture the feudal restraints of the *daimyo*. Thus even as Americans, Russians, and British approached from the outside, Tokugawa rule was being internally undermined by spreading frustrations as well as by a rising price inflation caused in part by the Shogun's own overspending.²⁷

An intense debate was therefore erupting just as Perry demanded entrance. By the mid-1850s, his appearance helped turn a central part of that debate into the highly dangerous question of how Japan must change in order to deal with "the barbarians." The shock of Perry's timing and success, moreover, transformed a once-restricted discussion into an explosive public argument. The political stakes rose dramatically as several fiefs that had never been fully controlled by the Shogun or the *bakufu* seized on the debate to challenge the *bakufu* and try to solve their growing economic crises by transforming themselves to make their own domains more efficient. The Shogunate began to endure exactly what it had long feared: opening Japan to foreign influences was helping undermine Tokugawa rule and destroying social harmony.

Harris's Triumphs, Ii's Assassination

The clash between Japanese and American systems therefore occurred initially not in Manchuria in 1910, or China in the 1930s, or the international market of the 1980s. The clash came with the first appearance of Americans in Edo Bay during 1853–54. The Tokugawa rule had long been under attack. The Americans did not cause these fundamental economic and social problems that struck Japan, but they accelerated the problems and, of special note, created a new and more dangerous political environment in which the *bakufu* had to deal with the crises. For nothing less was happening than an assault on a centuries-old feudal structure that many Japanese assumed to be fundamental for their own happiness. Americans were the cutting edge of a new world, a world that had little use for feudal order; a world that valued social harmony less than individual acquisition; and a world that (unlike the Shogun's) saw its survival resting not on exclusion, but on a manifest destiny that required the opening of ports and markets everywhere.²⁸

Abe found himself trying to steer a weakening Japan around a radical turn in its history. He had to steer, moreover, as competing groups grabbed for control. On one side was the Shogun Iesada (1853–58) who, out of a sense for survival, wanted to exclude the Americans while

building up military power at home. (The term *Shogun* could be translated as "barbarian-fighting general.") He was supported by his only superior, Emperor Komei (who ruled in 1846-67). Komei's ardent xenophobia merely moderated in the 1860s. On the other side were Ii Naosuke, a tough, powerful *daimyo* of Hikone, and Hotta Masayoshi, *daimyo* of Shimoda. They believed that increased contacts, even treaties, with foreigners were inevitable, so should be turned to advantage. Amid this power struggle, another more serious fight intensified: outlying areas, especially Choshu, in the extreme west, and Satsuma, in the far south, had never been fully integrated into Tokugawa Japan. Led by Choshu, these areas began a major assault on the weakened *bakufu*'s powers. The challenges to the central government were supported by some intellectuals and political activists who saw the American Revolution as exemplifying the kind of radical change needed to replace the decaying Shogunate. Many of these writers wished to work with the Americans. But some (like Nakuoka Shintaro) thought the 1776 Revolution simply a splendid example of how to expel foreigners.²⁹

Abe and the Shogun thus not only had to deal with the Westerners but to develop a policy that stood the beliefs of two centuries on their head—that is, deal with foreigners without bringing about a war while reconciling the internal debates and facing down the Choshu-Satsuma challenge. All of this suddenly came to a head on August 21, 1856, when a U.S. consul, Townsend Harris, appeared at Shimoda. Harris announced that the Japanese must now sign a trade agreement with the United States.

The bland failures of Harris's previous fifty-three years of life gave no hint that he would succeed in opening Japan to trade after the world's leading empires had failed. With little formal schooling, he had risen in New York City business circles and even persuaded the city's Board of Education to establish a school for poor boys that later became City College of New York. In 1848, however, his mother died, his china-importing company began to lose money, and he apparently was drinking heavily. Never married, he had few ties left in New York, so Harris invested in a ship that took him to the Philippines, India, and China's open ports. As his business prospects darkened, he asked for a U.S. consul's job at Hong Kong or Canton, then requested that he be allowed to join the Perry mission. Harris received none of these appointments. Although he was finally offered the consul's position at the backwater port of Ningpo, Harris turned down its pitiful salary. At this point, he heard about the possible consul's job at Shimoda. Backed by New York friends, but hounded by stories of his drinking, he decided to take the

long journey back to convince President Franklin Pierce of his abilities and sobriety. Harris won the appointment, left in October 1855, and arrived in Japan ten months later. On the way, he had finally renegotiated a trade treaty with Siam that left him tired and bitter ("the proper way to negotiate with the Siamese," he concluded, "is to send two or three men-of-war").³⁰

Harris was thus no innocent as he approached Shimoda. "I have a perfect knowledge of the social banishment I must endure while in Japan," he had written Pierce, "and the mental isolation in which I must live . . . I am a single man, without any ties to cause me to look anxiously to my home, or to become impatient in my new one." But not even Harris was prepared for the next fourteen months. As he stepped off the U.S. warship, the *Sar Jacinto*, that brought him from China, Harris realized that Shimoda, a small, isolated town, had no housing for him. Local officials who greeted him with surprise told him they understood the 1854 treaty provided for a U.S. consul only if both nations wanted one—and Japan decidedly did not. When Harris insisted on staying, the officials put him and his translator, Henry C. J. Heusken, a Dutch American hired in New York, in a broken-down temple five miles from town. "Bats in rooms. See enormous tête de mort spider; the legs extended five and a half inches as the insect stood," Harris recorded. "Unpleasant discovery of large rats in numbers, running about the house."

He came both to appreciate and be befuddled by the Japanese. They "are a clean people. Everyone bathes every day," Harris wrote admiringly. But poorer classes "of both sexes, old and young, enter the same bathroom and there perform their ablutions in a state of perfect nudity. I cannot account for so indelicate a proceeding on the part of a people so generally correct." Harris was partially reassured only when Japanese friends told him that "the chastity of their females" was protected by "this very exposure [that] lessens the desire that owes much of its power to mystery and difficulty." Plagued, as he admitted, by too much smoking and exotic food, Harris quit smoking, took long walks, and learned to appreciate the wild game the Japanese began to bring to him. Heusken, who refused to stop smoking, grew increasingly prickly.³¹

But Harris's central problem was somehow to reach the Shogun's officials who could make decisions. Stalling, the Japanese told him that Edo was too distant for him to visit. At one point, believing he was being lied to by officials and spied on by servants, he shook the Japanese by picking up a stove (*hibachi*) and flinging it against the wall. According to legend, Shimoda officials appeased Harris by giving him a

geisha named Okichi-san as a mistress. Heusken also supposedly received a mistress. Stories passed down relate that Okichi was then shunned by her own people for living intimately with a white man. She took to drinking and finally drowned herself. Nothing in official records supports these accounts, but Okichi's birthplace in Shimoda became a tourist attraction, at least five plays were written about her, and in 1958 Hollywood immortalized her in the film *The Barbarian and the Geisha*.³²

Whether Okichi was a reason or not, Harris grew to admire the Japanese. "I do not think the world contains a people so truly frugal and plain in matters of diet and dress as the Japanese" he wrote in early 1857. "No jewelry is ever seen on a man. . . . They are a people of but few wants." Admiration, however, led to no diplomatic breakthroughs. Those came from Harris's stubbornness, Japanese internal divisions, and the *bakufu's* sound information that British warships were again blasting China open in 1857 and when finished might well use their cannon to impose ugly trade terms on Japan. Harris's arrival had driven even deeper fissures between those Japanese who wanted to stall the foreigners and others who believed that the best possible deal should be made—while quickly copying the West's weaponry.³³

The key official who was to deal with Harris belonged to the second camp. Hotta Masayoshi, soon to be the most powerful member of the *bakufu*, was also one of the more moderate. Hotta had somehow gained extensive knowledge of "Dutch studies"—that is, events in the West. He wrote later in 1857 that "military power always springs from national wealth," and that such wealth could be found "principally in trade and commerce." Japan consequently had "to conclude friendly alliances . . . send ships to foreign countries everywhere and . . . copy the foreigners where they are at their best and so repair our own shortcomings." By March 1857, Hotta's approach led to the first substantive talks with Harris. The consul was plagued by cholera, little medical help, no news from U.S. ships on the China coast, and no assistance whatever from Washington. He nevertheless warned the Shimoda officials that he had been instructed to tell them that if they continued to delay, the President would ask Congress for the authority to use "arguments . . . they [the Japanese] could not resist." In June, Harris excitedly recorded that he had broken through. Shimoda officials agreed to a convention that opened Nagasaki to U.S. ships, allowed American residency and a vice consul at Hakodate, enabled Harris to move around Japan more freely, and settled the exchange rate for Japanese money at a more favorable level. But this agreement only prepared the way for the most difficult step: traveling to Edo and negotiating a full trade treaty with Hotta.³⁴

In November 1857, Harris and Heusken approached Edo in a spectacular caravan that aimed to convince all onlookers that Americans were not to be trifled with. Made up of 250 persons, including 12 guardsmen, two standard-bearers, two shoe and fan carriers, two grooms, 40 porters carrying Harris's luggage and household goods, and 20 bearers of the sedan chairs on which Harris and Heusken rode, the procession finally entered Edo on November 30. Always sharply aware of his possible place in history, the consul wrote that the entry "will form an important epoch in my life, and a still more important one" for the Japanese, for "I have forced this singular people to acknowledge the rights of embassy"—formal diplomatic relations with the United States.³⁵

On December 7, 1857, Harris had a brief, formal, historic meeting with the Shogun, who expressed pleasure with the consul's presence and declared, according to the interpreter, that "intercourse shall be continued forever." But detailed talks with officials on December 12 turned frustrating. Harris notably opened them by explaining two of the beliefs that drove U.S. policy, then and since: because of the technological breakthrough (of steam locomotion), "Japan would be forced to abandon her exclusive policy"; her wealth and happiness would grow most rapidly "when developed by the action of free trade." Otherwise the powers would "send powerful fleets" to force Japan open. Hotta thanked Harris for the thoughts, then added "that the Japanese never acted as promptly on business of importance as the Americans" because "many persons had to be consulted." Weeks dragged by Harris began to complain that Heusken could not solve the mysteries of the Japanese language: it "does not possess either singular or plural, has no relative pronoun, nor is the use of the antecedent known. . . . I never shall get to the bottom of the deceptions of the Japanese." (Later observers also helped explain Harris's frustration by noting that, having considerable mistrust of verbal skills, a Japanese preferred to communicate feeling indirectly and even without language. If these signals were communicated, the receiver, not the sender, was blamed for lacking sensitivity and intelligence if they were not picked up.)³⁶

Finally in March 1858, agreement was nearly complete, a result of Hotta's influence and ominous British and French warmaking in China, when again Japanese internal divisions stalled the talks. In June, Hotta carried the day. The treaty, signed initially on July 29, 1858, opened five ports to trade between then and 1863, including Nagasaki and Kanagawa (later Yokohama); allowed foreigners into Osaka and Edo; permitted a resident minister in Edo and a Japanese minister in Washington

with each country's consuls at the other's open ports; protected Americans through extraterritoriality (that is, they would be tried only in American courts); and imposed an import and export tariff that was fixed extremely low so the Japanese could not manipulate it to keep out foreign goods. Americans could enjoy freedom of religion as well as own land for business, residential, and even religious purposes. (Later, in 1859, Harris tried to obtain a provision guaranteeing religious freedom for the Japanese themselves, but the *bakufu* quickly rejected it.) Oddly, one of the great U.S. diplomatic principles, that of most-favored-nation—that any trading rights Japan gave to one nation automatically went to others—was not included. (This omission was remedied in August when the British, using Harris's secretary and treaty, opened trade relations with Japan and obtained most-favored-nation rights.)

Of special significance was a provision in Article III:

Americans may freely buy from Japanese and sell to them any articles that either may have for sale, without the intervention of any Japanese officers in such purchase or sale.

Not for the last time, Americans, with deep suspicions about state power, tried to remove that power as much as possible in their commerce with Japan. They enjoyed little success in this attempt. Not could they become involved in Japan's internal commerce, for foreign traders were mostly confined to a residential area near the ports.

The Dutch and Russians as well as the British followed Harris into the Japanese market during August 1858. The American, meanwhile, followed up his triumph by having a physical breakdown that had been building since August 1856. Delirious for days, he was probably saved because the Shogun ordered Japan's best physicians to attend him. Harris nevertheless had his historic treaty and even a letter for President James Buchanan from the Shogun, the first letter sent by a Shogun to a foreign leader in 240 years.⁵⁷

Harris knew his demands had divided the *bakufu*; but he did not realize he was helping to destroy the 250-year-old Tokugawa rule itself. For his demands, coupled with the growing internal unrest, had led to a crisis and Hotta's removal in June 1858. He was replaced by Ii Naosuke (1815-1860), a powerful *daimyo* of Hikone. Tough, determined, relentless, Ii became a virtual dictator of the *bakufu*. Assuming power in mid-1858, he discovered that the Emperor, sitting in his majesty at Kyoto, feared the proposed treaty. "The American affair is a great sorrow to our divine land," he had told Hotta. The treaty "would disturb the

ideas of our people and make it impossible to preserve lasting tranquility." Many *daimyo* sided with the Emperor. But most of them, Ii learned, believed the treaty to be inevitable. The alternative of war with the Western powers was unthinkable.⁵⁸

Ii, moreover, heard in July 1858 that British and French warships had finished their work in China and might be heading for Japan. He decided therefore to sign the treaty with Harris in July. The Emperor had not changed his mind, but he reluctantly went along out of fear that the Westerners would play on the divisions between his court in Kyoto and the Shogun in Edo. The rebels who hoped to keep out the "hairy barbarians" and weaken the Shogun never forgave Ii for easing the foreigners' entry into Japan. On March 3, 1860, eighteen samurai from the rebellious *daimyo* at Mito, assisted by Shinto priests, attacked Ii outside the Imperial Palace. Because it was raining, Ii's sixty guards had covered their sword hilts. Before they could uncover their swords, Ii lay dead and four guards were dying. The attackers were killed or captured, but the death of the decisive Ii left a power vacuum that soon proved fatal for the Shogun himself. Harris's treaty was already casting long shadows.⁵⁹

The Americans and the Birth of Modern Japan

On February 13, 1860, after many postponements, a Japanese diplomatic mission of seventy-seven persons left on a U.S. warship for Washington where formal ratifications of the treaty were to be exchanged. It was the first such trip anywhere by a Japanese diplomatic delegation of this size after two hundred years of seclusion. The trip was difficult. Few Japanese cared to speak English—too difficult—and so spoke only Dutch other than their native language. Not many Americans knew Dutch. The mission included spies who reported on other members. U.S. sailors found soy sauce and fish foul-smelling and so threw out most of the Japanese food, forcing the diplomats to eat meat, cheese, and bread, which they hated.

The high point of the mission's visit was its arrival on June 16 in New York Harbor. In November 1858, the *New York Times* had carried an account from a reporter traveling with Harris who had seen a Japanese steamer. He asked his readers "to stop here a moment, reflect upon the strangeness of such a thing." Such a steamer had not existed when

Perry arrived five years earlier. Now this state-of-the-art vessel not only existed, it "could capture any Portuguese man-of-war of her class." In 1860, the *Times* did not yet want to say that a new era had opened between "Western Christendom" and the "heathen East." But this "England of the Pacific," as Japan was now commonly called, could nevertheless cause a spectacle even in New York City where tens of thousands went on holiday to welcome the stolid visiting diplomats. The *Times* nicely added, moreover, that it was only fitting that the trip climax in New York, rather than in "more provincial cities [that is, Washington] through which they have been dragged as a kind of vulgar show." For New York, after all, "represents the full grandeur of that mighty American commerce," which had beaten the military of the "more arrogant powers" in opening "the hitherto impregnable East."⁴⁰

A more exalted and memorable response came from Walt Whitman, a New Yorker who had come to see the growing U.S.-Asia ties in mystical terms, yet with words that nicely captured central themes of U.S. diplomacy. The *New York Times* published his long poem, "The Errand-Bearers," on June 27, 1860, to commemorate the Japanese delegation's visit:

Superb-faced Manhattan,
Comrade Americans—to us, then, at last, the Orient comes. . . .
The Originatress comes. . . .
Florid with blood, pensive, rapt with musing, hot with passion,
Sultry with perfume, with ample and flowing garments, . . .
I, too, raising my voice, bear an errand,
I chant the World on my Western Sea. . . .
I chant the new empire, grander than any before—As in a vision it comes
to me:
I chant America, the Mistress—I chant a greater supremacy. . . .
I chant commerce opening, the sleep of ages have done its work—races,
reborn, refreshed.

The Japanese were not as happy with the moment as was Whitman. Americans often shouted insults, as in Philadelphia where one cried out to a U.S. naval officer, ". . . is that your monkey you have got with you?" The puritanical, male-dominated Japanese were notably stunned by American women, who, as one of the mission noted during a dance, "were nude from shoulders to arms. . . . The way men and women, both young and old, mixed in the dance, was simply insufferable to watch." One Japanese compared American couples to "butterflies crazed by the

sight of flowers," especially when the men actually gave their chairs to women.⁴¹

Whitman's "new empire" nevertheless seemed to be booming by 1860. As Perry and Harris opened Japan to Western trade, Lieutenant John Rodgers led a U.S. survey expedition through the waters surrounding Japan and along China's coasts between 1853 and 1856. After thoroughly investigating this Great Circle route, Rodgers concluded that the "commercial possibilities [of Asia] are so vast as to dazzle sober calculation." At the same time, American merchants and the U.S. minister to China pushed Washington to seize Taiwan, both as a strategic base and as leverage with which to beat down Chinese opposition to Western trade. In 1854 to 1860, Russia began to discuss the sale of its Alaska territory to the Americans. The U.S. Civil War stalled the talks until 1867, when the Russians recognized the reality—Americans already controlled the commerce around the region—and sold Alaska for \$7.2 million. Holding Alaska and with formal entry into Japan, the United States grabbed a secure hold on the Great Circle route to Asia's markets.⁴²

But Japan itself seemed much less secure. It's murder in 1860 occurred in a wave of assassinations that finally washed over foreigners. Harris noted that gangs of Japanese roamed the streets at night; seven killings of Westerners occurred in eighteen months. Many of these murders were done by the hands of *ronin*, that is, samurai who had broken loyalty to their *daimyo* and now, in a Japan coming apart, committed crimes from political or economic motives. In January 1861, Heusken, Harris's translator, was killed when he made the mistake of walking home from the Prussian legation in the dark. The foreign diplomats demanded retribution, as did U.S. Secretary of State William H. Seward, just newly appointed by President Abraham Lincoln. But Harris successfully held out against any retaliation. He instead blamed Heusken, who "should have known better" than to be on foot after dark. The consul quieted the issue by accepting a \$10,000 indemnity from the *bakufu* for Heusken's mother, an amount one-tenth the indemnity the British collected after one of their officials was murdered by Satsuma samurai. Harris doggedly remained in Edo even when the other diplomats left after the British legation was attacked and burned in 1862.⁴³

Much as the Emperor had feared, the West's intrusions were undermining Japanese order. Foreigners bought up Japanese gold coins and resold them in China at great profit. When the *bakufu* threatened to stop the traffic, Western officials threatened war. The *bakufu* there-

fore minted cheaper coins, debased the money, and triggered rapid inflation that devastated the mass of Japanese. Foreign demand for tea and silk pushed up prices for Japan's people. The Shogun's sudden desire for Western arms, and the reparations the *bakufu* had to pay the West for the murders of the foreigners, drained the country of good money. The view that the Shogun was becoming a mere frontman for the Westerners, mistaken as it was, fatally infected the *bakufu*'s legitimacy. Japan's first extensive contact with the West was turning into a catastrophe.⁴⁴

Worn down, Harris returned finally to a United States, itself torn by civil war, in 1862. He was thus not present to soften the crisis that erupted between the Westerners and the Tokugawa regime in 1863-64—a crisis that led to bloodshed. By 1863, the Shogun's policy of reluctantly agreeing to the foreigners' demands had created a loose alliance of various *daimyo* at the Emperor's court in Kyoto. The alliance was led by the distant clans of Choshu and Satsuma. The group aimed at undermining the Shogun's power and driving out the foreigners. The objectives were two sides of the same policy. As the Shogun's government in Edo weakened, the *ronin* became more vicious and the distant *daimyo* more daring. On May 24, 1863, the U.S. legation in Edo was gutted by fire. The new U.S. minister, Robert H. Pruyn (an Albany Republican politician who had taken the post at the begging of his close friend, Secretary of State Seward), wanted to believe the fire was accidental; yet, after all, "repeated attempts have been made to induce me to leave." Then word circulated that the embattled *bakufu* was about to go back on its agreements, close the ports, and regain its power by moving decisively against the foreigners. Pruyn's response was direct: "Even to propose such a measure is an insult to my country and equivalent to a declaration of war." The Edo government strongly denied any idea of going back on its commitments, but it was clear that the Shogun was losing control.⁴⁵

On June 25, 1863, the small U.S. steamer *Pembroke* was fired upon by the Choshu when it tried to pass through the Straits of Shimonoseki. French and Dutch vessels also received fire. On July 16, the U.S. warship *Wyoming* was hit before its cannon sank several Japanese boats; five Americans and an undetermined number of Japanese lost their lives. Ten years after Perry, the first Americans and Japanese had fired at each other. The Western diplomats decided to cut through the frustrating Japanese politics to teach their hosts a lesson. Pruyn asked Seward for instructions.⁴⁶

Seward's responses formed a new U.S. policy toward Asia. The Sec-

retary of State's views, moreover, shaped U.S. approaches toward much of Asia until World War II. Japan, it turned out, was to serve as a laboratory case study. Indeed, Seward treated the Japanese even more brutally than he did the Chinese. And if it were his policies that guided U.S. diplomatic activities for the next three-quarters of a century, it was also his policy that the Japanese vowed to destroy inasmuch as it applied to them.

Seward had begun his obsession with Asia in the early 1850s (just as Perry was setting out for the new West), when he was a Whig senator. Believing that the American continent was soon to become the center of the world's production and communications, he urged Americans to take their eyes off the western hemisphere where, he was sure, the United States was inevitably going to be supreme, and focus on the incredible potential of Asia, "the prize," "the chief theatre of events in the world's great hereafter," as he termed it. The key to Asia was commerce, "which [...] surviving dynasties and empires . . . continues, as in former ages, to be a chief fertilizer" for both Europe and Asia. If commerce was the "fertilizer," then missionaries often acted as the plow. Not especially religious himself, Seward developed a fixation on prosletyzing in, of all places, Japan. Not only were "the simple people of Japan" to be made to respect "the institutions of Christianity"; their attacks and limitations imposed on Christians were not to be tolerated. He even urged what his biographer termed a "holy war." Japan's attempts to recover its internal harmony by moving against Christians "will only prepare the way for fearful and bloody convulsions. . . ." Seward wrote the U.S. minister in Edo in 1868, "Humanity indeed demands and expects a continually extending sway for the Christian religion."⁴⁷

To achieve these objectives of expanding commerce and Christianity, Seward did nothing less than reverse the decades-old principles of U.S. policy in Asia. Traditionally, the Americans had acted alone (so as not to be tarnished by acting with European imperialists), and largely stayed away from the use of force. Competitive goods and peaceful relations, not gunboats, were to win over Asian souls and money. Seward, however, believed that the Western powers shared interests in China and Japan; cooperation could best advance those interests. Given the distraction of their civil war, in any case, Americans needed all the foreign help they could find to hold on to their Asian trophies. That belief led as well to the reversal of the second principle: Seward now believed that U.S. military power had to be applied. His close friend, Minister Pruyn, understood the Secretary of State's mind perfectly. It was not any Japanese respect for the "public good" that had opened the country,

the minister wrote Seward in 1863: it had been "the silent but no less potent utterances of bayonet and wide-mouthed cannon [that] burst away the barriers of isolation." Now, he added, "our foothold here can be maintained . . . with the hand on the sword."⁴⁸

Seward, resembling many U.S. leaders before and after, believed that having been born free of feudalism themselves, Americans were destined to free others of feudal institutions. Then the ever-moving hand of Western capitalism and Christianity could justly enjoy access. He instructed Pruyn to help any *daimyo* who favored Western trade, "and thus lead to the ultimate revoking of the feudal system, and of the exclusive theory of Japan." In the same instruction, Seward ordered Pruyn to work with the other foreign governments. The Secretary of State realized that Western policies could destroy traditional Japanese society and create large-scale disorder. Not for the first or last time, U.S. officials willingly accepted disorder, perhaps even civil war, for the sake of obtaining access for Western goods and missionaries. After all, Seward candidly wrote, "One can hardly expect anything less than serious political changes as a consequence of the sudden entrance by Japan into relations with the other nations." The idea that Americans always valued order more than the opportunity of profit is, as Seward illustrated, a myth.⁴⁹

Weeks after arriving in Japan, Pruyn believed that "all the officers of the Western Powers in Japan are sentinels in the outposts of civilization. It is here as with our Indian tribes"—strike or be struck. Given these racial and ideological views, Seward and Pruyn not surprisingly agreed in early 1864 to commit U.S. force to an international flotilla that would teach Choshu hard lessons about the power of Western technology, while opening forever the Straits of Shimonoseki. Officials in London were even more enthusiastic about using such force, for British citizens had been especially targeted by *ronin*. In Japan, the British minister, Sir Rutherford Alcock, vigorously agreed with Pruyn that all policy toward "Asiatics" had to "rest on a solid substratum of force," in Alcock's words. He led the preparations for an attack on Choshu. The only problem for Seward and Pruyn was they had little naval power to commit. The major ships were at home fighting the South. Pruyn finally found a small sailing boat, the *Jamestown*, to accompany seventeen powerful ships dispatched by the British, French, and Dutch. The *Jamestown*, however, could not keep up with the fleet, so Pruyn had to charter a privately owned ship, install on it a 600-pound cannon from the *Jamestown*, and send it off to uphold American honor. After four days of bombarding Choshu and suffering a dozen killed in September 1864, the Westerners

seized Choshu's cannon and the straits were open. The Japanese had indeed been taught a lesson they would not forget, although it was not precisely the lesson Seward and Pruyn had hoped they would learn.⁵⁰

The *New York Times* reporter in Japan thought the Japanese should actually thank Seward, Alcock, and other Western officials for disciplining Choshu and enabling the Shogun to meet his obligations. The *Times* correspondent nevertheless had to admit, "It will take a long time . . . to break down the prejudices of millions of the non-ruling classes, who have for generations looked upon seclusion as their peculiar institution [a reference to the American South calling slavery its "peculiar institution"], and who, in their ignorance and superstition," would blame the West for Japan's ills. "The masses," he told his readers, "must be made to feel the benefits arising from trade and contact with civilization." The Japanese did quickly feel such "benefits." Immediately after the flotilla attacked, the *bakufu* agreed to pay a \$3 million indemnity for past attacks by Japan. The Americans, with the smallest ship, received the smallest share. (It was therefore not onerous in 1883 when the United States returned the indemnity to warm relations with a different, now respected, Japan.)⁵¹

In the Convention of 1866 the powers forced Japan to fix tariff duties for the foreigners' long-term advantage. But of special significance, Japan had to promise that its traders would deal with foreign merchants directly—that is, without the support of the government—not only in Japan but everywhere. The *bakufu* also had to agree to reverse 250 years of policy by allowing Japanese to travel abroad.⁵²

The treaties of 1858 and after were transformed by the enemies of the Shogun and the Western powers into weapons to destroy both the Shogun and the influence of the powers. "Revere the Emperor and expel the barbarian" became the motto for the rebels at Mito and many other places. Choshu, despite (or because of) the powers' attack of 1864, regrouped, joined Satsuma in 1867, and helped lead the drive to destroy the Tokugawa Shogun. In March 1868, an imperial army, led by Choshu and Satsuma, moved out of Edo to defeat the Shogun's forces. It occupied Edo in April. The Shogun resigned. A fifteen-year-old emperor began to rule as well as reign by a proclamation of October 23, 1868. The powers officially remained neutral through the fighting. In reality, Pruyn sympathized with the Shogun, who had, after all, worked (albeit most reluctantly) with Perry and Harris. Alcock ironically backed Choshu.⁵³

The victors declared not the creation of a new nation, but the "restoration" of a Japan that had allegiance to the Emperor, whose lineage,

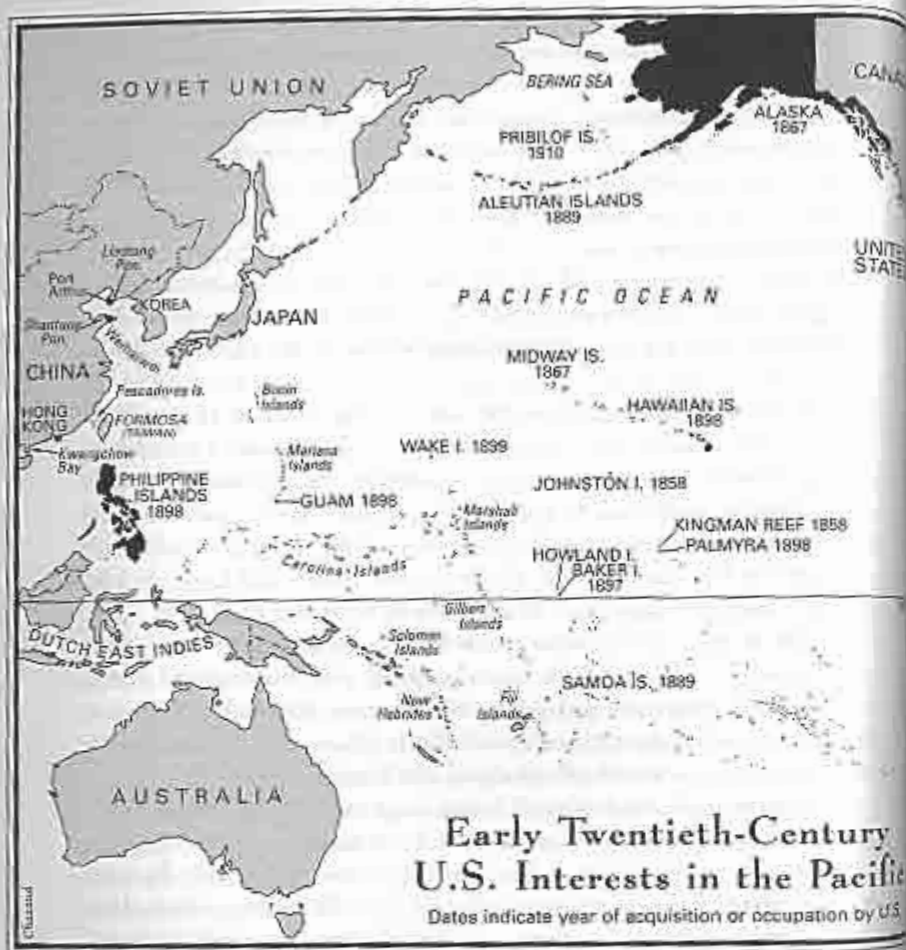
they claimed, went back to Jimmu Tenno. Or, as Robert Smith has summarized their feat, "Seeking nationalist revolution, they called it imperial restoration." The restorationists moved to switch the allegiance of the Japanese people away from the feudal *daimyo*, now on their way to extinction, and toward the Emperor. This was accomplished in part by taking up the long practice of ancestor worship—arguing that all Japanese were descended through the centuries from the imperial family, and concluding that hence all Japanese were related.⁵⁴

Until 1868 emperors had been considered so divine that their persons were not allowed to touch the earth and their subjects could not look upon them. During the Tokugawa years of 1626 to 1863, no emperor had even left the palace at Kyoto unless forced out by fire or other emergencies. But the young Emperor traveled in April 1869 from Kyoto to his new capital at Edo (now renamed Tokyo, the nation's commercial as well as political center). He took the name of Meiji, or "enlightened rule." When the Emperor emerged from his Tokyo palace, he was dressed in foreign-style clothes and rode in an open carriage for all to see. Having established a vital link with the Japanese past through the Emperor, the victors were nevertheless pointing toward a very different future. The Charter Oath, signed by the Emperor in April 1868, declared that councils for discussion of the public's needs would be established, a declaration that quieted samurai who opposed the new regime. The Charter Oath also proclaimed that "knowledge shall be sought throughout the world"—but the objective was "to strengthen the foundations of imperial rule," not to become Westernized.⁵⁵

Restoration paradoxically led to great innovation. Japan meant to avoid the Chinese example of subjection to foreign powers. The Japanese instead intended to join the powers, but on their own terms, not the West's. Harmony and a traditional community were to be restored along with the Emperor's authority. In 1860, an observant visitor noted the dividing line between Japan and the West: "It is a singular fact that in Japan, where the individual is sacrificed to the community, he would seem perfectly happy and contented; while in America, where exactly the opposite takes place, and the community is sacrificed to the individual, the latter is in a perpetual state of uproarious clamor for his rights."⁵⁶

Tocqueville could not have stated it better. Between 1853 and 1868 the relentless American determination to break feudal barriers and gain access for every individual—whether merchant, diplomat, or missionary—had encountered a centuries-old and apparently immovable culture of Tokugawa Japan. The irresistible force nonetheless helped

destroy the shell of the unmovable object. A new capitalism triumphed over an old regime. Now it was to be decided: could a different Japanese political system—one that continued to value harmony at home and a strong relationship between the individual and the state—adapt rapidly enough to obtain Western industrial and military power while retaining Japanese forms of society? And would this make Americans happy? Or would they push Japan's society further, to fit the principles of American capitalism? And how would the Japanese respond to such pressures? Around these questions, the conflict between Americans and Japanese built over the next century and a half.



shooting—destroyed the decrepit Spanish flotilla in Manila Bay on May 1, 1898.⁶¹

Even before receiving official word from Dewey, an anxious McKinley dispatched twelve thousand troops to occupy Manila. The President also moved quickly to annex Hawaii. "We need Hawaii just as much and a good deal more than we did California," he told his private secretary. "It is manifest destiny." Senate opponents raged that the Philippines and "parts of Asia" would be next: "this Hawaiian scheme is but the entering wedge that cleaves a way open for empire." The critics were correct, but McKinley outfoxed them by skirting the Senate and

asking instead for annexation by a joint resolution—a procedure requiring only a simple majority of the House and Senate. Hawaii was annexed in June 1898.⁶²

By August, Spain had surrendered. In September, McKinley appointed John Hay Secretary of State. Returning from London where he was serving as U.S. ambassador, Hay intimately knew what was required to reopen the door to China. Having served as Abraham Lincoln's private secretary, and then becoming a wealthy industrialist, Hay also was highly sensitive to the political and economic meanings of foreign policy for Americans. Finally, in late autumn 1898, McKinley ordered the U.S. Peace Commission in Paris to demand that Spain surrender not only Cuba and Puerto Rico but all the Philippines as well. As a result of the "splendid little war" (Hay's phrase), the United States now controlled the strategic Philippines that were to be "the pickets of the Pacific, standing guard at the entrances to trade with the millions of China and Korea, French Indo-China, the Malay Peninsula, and the islands of Indonesia." Or so said the powerful New York banker, and McKinley's assistant secretary of the Treasury, Frank Vanderlip.⁶³

But there was a problem. McKinley's attempt to extend formal U.S. power across thousands of miles of water and over millions of non-whites raised storms of protests. The President's fight to obtain Senate ratification for his peace treaty was therefore touch and go until the evening of February 4, 1899, when the White House telegraph informed him that Filipino nationalists had fired on U.S. troops. Even riding a new wave of patriotism, the treaty barely obtained the needed two-thirds vote in the Senate several days later. McKinley suddenly found himself enmeshed in an escalating war that lasted more than three years, took the lives of several thousand Americans and several hundred thousand Filipinos, and, at times, was fought on a subhuman scale.

U.S. policy in Asia now rested on a naval base at Manila and an informal alliance with Japan and Great Britain, the only other two powers interested in the open door. Or as Mahan portrayed the developing global power struggle, the seapowers of Great Britain, Japan, and the United States were pitted against the land powers of Russia, Germany, and France. For Americans, it was a contest of good traders versus evil colonizers.⁶⁴

U.S. policy required a cooperative Japan. During the war of 1898, the Japanese had been preoccupied with German and Russian moves in nearby Manchuria, but worked to stay on good terms with Washington. Ambassador Komura Jutarō, one of Japan's most distinguished diplomats, moved easily in America as he enjoyed strong friendships from

The reasons were both domestic and foreign. At home, Bryan and the Democrats blasted the President's use of troops to keep China open. If U.S. traders and investors moved into China, the Democrats warned, China's cheap labor would mean that she "would . . . become the great workshop to fill the markets of the United States," while U.S. capital would hire Chinese labor instead of "American labor." Americans who love "the open door" . . . would see western civilization crippled," Bryan called imperialism the central campaign issue. He had Andrew Carnegie's millions to back up his assault on McKinley's policies. "Mr. Dooley" sarcastically supported Bryan in the widely read humor column written by Finley Peter Dunno: "We ar-re th' advance guard iv Western Civilization . . . and we're goin' to give ye [Chinese] a railroad so ye can go swiftly to places that ye don't want to see. . . . A country that has no railroads is beneath contempt."¹²

In China itself, Russia and Britain maneuvered to partition choice portions of the dying empire. McKinley considered grabbing a strategic slice himself to protect the growing U.S. interests. From a sickbed in Newport, Rhode Island, Hay pulled the President back from the edge. The United States had no alternative, the Secretary of State instructed McKinley, but to play for all China by cooperating, especially with the British and Japanese, in maintaining the open door. Believing that U.S. interests could be protected by "moral" power or American forces alone was "mere flap-doodle." At the same moment, Italy proposed a face-saving compromise that calmed the rivalry in Peking and provided the tsar with an excuse to retreat in Manchuria. McKinley stayed with the open-door principle, the crisis passed, Bryan fumbled away his campaign while the Republicans ran a well-financed race, and the President won reelection in a landslide.¹⁴

But Hay, it turned out, wanted the best of both worlds, colonial and open door. While supporting his notes, the Secretary of State, apparently without embarrassment, sounded out Japan to see whether it would oppose a U.S. lease on Samsah Bay, in Fukien Province. Japan had tried to obtain rights in Fukien, especially because the province faced its newly seized colony of Formosa. Hay's approach not surprisingly hit a solid wall in Tokyo. Cool officials quoted back to the Americans the open-door principles that prohibited such leases. Hay backed off, then redoubled his efforts to push out the Russians and prop up a crumbling China. In the Boxer Protocol of September 7, 1901, ten Western powers plus Japan forced China to pay a \$318 million indemnity and worse, to accept foreign troops to be permanently stationed in Peking's foreign quarter and other strategic areas throughout the coun-

try. The United States tried to reduce the indemnity. Such a large amount left China open to financial pressure from the powers who wanted to finance it. In the end, the American share was largely used to help educate Chinese students in the United States. Japan received relatively little out of the settlement, given its large military commitment. Short of capital, as usual, the Japanese could not join others in the profitable financing of China's bonds to pay the indemnity. They went along with the deal anyway to show a cooperative spirit with the imperial powers.¹⁴

Ito, indeed, seemed nearly frantic to demonstrate that spirit. "One says that the Japanese and Chinese are of another race and that the yellow race will always have a tendency to draw together and unite against the white race," the prime minister told the Belgian ambassador in 1901. "Nothing is farther from the truth or more absurd." Japan wanted to establish a "progressive government in China," but "in cooperation with the European nations. . . . Our interests in China are identical with those of the industrial powers of both worlds. All our efforts are directed toward the development of our trade and industry, and the big [China] market which is at our door must be open wide to us." McKinley had not said it better. But in September 1901 the President was killed in Buffalo, New York, by an assassin's bullet. In 1909, a Korean nationalist assassinated Ito in Manchuria. By 1909 their successors were talking much less about American-Japanese cooperation.¹⁵

Yamagata, Roosevelt, and the Russo-Japanese War

The Chinese Empire was gravely weakened by the Boxer intervention (or the "foreign intervention," as Chinese later termed the Boxer episode). The remains were rapidly filling with Chinese nationalism and explosive big-power rivalry. One of the worst fates that can befall a nation befell China: it became utterly unpredictable. Some astute Japanese officials believed the upshot would be "a complete change of government" in China. Western observers more dimly saw a possible radical turn in Chinese affairs. Like the Japanese, Westerners most cared about maintaining foreign rights in Chinese markets. The powers thus faced an awful dilemma when dealing with China before 1949: they wanted to make continual demands on a Chinese government they hoped could deliver concessions, but do so without it becoming a Chi-

nese government that because of the concessions became a target of its people's xenophobia. The West and Japan thus tried to figure out how to have it both ways: a China weak enough to be dominated by foreigners, but strong enough to resist the demands of its own people.¹⁶

The United States and Japan dealt with this dilemma differently, and, for all the talk about open doors, for different reasons. Americans wanted markets. Japanese wanted markets and security. Americans cared most about open economic competition in Asia. Japanese cared most about Russian military forces. U.S. officials found the worst of their domestic upheavals behind them, in the horrors of the 1890s, and sought economic expansion to keep such protests in the past. Japanese officials feared that without changes the worst of their public protests lay ahead. Japan had to open mainland markets, control and exploit the long-despised Koreans, and drive back Russian forces who refused to keep their agreements of 1901 to evacuate Manchuria. Indeed, in a secret deal that the Japanese discovered, China and Russia had agreed that if the tsar's troops left Peking, China would help Russia build railroads in Manchuria that linked up with the great Trans-Siberian railroad system. With China's help, Russia was practically settling on Japan's doorstep.

Japanese officials discussed this growing danger amid unpredictability at home. Since 1868, the Emperor Meiji had been guided by a group of elder statesmen known as the *genro*. From Satsuma and Choshu (the two provinces that led in the overthrow of the Shogun), the five remaining *genro* in 1904 averaged sixty-six years of age. In 1901, for the first time, they failed to solve a political crisis by putting a *genro* member in the prime minister's chair. One *genro*, Ito, stepped down while another (and Ito's longtime political opponent), Yamagata, finally was able to place of his younger followers, Katsura Taro, in the top governmental position. Even as this generational change threatened to shake Japanese politics, Ito tried to counterattack by using his Seiyukai political party as a base. The party had little support from the public. Bearing small resemblance to grass-roots American parties, Seiyukai was made by, for, and with elite officials. But some of the elites, especially Yamagata, hated such parties. In a cunning move during 1903, Yamagata politically beheaded the Seiyukai by having Ito promoted to the Emperor's Privy Council, a job that forced Ito to cut party ties.¹⁷

Yamagata also moved to strengthen the military's hand in this transitional period. In 1900, the prime minister established the principle that only high active-service officers could serve as ministers of the army and navy. He excluded civilians from overseeing the military and gov-

the military a virtual veto power over Japanese politics. Yamagata further checked civilian politicians by helping to insulate the bureaucracy against them. The Civil Service examinations, begun in the 1880s, had created an elite, powerful corps of bureaucrats. By passing through the so-called Dragon Gate into government, this elite saw itself as "servants of the Emperor." By 1900, the best and brightest of Japanese men (quite unlike those in the United States) wanted careers not in law or business but in government. As bureaucrats, they would enjoy enormous prestige, power, and a status above that of most politicians. Yamagata's moves between 1900 and 1904 significantly shaped Japanese politics for nearly the next half century.¹⁸

More immediately, he shaped those politics by helping Katsura stay in power as prime minister from 1901 to 1906. Member of a Choshu samurai family, Katsura had closely studied the new German military, then distinguished himself as an officer under Yamagata in the 1894-95 war. Named a viscount and a general by 1898, Katsura was nevertheless looked upon as a temporary prime minister in 1901. This view suddenly changed when, to the surprise of many, Komura Jutaro quickly accepted his offer to become foreign minister. The rising star in the foreign policy firmament, fresh from diplomatic successes in Washington and the Boxer crisis in Peking, the Harvard-educated Komura was on his way to becoming perhaps the greatest twentieth-century Japanese diplomat.¹⁹

Komura had close ties to the United States, and he held great respect for British tradition. (When he died in 1911 at age fifty-seven, the two books on his bedside table were Tennyson and the *Oxford Book of English Verse*.) Above all, however, he was a Japanese nationalist and expansionist. Komura believed that Japan needed Manchuria, both to block Russian power and to exploit the markets. He also concluded that the open door was not the answer. Japan remained too weak to compete: "our commercial capitalists have not yet reached the stage of development at which they could compete equally with those of other countries under such new privileges." The open-door principles were fine for Americans and British. Their industrialization enjoyed a head start over Japan's and they had access to rich raw materials. Open doors did not work as well for Japan. Komura's thinking marked a historic transition in Japanese diplomacy from a willingness to work with the United States along Hay's principles, to a realization that being able to exploit those principles was beyond Japan's power. And that thinking was shaped by Komura's reading of the new industrial revolution.²⁰

Between 1901 and early 1904 an epic struggle erupted between Ito's group and the Katsura-Komura government. Ito feared war with Russia

and deplored dependence on Great Britain and the United States. He thus advocated "exchanging Korea for Manchuria"—that is, Japan would receive a free hand in Korea in return for recognizing Russia's free hand in Manchuria. On the other hand, Komura's policy aimed at obtaining rights in both Korea and Manchuria. He thought a confrontation with Russia was inevitable. Any deal with the tsar, as Ito urged, would necessarily only be a "short-term remedy." To clear the way, and establish the necessary power alignment, Komura aimed for a formal alliance with Great Britain and an informal understanding with the United States. He knew all about the U.S. aversion to formal alliances. Since the near-disastrous alliance with the French between 1778 and 1800, Americans had kept free of overseas ties so they could freely pursue their own interests. Such going-it-alone was the real definition of their own "isolationism." In early 1904, a U.S. reporter asked Komura whether an American-Japan deal could be worked out so "the Philippine Islands could be the garden, Japan the factory, China the market, and the United States the banker." Komura replied that Japan was fully ready to intensify its manufacturing. He added that the Japanese badly needed Philippine products, especially tobacco and sugar. The foreign minister politely did not add that such a neatly integrated operation was to be worked out on Japanese terms, not necessarily on those of the banker.²¹

Komura's aggressive approach triumphed on January 30, 1902, when Great Britain and Japan signed an alliance that shook the international terrain. The treaty, recognizing Japan's special interest in Korea, further provided that if other powers attacked one of the signatories, the other would come to its aid. In a stroke, Komura put Korea at Japan's disposal. He also prevented any more Triple Interventions from robbing Japan of its conquests, and began to integrate the world's greatest navy with Japan's fleet in war planning along the western Pacific. For their part, the British forestalled a possible Japanese-German deal. They could now preoccupy Russia with Japan in Northeast Asia so the tsar would have less time to pressure Afghanistan and threaten India.²²

The surprised Russians began to bend by evacuating some troops from Manchuria in 1902. By 1903, however, the retreat stopped. Japan and Great Britain quietly urged Chinese officials to put more pressure on the Russians. The United States, already recognized as an informal member of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, also pushed the Chinese—who instead backed away. "We have done the Chinks a great service, which they don't seem to recognize," declared the State Department's ranking Asian expert William Rockhill. "It will never do to let them imagine

they can treat us as they please." After all, "the only power they need fear is Russia."²³

The Katsura-Komura government meanwhile accelerated war preparations. To ensure a consensus in the cabinet, Komura approached St. Petersburg for a settlement. Russia did not respond for fifty-two days. When the answer appeared in October 1903, it was sobering: the tsar demanded complete freedom of action in Manchuria while limiting Japan's in Korea. Even Ito and the (relative) pro-Russian faction lost patience. Katsura's patron, Yamagata, at last had his chance to seize Korea and drive back Russia, objectives he had harbored since the 1870s. He now presided over a powerful military. Between 1890 and 1919, these forces consumed about 30 to 50 percent of Japan's annual budgets (some 10 to 20 percent of total national income). The policy acclaimed by nearly all officials was *fukoku kyōhei*, or "enrich the nation and strengthen its army."

The business community was less united. Sounding much like American business just before the 1898 war, many Japanese worried that war would further destabilize an already depressed economy. But others, especially cotton textile producers, demanded Manchurian markets and were willing to fight Russia for them. Again sounding like U.S. business in early 1898, one newspaper finally decided in early 1904 that this "endless uneasy peace" was "worse than . . . a temporary war." Japanese resembled some Americans in yet another way: while deeply divided over the importance of the new Darwinian and social Darwinian beliefs, a number of expansionists cited them to demonstrate Japanese superiority. Pulling themselves up by their own bootstraps since 1868, the Japanese had shown they were the fittest, that they stood atop the evolutionary ladder along with a few other great powers. Further expansion (especially over the less fortunate Chinese) was in a future that all enlightened and worthy people could glimpse.²⁴

By early 1904, Japan was in a war frenzy. U.S. Minister Lloyd Griscom reported to Washington that "The Japanese nation is now worked up to a high pitch of excitement." If no war occurred, "it will be a severe disappointment to the Japanese individual of every walk of life. The people are under such a strain that the present condition cannot last long." A Japanese war song chanted that Great Britain, "Lion, Lion, the King to the Beasts," now "approves of us, and America sympathizes with us in the war for civilization." The lyrics were correct: Komura had carefully kept President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Hay informed about his talks with Russia. He knew that the Americans quietly, but fully, supported Japan. Yet on February 4, 1904, when the Imperial Con-

ference decided to wage war, it was not done without fear. The army figured it had only a fifty-fifty chance of defeating Russia; the navy expected to lose half its fleet. To avoid such disaster, the government launched a surprise strike that destroyed part of the Russian fleet at Port Arthur, and landed troops in Korea before the tsar received a declaration of war. Americans and British applauded such ingeniousness. U.S. Minister Horace Allen told Washington that since "These people [Koreans] cannot govern themselves," a "civilized race" like Japan should take over "these kindly Asiatics for the good of the people and the establishment of order and the development of commerce." Of course, Allen was confident Japan would keep Korea "open" to all for "development of commerce."²⁵

At the same time, Japan dispatched an old friend of Roosevelt's Harvard days, Kaneko Kentaro, to Washington for talks with the President about how the conflict could end. As the historian Shumpei Okamoto observes, Japanese officials thus were "thinking of ending the war at the time of beginning it." Roosevelt and most Americans thoroughly sympathized with the Japanese position. At the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, the Japanese, one reporter wrote, were no longer seen as "half-developed, peculiar people" who made "toys and knickknacks," but as "one of the first nations of the world." Another writer breathlessly explained in Darwinian terms that Japan's quick triumphs over Russia were understood by anthropologists as resulting from "the complexity of the blood." Resembling Anglo-Saxons, Japanese were "the most complex" people in Asia. (The writer also admitted that anthropologists actually knew little about Japanese.) At the Portland Exposition in 1905, a journalist fantasized over the profits to be made from 800 million Asians, "half of the population of the entire world," when "they wake up after the Russo-Japanese war. . . . The day when the Pacific shall be transformed into an American lake will come even earlier than Seward's prophetic vision grasped." Such optimism rested on one assumption: that a victorious Japan would open Asian markets to Americans.²⁶

Not everyone trusted the Japanese. U.S. investors poured \$55 million into Russia by 1906. Some made fortunes in helping build the Trans-Siberian and other transportation networks. Powerful Republican Party figures, including Civil War hero and railway entrepreneur James Harrison Wilson and New York attorney John J. McCook, tried to persuade McKinley and Roosevelt that Russia could be a more profitable and less dangerous partner than Japan. The two presidents were not moved. The arch-expansionist Republican senator from Indiana, Albert J. Beveridge

then warned that if the Japanese and British gained control of Asia, American goods would be shut out. Only Russia's market and cooperation, the Hoosier senator argued, could make U.S. involvement worthwhile. Roosevelt's close friend Henry Adams took another, more cautious, approach: "Everybody is interested, and excited, and all are anti-Russian, almost to a dangerous extent [Adams wrote privately in 1903 as the Russo-Japanese War erupted]. I am the only—relative—Russian afloat, and only because I am half-crazy with the fear that Russia is sailing straight into another French revolution which may upset all Europe and us too. A serious disaster to Russia might smash the whole civilized world."

Adams understood a fundamental fact about this era that too few others saw. Japan and Russia were both backward, brittle societies, compared with the rapidly industrializing Americans and West Europeans, and given the terrible precariousness of each of these societies, any setback could trigger a string of internal catastrophes: Americans were being driven outward by their successes and divisions at home, but both Japanese and Russians were being driven outward by weakness and divisions at home. Adams's choice was not merely to be friendly toward Russia. He wanted to quit the search for Asian markets. Adams suggested building a tariff wall around the United States to shut out cheap Asian goods. Perhaps then, he speculated, Asians could sort things out for Asia, while Americans could keep their system going at least several more generations.²⁷

The ebullient occupant of the White House pooh-pooed his friend's dark outlook. Roosevelt had closely studied America's Asian destiny. He had also been tutored by Brooks Adams and Alfred Thayer Mahan on the need to develop and protect (by force if necessary) Asian markets. His country was entering the Pacific Century, Roosevelt passionately believed, and Japan was fighting America's fight against Russia.

Although heavily racist (when he especially wanted to demean someone he called them a "Chinese"), and believing that race was a primary determinant in history, TR had little belief in social Darwinism. The President recalled that social Darwinism could be championed by ardent anti-imperialists (as William Graham Sumner), as well as by imperialists. He preferred Lamarckianism, with its suggestion that superior races could improve the characteristics of the inferior. Social Darwinism in the United States (and Japan) was too complex to lend itself as an easy explanation for imperialism or anti-imperialism. Certainly Roosevelt considered it unimportant that the "Japanese are of an utterly different race from ourselves and . . . the Russians are of the

same race." As he had earlier noted, Russians posed a "more serious problem" to future Americans than did even Germany, while "Russians and Americans . . . have nothing whatsoever in common." Roosevelt even later bragged that in 1904 he had warned France and Germany not to interfere against Japan, a boast without documentary evidence.²⁸

At the same time, Roosevelt understood he was dealing with dynamite. As he wrote in one letter: "if the Japanese win out, not only the Slav, but all of us will have to reckon with a great new force in eastern Asia. . . . If, moreover, Japan seriously starts in to reorganize China and makes headway, there will result a real shifting of the center of equilibrium as far as the white races are concerned." In another letter of mid-1904, he wrote that over lunch he had told his old friend, Baron Kaneko, that Japan "might get the 'big head' and enter into a general career of insolence and aggression" that could turn out to be "very unpleasant for Japan." Roosevelt apparently suggested to Kaneko that Japan follow its own Monroe Doctrine in Asia—that is, civilize and order, but not conquer, the region. (In the 1930s these alleged Rooseveltian remarks were resurrected by an imperialist Japan.) The President also told Kaneko that Americans could learn from Japan about how to deal with "the misery in our great cities," but the Japanese "had to learn from us the ideal of the proper way of treating womanhood." Kaneko agreed. In all, the President noted to his intimate friend, British Ambassador Cecil Spring Rice, in June 1904, if the Japanese "win out it may possibly mean a struggle between them and us in the future; but I hope not and believe not."²⁹

How to avoid the "struggle" haunted Roosevelt during the next four years of his presidency. He failed to find an answer, other than retreating from Asia and leaving it to the Japanese. Not wanting either the "despicable" Russians or the Japanese with their "big head" to triumph, TR hoped "that the two powers will fight until both are fairly well exhausted." The peace terms would then "not mean the creation of either a yellow peril or a Slav peril." It was a pious hope. The well-drilled front-line Japanese forces overran ill-prepared Russian reservists, then in early 1905 won tougher battles at Port Arthur and Mukden. Mukden cost Japan at least 41,000 casualties and Russia nearly 60,000. But Russian resources seemed limitless; Japan's were not. "While the enemy still has his powerful forces in its [sic] home country," Yamagata warned, "we have already exhausted ours."³⁰

Some Americans stepped forward to help replenish Japan's resources. They were led by leading Jewish investment bankers in New York City who had witnessed, or personally endured, the atrocities com-

mitted by Russians against Jews, especially between the early 1880s and the Kishinev Massacre of 1903. These pogroms produced both a wave of Jewish immigration into the United States and anti-Russian measures by the U.S. Congress, including economic retaliation. Roosevelt, who valued Jewish friends and political support, condemned the tsar's brutalities, although more privately than publicly.

After the already-strapped Japanese treasury failed to float large loans in London and New York during April 1904, Jacob Schiff, the powerful head of the Kuhn, Loeb investment bank, took charge. He worked with his friend, Lord Rothschild, of the great European banking house, to block Russian loans in London and Paris. Schiff then put together for Japan the first major flotation of foreign securities successfully offered in New York City. In all, Schiff helped Japan sell Americans four bond issues that totaled nearly \$350 million, or almost half the cost of the entire war for Tokyo. For the third loan, Kuhn, Loeb sought \$95 million for Japanese war bonds, but received \$500 million in subscriptions in only several hours. These loans marked the birth of Wall Street as a force in international diplomacy. One journal noted that it had "never known a conflict in which the United States was not an active participant where there was anything like the unanimity of opinion or intensity of sympathy which is felt in the republic for Japan."³¹

Despite Schiff's herculean efforts, by April 1905 Japanese officials found themselves in a bind. On the one hand, Katsura and especially Komura had enlarged the primary objective from Korea solely to Korea and Manchuria. Elated and overconfident, they aimed, yes, to remove the Russian danger from South Manchuria, but also replace it with Japanese power. They believed they could do this without stepping on the considerable U.S. economic interests in Manchuria. Throughout 1904-05, Komura reassured Roosevelt that Japan only wanted to defeat Russia; otherwise Tokyo would accept the Asian status quo. (Komura especially pushed this line after the Russians told the President that once Japan obtained Korea, the Philippines would be next.) Komura was not being quite straight with the person whom the Japanese hoped might mediate their victory. But his government's bind was tighter. For as their victories grew in number, and as the Japanese endured the terrible financial and social strains (not to mention 81,000 dead), they came to expect riches from the war—that is, they expected a large indemnity as well as territory from the tsar. Katsura and Komura knew better. Japanese officials realized they now faced a Russian army three times the size of Japan's. The tsar had used the Trans-Siberian line to move fourteen trains a day and transfer 500,000 troops from Europe.³²