

***The Role of Tradition in Japan's Industrialization. Another Path to Industrialization*, edited by Masayuki Tanimoto, *Japanese Studies in Economic and Social History*, vol. 2, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. 342 pp. ISBN 978-0198292746 (hardcover), \$170.00.**

*Reviewed by Salvatore Ciriaco*

As its subtitle indicates, this collection of essays edited by Masayuki Tanimoto, professor of history at Tokyo University, aims to focus on studies that offer an alternative to the traditional view of 'the industrial revolution.' Concepts such as 'proto industrialisation' and 'flexible production' are used to highlight the role within that process played by small- and medium-sized businesses and by continuing widespread presence of home labour within villages; often a complement to the factory system, these might even at times be a clear-cut alternative to it.

Though they have often stressed the significant variety that emerges from regional case-studies, Western scholars have strangely tended to ignore the experience of Japan, where such regional differences were of essential importance. Tanimoto's work not only draws upon the Western literature on such themes (Mendels, Kriedte-Medick-Schlumbohm, Berg, Hudson, Pfister, Quataert, Piore, Sabel and Zeitlin), but also has the additional merit of bringing together a number of essays that explore the complexities of Japanese manufacturing and industrial production in the years that run from the end of the Edo period to the Meiji restoration (and the transformations it brought with it). The conclusion is that, even more than in other industrialised nations, the move towards modern industry in Japan would seem to have run parallel with a development of small- and medium-sized manufacturing concerns. Furthermore, modernisation here did not entirely break with the traditions of home labour, whose roots can be traced back to the Edo period in particular.

There has already been substantial debate regarding the role of the "Meiji Restoration" in initiating Japan's industrial revolution through a process of westernisation that was subject to political and cultural controls. This debate links up with that regarding the problem of Japan's economic growth in the seventeenth and eighteenth century: most historians of Japan now accept that, contrary to what was once believed, the country was not in this period merely inward-looking and technologically-backward. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that various factors which accompanied the first and second industrial revolution – the use of steam (in the second half

of the nineteenth century) and later the use of electricity; the advent of the railways; the build-up of an arms industry; the development of a national-scale policy on port facilities – had a profound qualitative effect upon the development of manufacturing in the Japanese archipelago. Hence, the very concept of a ‘gentle transition’ is one that must be evaluated with care.

Together with Tanimoto’s insightful introduction, the essays in this volume confirm and underline what historical studies of Japan’s ‘industrial revolution’ have long suggested to be the case: the continuing survival of past social and productive structures within a country that was undoubtedly opening up to such modern phenomenon as large factories, mass concentration of labour and multinationals – to what, in short, is sometimes described as “corporation society.”

The fact is that not all the ‘early factories’ had necessarily to embrace ‘up-to-date technology.’ In his essay, Johzen Takeuchi draws a clear distinction between various industrial sectors, identifying the factories which could become ‘developing industries’ (for example, those which produced silk thread and fabrics, cotton cloth, headwear, glass and iron ware, toys, sugar, cement or beer) and the sectors which appear to have been ‘stagnating industries’ (these latter being primarily linked to agriculture – for example, the production of tea or of objects in woven straw, etc.). Of whatever size, manufactories drew upon a large-sized labour force, which – according to economic theory – should have guaranteed production costs that were lower than those borne by first comers (this offering had relative advantages to late comers). However, Takeuchi argues, in Japan this situation did not result in an industrial system with high concentrations of labour, but rather in a manufacturing system characterised by the presence of small-and medium-sized factories. In effect, as Tanimoto underlines, as late as 1920, statistics (much more reliable than the scant figures we have for the second half of the nineteenth century) depict a situation in which the working-classes were employed primarily in small- and medium-sized manufactories rather than large industrial complexes. For example, 45,806 ‘factories’ employed a total workforce of 4,560,000; but a good 62.6% of these workers were employed by manufacturing concerns that had a workforce of five or less. In France, during the same period, 37% of the workforce was still employed in ‘factories’ of 1–5 workers, and the figure for the USA was 33%, so perhaps we should reflect some more upon what the advent of the modern factory actually meant in terms of the concentration of workforces (which was clearly rather limited in the early days of industrialization). However, with

specific regard to Japan, the very high percentage suggests that tradition and the links between manufacturing and existing agrarian/social structures played no secondary role in the nation's development. Between the two world wars, employment within Japan developed in two main directions (three, if we take into account the increase in employment in the service industries): on the one hand, traditional small/medium-sized manufacturing concerns continued to hold their own, while large-scale industry slowly absorbed the workforce from the tiny workshops which had gone into progressive decline (Takamori Matsumoto). This trend was particularly clear in the production of silk thread, where the traditional home industry based on the use of hand-operated spinning wheels (the *zaguri* or *tebiki*) would survive in the Suwa region until at least as late as 1870 (Satoshi Matsumura). It was only after this date that spinning machines from Europe were introduced, and subsequently became widespread in the region. Masaki Nakabayashi explains this development on the basis of increasing demand for low- and medium-quality silk from the growing mass market in America (the destination of the silk thread exported from Suwa). The adoption of mechanical spinning machines was due to the fact that the product now had to respond to the standards of uniformity and guaranteed minimum quality expected by such a mass market.

Foreign market demands would also play a fundamental role in the adoption of western technology in the traditional manufactures of porcelain and ceramics. From around 1910, the districts of Nagoya, Seto and Mino began to move away from the artistic perfection of the porcelain created in the Edo period and instead produced everyday objects in ceramic and hard porcelain. Coal-fired kilns were adopted and technical schools set up for the teaching of western know-how, with the result that there was a vast increase in exports (Takehisa Yamada). And even though directed primarily at the home market, the production of spirits (mainly saké), beer and soya foodstuffs was also established on a more industrial basis – even if, as M. Tanimoto points out, in 1896 a good 80% of the 4,500 businesses producing in this sector did not have company capital exceeding 100,000 yen. This observation is particularly important given that, in this period, these industries were the most important outside the strictly agricultural sector; their volume of business far exceeded that of the cotton and silk industries.

Thus, links with local entrepreneurs remained strong: society itself seemed to expect that those economically fortunate enough to have disposable capital should invest in the food/beverage sector, which one might describe as 'socially-embedded.' Ass Jun Sasaki demonstrates clearly

with regard the textile area of Banshū (prefecture of Hyōgo), a rupture with the traditional rural world was avoided – further demonstration of the complexity of the model of Japanese development. In fact, right up to the early decades of the twentieth century, the more complex cotton fabrics (those with horizontal stripes) were produced by home labourers; the factories themselves produced the vertical-striped fabrics, for which machine looms were more suitable. In fact, entrepreneurs would decide which system of manufacture to opt for on the basis of the availability of a female workforce whose time was not taken up by domestic and agricultural labour.

Nevertheless, this system of community manufacture and social capitalism would be put under great strain in various sectors of production – ranging from straw-ware (Kazuhiro Ōmori) to silk (Futoshi Yamauchi). As Isami Matsuzaki concludes, even if such business ventures rested on mutual trust within social networks and on local associations in which management pursued commercial strategies without losing sight of community values, the fragile economic situation which existed between the two world wars meant that their performance was often far from brilliant. And obviously this necessarily stimulated a move towards high-investment capitalism that eschewed the burden of social considerations.

One last factor that played a decisive role in the establishment of modern factories was the nation's armaments policy, which reflected the national and indeed imperial aims that modern Japan was pursuing during the course of the early twentieth century. As Jun Suzuki points out, traditional crafts were still fundamental here in providing necessary skills (particularly in the area of mechanics). However, one cannot deduce from all this that the role of large-scale industry was simply insignificant. In effect, what one has here is a complex process of industrialisation which cannot be fully understood without taking into consideration both political and cultural factors.

**Benjamin Duke, *The History of Modern Japanese Education: Constructing the National School System, 163872-1890*. Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2009. 416 pp. ISBN 978-0-8135-4403-8 (hardcover), \$65.00.**

*Reviewed by Lucien Ellington*

Many readers are familiar with the twists and turns in Meiji political and social affairs as Japanese governing elites pieced together a new nation while struggling with foreign and domestic challenges. The creation of a national educational system is a significant part of this story and Benjamin Duke, Professor Emeritus of comparative and international education at the International Christian University in Tokyo, has done a masterful job of telling this story. Professor Duke, who has published several excellent works on Japanese education, including a 1989 edited volume, *Ten Great Educators of Modern Japan: A Japanese Perspective* (University of Tokyo Press), mines Japanese language sources in authoring the most thorough account on this topic to appear thus far in English. Duke also does a superb job of balancing political analysis with numerous biographical vignettes of well-known and obscure Japanese and Westerners who played significant roles in building Japan's educational system.

The Meiji political decision makers who played dominant roles in shaping Japan's schools and universities coalesced into competing factions, each of which were influenced by different Western experiences, individuals, and ideas concerning education. Depending upon what Japanese clique was in power during the twenty-two years when the events occurred – as described in this book – France, the UK, and to a much greater extent, the US and Germany, exerted influence on the design of national plans and educational institutions. This is reflected in the four national school initiatives Meiji governments promulgated and attempted to implement during the period; the short-lived first plan based upon Napoleon Bonaparte's French educational reforms, and an American model that went through two different phases, (1873–1876 and 1877–1879) and then, from the 1880s on, the rejection of many elements of American education and the accession of the influence of German educational ideas.

As they made decisions that hopefully would result in a “modern” educational system that would be an integral factor in Japan becoming a great nation, Meiji decision makers also had to contend with powerful domestic reactions to new institutions and policies they initiated such as

compulsory elementary education (accompanied by heavy local taxes for the new schools), an abandonment of the Confucian moral education of the Tokugawa village schools, and the incorporation of large amounts of English language education, science, and mathematics into the school curricula.

The most vivid and violent reactions to new educational policies occurred during the 1870s and occurred in rural areas where farmers unleashed mass protests against compulsory schooling and the aforementioned local tax increases. Forty-six public elementary schools were destroyed in 1873 in Okayama prefecture. In the same year, farmers in Kagawa Prefecture destroyed 48 elementary schools and 20,000 protesters in that prefecture alone resisted the new policies. The army had to break up Kyōto demonstrations and schools were burned in Aichi, Mie, Saitama, and Chiba prefectures.

Political decision makers and bureaucrats engaged in educational reform also encountered other forms of more sophisticated but powerful domestic political opposition. On the left, the *Jiyū Minken Undō* (People's Movement for Freedom) questioned the legitimacy of Meiji government and teachers increasingly supported or joined the movement. The emperor and members of the imperial household, beginning early in the Meiji period, questioned reforms they viewed as an abandonment of Japanese traditional values in schools in favor of excessive Westernization.

Duke begins his book with accounts of young samurai such as Fukuzawa Yukichi, Itō Hirobumi, and Mori Arinori who were in Western countries before the Meiji restoration, and then links their early formative experiences to their later roles in shaping educational events and institutions. Fukuzawa, Itō, and Mori are well known historical figures but the author chronicles the stories of historically obscure decision makers and innovators who had significant influence as well. Colorful and controversial Tanaka Fujimaro, a devotee of American education and American-style decentralization who was the Ministry of Education official most responsible for initiating US-influenced reforms ranging from an inundation of English language texts at all levels to the inclusion in teacher training of the progressive ideas of Swiss educator Johann Pestalozzi then popular in "cutting-edge" normal American schools such as the Oswego New York Teacher Training College. Eventually, Tanaka was ousted as powerful forces, including the emperor and most notably his senior advisor and personal tutor on Confucianism, Motoda Nagazane, relentlessly opposed

what they viewed as the denigration of traditional Japanese moral education in the new schools.

Internationalists like Itō Hirobumi and Minister of Education Mori Arinori sided with the Imperial Household in the removal of Tanaka but for different reasons than Motoda; they were intensely attracted to German education. Several early Japanese internationalists, as they assumed political leadership, moved away from earlier youthful flirtations with the notion that education was intended for the individual and toward a position that education should serve primarily state interests.

The transition from an ethos of educational freedom to one of subordination to state interests is a story with some bizarre twists. At one point in the mid-1880s Minister of Education Mori initiated military training for the prestigious Tokyo Higher Teacher Training College and installed Army Major General Yamakawa Hiroshi as president of the institution, but appointed well-known Pestalozzian advocate Tanaka Takemine as head teacher. Eventually, though, more structured German and Hebertian ideas came to dominate the leading teacher education institution in Japan.

Even after the “reverse course” from US to German educational influences, Motoda and the emperor were still most dissatisfied with what they viewed as the lack of attention of internationalists like Itō and Mori to paramount Japanese educational values, defined by Motoda as a combination of Confucianism and elevation of the emperor’s moral authority. Eventually and ironically, Inoue Kowashi, head of the central government’s Legal Affairs Bureau and part of the pro-German internationalist faction who had earlier opposed Motoda’s traditional moral education perspective, compromised. In a series of interchanges with the irrepressible Motoda, Inoue helped draft the critical 1890 Imperial Rescript on Education – which Duke illustrates through documentary comparison – though it was mainly the work of Motoda. In this proclamation that set the course of Japanese education until 1945, Confucian teachings and imperial ideology were assured an equal footing with the study of Western scientific and technical subjects.

Hopefully, this brief review does some justice to a fine work of scholarship that is essential reading for both historians of education and comparative educationists who wish to better understand Japanese schools and universities.

**Shohaku Okumura, *Realizing Genjōkōan: The Key to Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō*. Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2010. 240 pp. ISBN: 978-0861716012 (paperback), \$16.95.**

*Reviewed by Ernesto Fernández*

Shohaku Okumura has produced substantially more than another Zen exegesis with his latest book. His methodical approach to unpacking the Genjōkōan has not betrayed Dōgen's original intention: to prepare the mind, through the clear exposition of vivid metaphors, for a meditative engagement with the Dharma. Because of Dōgen's precise language and quintessentially Zen subtlety, the balance of spiritual and academic insight in Okumura's patient approach to the Genjōkōan is most welcomed, especially after the initial encounter with the text in the book's first pages. My own background rests heavily in the Theravada, a very different Buddhist tradition whose literature can vary widely in terms of methodology, languages and emphasis from that of its Japanese counterparts. Because of this, I offer this review of *Realizing Genjōkōan* as an outsider to Sōtō Zen and, indeed, Zen in general; it is my hope that this will encourage others to approach Dōgen, and Zen, for what may be the first time.

*Realizing Genjōkōan* spans 12 chapters and 3 appendixes: Chapter 1 establishes the Genjōkōan in the context of Eihei Dōgen's life; Chapter 2 examines possible interpretations of the phrase "genjōkōan"; Chapter 3 provides a brief overview of Okumura's thirteen divisions of the text; Chapters 4–12 exegete the text itself in ten separate sections, as drawn by Okumura; Appendixes 1–3 supplement the exegesis with a translation of Dōgen's commentary on the *Heart Sutra*, a translation of *Shōbōgenzō* Maka Hannya Haramitsu, and an excerpt from the biographical *Eihei Dōgen – Mystical Realist* by Hee-Jin Kim, respectively. These are preceded by a forward from Taigen Dan Leighton, as well as Okumura's own preface, and are concluded with a bibliography, index and endnotes. Okumura's glossary merits an honorable mention for its skillful choice of key terms in Japanese and Sanskrit and its lucid definitions thereof, which I found myself turning to regularly during my reading.

With regard to specific chapters, I provide a brief summary of each. This review focuses on Okumura's style and pedagogical approach to the Genjōkōan, so that the reader may judge for him or herself the merits of *Realizing Genjōkōan*.



Chapter 1, “Dōgen Zenji’s Life and the Importance of Genjōkōan,” gives a breakdown of Dōgen’s pedagogical history, Dharma transmission, family background and personal development. At just over five pages, this short biography seems just right and does not attempt to be comprehensive. Instead, Okumura offers sufficient details on Dōgen’s life to make his work of interest to the uninformed reader while contextualizing the Genjōkōan, which is the true focus of the book. For a more thorough account of Dōgen’s life, the reader may refer to Appendix 3 (an essay by Hee-Jin Kim).

Chapter 2, “The Meaning of ‘Genjōkōan,’” examines Dōgen’s choice of kanji for the title, those kanji’s definitional significance, and their manifold function in “genjōkōan” as a symbol for inter-dependent origination. This careful analysis of “genjōkōan” may prove to be of special interest to students of Japanese language, who may make of it a valuable case study of that language’s complexity.

Chapter 3, “Buddhist Teachings from Three Sources: Is, Is Not, Is,” will be of particular value to students of Japanese literature as of yet unacquainted with Buddhist philosophy. Okumura extrapolates a satisfactory primer on Mahayana Buddhism from the first three lines of the Genjōkōan, which he identifies as Dōgen’s summary of his own understanding of Buddhist teachings. By basing this general lesson in Buddhism on the introductory lines of the Genjōkōan, Okumura remains anchored in the subject matter and therefore never appears off track.

Chapter 4, “Flowers Fall, Weeds Grow,” addresses Dōgen’s metaphor and exposition on realization and delusion as functions of the unique relationships between *jiko*, the self, and *banpō*, all beings. Rather than taking enlightenment as a cure for delusion or a final state which displaces delusion, enlightenment is understood as the noticing of delusions as what they are: preferences and biases with regard to one’s relationships with other beings. Okumura illuminates this metaphor by explaining the special place weeds have traditionally held in the lives of Zen monks. He subsequently deconstructs these delusions by invoking Dōgen’s exposition on the classical Buddhist doctrine of “the twelve sense fields” in the *Maka Hannya Haramitsu* (Appendix 1).

Chapter 5, “Realization Beyond Realization,” continues the theme of Chapter 4 by looking more deeply into Dōgen’s description of the realization of buddhas. Here Okumura identifies the realization of one’s own self-centeredness as Buddha and explains the reasoning behind this at length. Here I must respectfully take a small issue with Okumura’s diction:

I found his use of “Buddha” instead of “a Buddha,” “buddhahood,” or “enlightenment” confusing. Moreover, the definition in the glossary was not helpful in clarifying this, and Dōgen’s own definition of “Buddha,” which appears in a later chapter (p. 94), seemed incongruent with Okumura’s usage.

Chapter 6, “Dropping off the Body and Mind,” brings the train of thought begun in Chapter 4 to completion. Here the Genjōkōan arrives at the “Buddha Way” – a process of transcending delusion by realizing it – as a deliberate, proactive deconstruction of the Self. Thus, we see the necessarily engaged and meditative dimensions of Dōgen’s unique approach begin to surface. Okumura’s commentary appropriately follows this current in the Genjōkōan, emphasizing – through his own use of metaphor and decidedly Zen meditation hall language – the essentiality of self-examination and dharma practice to the Zen experience.

Chapter 7, “When We Seek We Are Far Away,” provides the overstimulated reader with a much needed respite from new information. Here Okumura reviews the previous chapters, concentrating more heavily on the exegesis of Dōgen’s Genjōkōan than on adding his own commentary. In order to illuminate the meaning behind Dōgen’s writing, Okumura employs a particularly painstaking methodology in this chapter and throughout *Realizing Genjōkōan*. Okumura presents the section, followed by his interpretation, then restates the essential phrase of the section (usually the first line), and finally provides his own explanation of the text:

(7) “When one first seeks the Dharma, one strays from the boundary of the Dharma. When the Dharma is correctly transmitted to the self, one is immediately an original person. If one riding in a boat watches the coast, one mistakenly perceives the coast as moving. If one watches the boat [in relation...to the water], then one notices that the boat is moving. Similarly, when we perceive body and mind in a confused way and grasp all things with a discriminating mind, we mistakenly think that the self-nature of the mind is permanent. When he intimately practice and return right here, it is clear that all things have [no] fixed self.”

Here Dōgen discusses delusion and enlightenment in relation to the search for truth. Okumura then restates the opening line of the passage, but instead of Dōgen’s explanation as it appears in the Genjōkōan, he offers his own exegesis: the pursuit of realization initially requires a “hunting mind,”

which believes that liberation exists outside the perceived limits of mind as it is, but it is ironically this delusion itself which at first distances seekers from the Dharma. This “read, explain, reread, interpret” approach facilitates not only a meaningful understanding of the section’s central theme but of Dōgen’s (often counter-rational) approach to explaining them.

Chapter 8, “Past and Future Are Cut Off,” delves deeply into the complexity of Japanese terms and phrases and the difficulty of accurately translating their subtle and complex meanings. Okumura carefully teases out key terms from Dōgen’s account of the Self and its construction from the “five aggregates.” He gives due consideration to the terms’ Japanese and Sanskrit origins in a way which enables his reader to comprehend their historical and linguistic significance and development.

Chapter 9, “The Moon in Water,” continues the emphasis on language begun in Chapter 8 but presents a thorough analysis of a single term (translated as “realization”) comparable to Okumura’s treatment of the name “genjōkōan” in Chapter 2. He makes no secret of the challenges and occasional need to rely on personal judgment in translating Dōgen’s writing, allowing the rough edges of his commentary to show. This act of bringing the reader into the interpretive process enriches the reader’s experience of Okumura’s guided journey through the Genjōkōan.

Chapter 10, “Something Is Still Lacking,” deals with Dōgen’s emphasis on the attainment of enlightenment in the present moment and an appropriate realization of interdependent origination as a factor of that attainment. As Dōgen’s subject matter becomes more nuanced, so Okumura’s approach becomes more scholarly. Okumura draws on Dōgen’s writings outside of the Genjōkōan, including other chapters of *Shōbōgenzō*, as he begins to slowly ratchet up the intensity of his comparative literary analysis of Dōgen’s metaphors in proportion to their importance in the overall text. This, like so much of Okumura’s commentary, educates the reader – without the feeling of becoming tangential – and involves the reader in Okumura’s interpretive process in a way that enhances the overall experience.

Chapter 11, “A Fish Swims, A Bird Flies,” begins to rely even more heavily on Dōgen’s works outside of the Genjōkōan. While personal anecdotes from Okumura do appear, Dōgen’s writings become the primary focus and interpretive tool. Okumura provides a conservative amount of additional commentary, choosing instead to defer to Dōgen.

Chapter 12, “We Wave a Fan Because Wind Nature is Everywhere,” continues the emphasis on Dōgen’s literary corpus begun in

the previous chapters. Drawing on a number of kōans and Zen stories from Dōgen's writing, Okumura's commentary here – as in most of *Realizing Genjōkōan* – is made more palatable and easy to read in spite of the depth of the subject matter.

Following Chapter 12, *Realizing Genjōkōan* ends abruptly without any formal conclusion. While the overall quality of the book is outstanding in terms of clarity, readability, and topical consistency (in spite of the great wealth of relevant information relating to the text), it struck me as strange that Okumura – who had committed Chapter 7 to reviewing and consolidating the commentary of the previous chapters – would fail to bring his exegesis together with so much as a brief concluding statement. This would seem particularly necessary considering the great length to which the *Genjōkōan* had been deconstructed: a commentary-to-text page ratio of just over 39:1.

But Okumura's journey through the *Genjōkōan* is well executed, with a readily apparent mindfulness of and consideration for the reader. His interpretative process is illuminating with regard to Dōgen, Buddhism, Zen sensibilities, and most of all the *Genjōkōan*, which so elegantly and understatedly synthesizes the three. The *Genjōkōan*, which at first appears dauntingly aloof and esoteric, can become accessible and meaningful with Okumura's masterful and encouraging introduction; even to one – such as me – exploring the “boundless skies and oceans” of Dōgen's instruction for the first time.

**The Yomiuri Shimbun War Responsibility Reexamination Committee, *From Marco Polo Bridge to Pearl Harbor: Who was Responsible?* Tokyo: Yomiuri Shimbun, 2006. 410 pp. ISBN 978-4643060126 (hardcover), \$40.00.**

*Reviewed by Katsumi Sohma*

This book is the product of a fourteen-month investigation by Japan's largest newspaper, the Yomiuri Shimbun. The Re-examination Committee consisted of seventeen staff writers and editors of the paper. Its findings were serialized in the newspaper over the period of a year beginning August 2005, the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II.

The significance of this work is not necessarily the quantity of new facts it sets forth about Japanese warfare from 1931 to 1945. Instead, it is important in two other ways. First is its source. The *Yomiuri* is closely aligned with Japan's conservative establishment, and its factual content is widely viewed as reliable and authoritative. Second, this is the first attempt in Japan to thoroughly examine the wars during the early Showa Era, and the findings are presented with exhaustive documentation. To assemble the book the Committee delved extensively into Japanese sources: journals and memoirs of political and military leaders, military documents, foreign ministry archives as well as historical studies.

Throughout the work there is an attempt to illuminate the all-important questions: Why did Japan extend its Manchurian campaign to South China? What was the logic of a war with the United States? Who established the policy? Why the stubborn continuation of the war in the face of certain defeat? What was the legitimacy and utility of the Tokyo Tribunal? To answer these and other questions, the book is divided into three parts.

Part I is an overview of the Showa War. During this period a group of army officers argued that war with both the United States and Russia was inevitable. To prepare for such a conflict would require taking over the natural resources of Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. Emboldened by their success in completing this initial step, they quickly expanded the battlefield to South China and beyond. In the meantime political leaders, terrified by a series of coup attempts and assassinations, were unable to bring the army under control. Thus, the war regime was plagued by strategic recklessness and political indecisiveness. The inevitable result was that Japan drifted toward war without a sound strategy. The onrush of events resulted in the fateful Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy (1940) and the invasion of southern Indochina (1941). Caught in an irreversible maelstrom of war, military leaders would insist on fighting to the end, even as Japan lay in ruins. Only the word of the Emperor, in a most unprecedented act of imperial intervention, could end the carnage.

Part II treats in greater detail the underlying influences and key figures that shaped these events. Four topics seem to be of particular importance: the independent military, the Anglo-American strategic position, the person of the Emperor, and the Tokyo Tribunal. It is difficult to imagine an army and navy officer corps empowered to act almost independently of the political government. Yet, the military establishment in the Japanese constitution had a remarkable degree of autonomy. Thus,

the more extreme of its factions were able to go so far as political murder of Chinese and Japanese leaders – with impunity. This lack of civilian restraint led to further and more flagrant exploits.

Another important factor during this period was the importance of Japan as part of the British security system. Japan was expected to police Manchuria, to act as buffer between China and Russia, and to prevent a Communist revolution in China. Thus, initially Britain and the United States more or less acquiesced in Japan's actions in Manchuria. It was only after Japan expanded the war to Shanghai that Britain changed its policy. The reason, according to the authors, was that the bulk of "Britain's investment in China was concentrated" in that city.

The study provides much needed background information on the role of the Emperor as well. Hirohito was "displeased" with the Manchurian Incident (1931) and tried to use his power to halt its expansion. But he was no monarch in the Western sense of the word, and much less was he a dictator. He had no power of command over the military and no voice in the affairs of government. Even after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, when military leaders were insisting on an all-out defense of the homeland, it was only in response to an extraordinary plea from the prime minister that Hirohito urged the Japanese to accept the terms of the Potsdam Declaration. Cables were sent accordingly to the Allied Powers on the following morning.

Finally the utility and legitimacy of the Tokyo Tribunal are discussed at length. For example, many officers who were chiefly responsible for the Showa War escaped prosecution due to a lack of evidence and reliable witnesses. Questions are also raised about the assigning of war guilt for crimes against "peace" and "humanity," wherein judgment was based on statutes enacted long after the event. Similarly, the Allied use of firebombs and atomic bombs are examined in the light of international law. To support the Japanese perspective in these matters, arguments by an American attorney and an Indian judge at the Tribunal are discussed.

Part III sums up the findings. This study expands on the responsibility of Tojo Hideki (prime minister, 1941–1944), the central proponent of launching and prolonging the Pacific War. Also examined are the roles of: Ishihara Kanji and Itagaki Seishiro of the Kwantung Army, the principal architects of the Manchurian Incident; Foreign Minister Matsuoka Yosuke and the ambassadors to Germany and Italy for promoting the Tripartite Pact; and mid-career naval officers for advocating the invasion of Indochina. Ultimately, however, it was Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro

(1937–1939, 1940–1941) who approved these strategies. For this reason Konoe emerges as the second most culpable figure in the onset of war.

Once again the value of this book begins in its uniqueness. Remarkably, it is the first such study undertaken in Japan. But for students of history, its importance lies in the voluminous quantity of documentation listed. It would not be an overstatement to say that any further study of the Showa War would be incomplete unless this volume is consulted. However, this book has examined only a limited number of English sources, which include U.S. government documents, memoirs and academic treatises. To have a complete picture of World War II, one would have to review more extensive literature not only in the United States but also in Britain and Germany.

