

The Strong Devour the Weak

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The Japanese Empire, like other empires, had a potential for extreme group-destructive violence. This potential was unleashed at times between 1937 and 1945 as the Japanese military, engaged in wars fought, ostensibly, for the liberation and reconstruction of an 'Asia for the Asiatics', embraced measures which paradoxically allowed for the elimination of substantial parts, and sometimes the whole, of Asian population groups in specific areas. Despite the genocidal undercurrents of this violence, Imperial Japan has not typically been included within genocide and mass violence scholarship. Furthermore, because the emergence of extreme violence in the Empire was a turbulent and chaotic process, as opposed to a pre-meditated master-plan for the annihilation of a race, as popular understandings of genocide would suggest it should be, area specialists have eschewed involvement with this conceptual field. I address this neglect in this thesis. Using a methodological approach derived from consideration of more recent scholarship which has explored genocide and mass violence in European empires, I aim to trace the genocidal characteristics of violence in the Japanese Empire. In particular, I analyse this violence as part of a dynamic process of radicalisation and escalation. I show that, while Imperial Japan does not neatly conform to models of genocide based on conceptualisations which place it as essentially synonymous with the Nazi's 'final solution', the insights of genocide scholarship are useful to understanding how, in the absence of an overarching intention to destroy Asian peoples, genocidal violence became an option in the Japanese Empire.

THE STRONG DEVOUR THE WEAK:
TRACING THE GENOCIDAL DYNAMICS OF VIOLENCE
IN THE JAPANESE EMPIRE, 1937-1945

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degree of PhD

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*In the West there is England,
In the North, Russia.
My countrymen, be careful!
Outwardly they make treaties,
But you cannot tell
What is at the bottom of their hearts.
There is a Law of Nations, it is true,
But when the moment comes, remember,
The Strong eat up the Weak.¹*

¹ Song of Diplomacy, c1880s, in George Bailey Sansom, *The Western World and Japan: A Study in the Interaction of European and Asiatic Cultures* (New York, 1949), 405.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADVANTIS	Advanced Allied Translator and Interpreter Section
ATIS	Allied Translator and Interpreter Section
CCAA	Central China Area Army
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CWR	China Weekly Review
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
G-2	Office of the Director of Intelligence (US Army)
GGK	Government-General of Korea
GMD	Guomindang (Chinese Nationalist Party)
IC	International Committee
ICC	International Criminal Court
IJA	Imperial Japanese Army
IJN	Imperial Japanese Navy
IMTFE	International Military Tribunal for the Far East
ISZ	International Safety Zone
JAG	Judge Advocate General
JGR	Journal of Genocide Research
JM	Japanese Monograph
JSEAS	Journal of Southeast Asian Studies
MID	Military Intelligence Division
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NAS	National Archives of Singapore
NCAA	North China Area Army
OHD	Oral History Department
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
RAB	Research and Analysis Branch
RG	Record Group
PACMIRS	Pacific Military Intelligence Research Service

POW	Prisoner of War
SCAP	Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers
SEATIC	Southeast Asia Translation and Interrogation Center
SINTIC	Sino Interrogation and Translation Center
TNA	The National Archives
WCB	War Crimes Branch

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NOTE TO THE READER

East Asian names are given in the conventional manner, with family name preceding given name, except for those scholars, such as Akira Iriye, who have written their names in the Western tradition in their books. Japanese words and names have been transliterated using the current standard of Romanization. Exceptions include Tojo Hideki, rather than Tōjō Hideki and *Kempeitai* instead of *Kenpeitai*. Differences may also appear in quotations from sources that use an older style. Chinese names and places have been transliterated in accordance with the *Hanyu Pinyin* Romanization system, except for famous names, such as Chiang Kai-shek, Yangtze, and Kwantung Army.

For brevity in the text, I have used abbreviations for archival sources from the outset.

Thus:

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Record Group (RG) 165, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, Office of the Director of Intelligence (G-2), Military Intelligence Division (MID), Entry 79 - Formerly Security-Classified Intelligence Reference Publications ("P" File) Received from US Military Attachés, Military and Civilian Agencies of the United States, Foreign Governments, and Other Sources, 1940-1945: Southeast Asia Translator and Interrogation Center (SEATIC) Publication, No. 182

will appear as:

NARA, RG 165, G-2, MID, Entry 79: SEATIC: Publication, No. 182.

Full citations are given in the bibliography and abbreviations are included in the list of abbreviations. Where I have consulted some collections at several archives, for example, the exhibits from the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE) and documents from the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section (ATIS), these will be referenced as follows:

- IMTFE: Exhibits, No. #, 'Brief Description of Item'.
- ATIS: [Bulletin, Current Translations, Enemy Publications, Interrogation Reports, or Research Reports], No. #, 'Brief Description of Item'.

This format provides adequate information to locate these materials in all archives.

MAPS



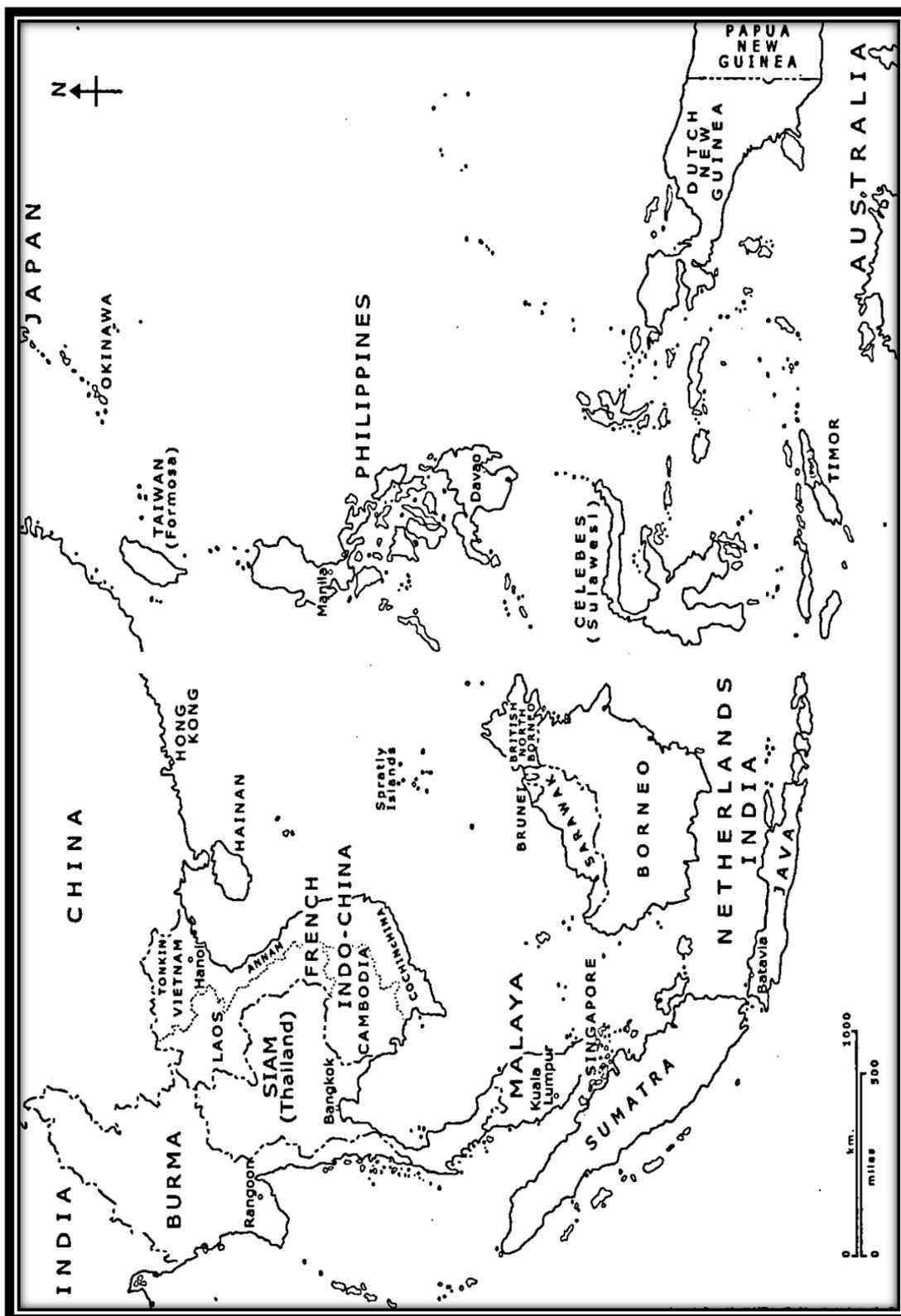
MAP 1: East China, 1937

Source: Rana Mitter, *China's War with Japan, 1937–1945: The Struggle for Survival* (London, 2013), 44–5.



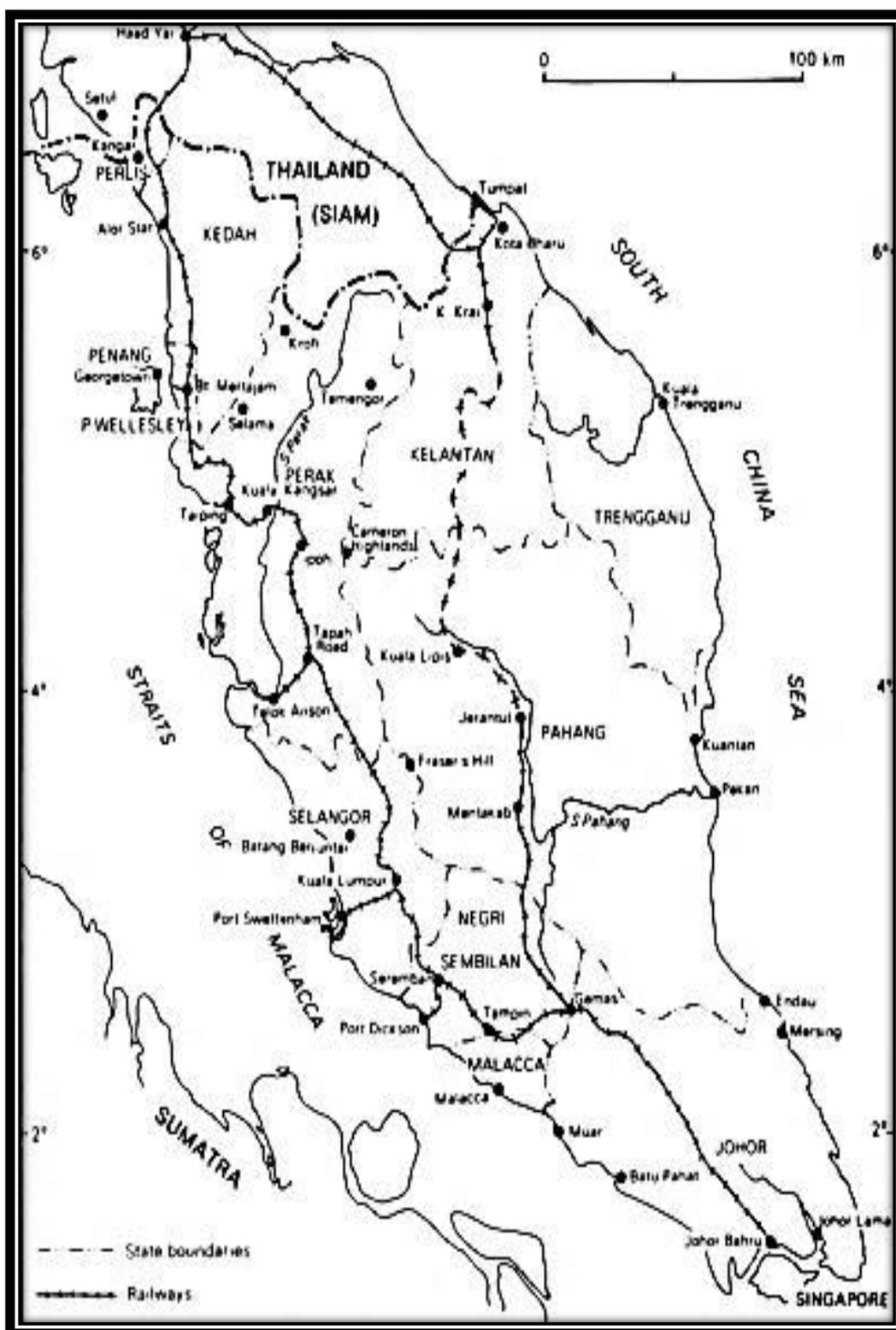
MAP 2: Occupied China, 1939

Source: Diana Lary, *Chinese People at War: Human Suffering and Social Transformation, 1937–1945* (Cambridge, 2010), 79.



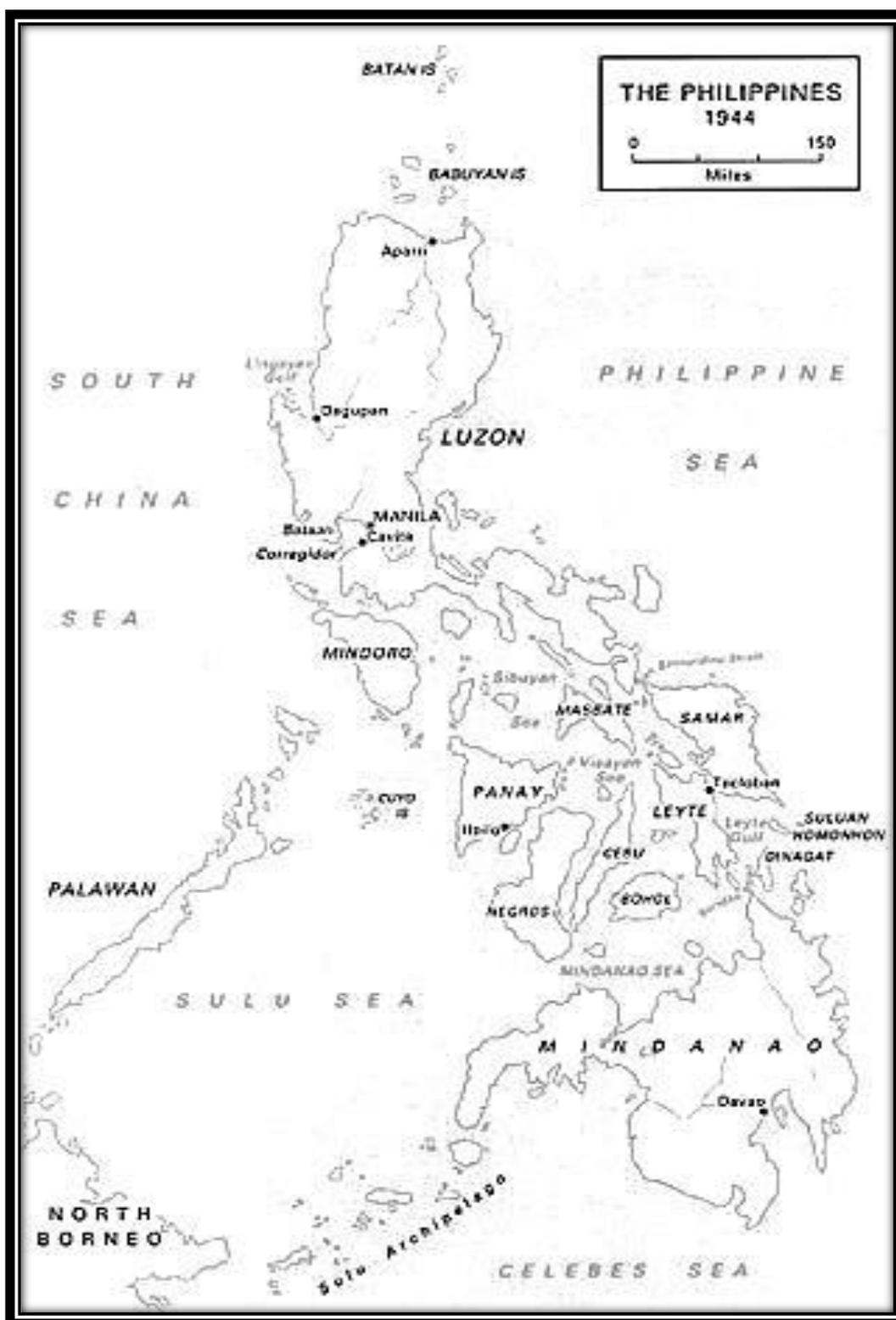
MAP 3: Southeast Asia, 1941-1945

Source: Nicholas Tarling, *A Sudden Rampage: The Japanese Occupation of Southeast Asia, 1941-1945* (London, 2001), xiv-xv.



MAP 4: British Malaya, 1942–1943

Source: Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star over Malaya: Resistance and Social Conflict During and After the Japanese Occupation of Malaya, 1941–46* (1983; 4th edn, Singapore, 2012), xxiv.



MAP 5: The Philippines, 1944

Source: Charles R. Anderson, *U.S. Army Campaigns of World War II: Leyte* (Washington D.C., 1994).



MAP 6: Luzon, 1941-1945

Source: David W. Hogan, Jr., *U.S. Army Operations in World War II* (Washington D.C., 1992).

INTRODUCTION

The Japanese Empire was, arguably, one of the most violent manifestations of imperialism in the twentieth century. In the pursuit of imperial objectives which by the 1940s had come to involve grand strategies for the liberation and reconstruction of Asia, the Japanese military paradoxically committed widespread atrocities against the very populations they purported to free from white imperialism. Military conduct in Asia between 1937 and 1945 was characterised to varying degrees by; massacres, indiscriminate scorched earth policies, wanton looting and destruction of property, bio-chemical experimentation and warfare, sexual violence, including forced prostitution, coerced labour, and systematic policies of cultural destruction. At times, Japanese commanders also employed measures that embraced the physical destruction of substantial parts, if not always the whole, of a population group in a given area as a rational but completely immoral military strategy. For example, in Nanjing in December 1937 and British Malaya in February 1942, Japanese troops were ordered to carry out comprehensive mopping-up operations that involved the deliberate yet indiscriminate massacre of a substantial part of the military-aged male Chinese population in both cases. Furthermore, anti-guerrilla efforts, first in occupied China between 1940 and 1941 and later in the Philippines between 1944 and 1945, also saw commanders adopt comprehensive scorched earth policies which included the killing of all inhabitants in areas of strategic importance. In short, genocidal violence, that is, violence that involved the intentional destruction of groups, became an occasional option in the Japanese Empire. However, the sporadic, inconsistent, and transient nature of this violence has meant that it has rarely been viewed through this conceptual lens.

Indeed, extreme group-destructive violence in the Empire was often the product of a complex and dynamic process. While it could be purposeful, widespread, and systematic, it was by no means consistently or universally employed. In fact, the physical destruction of local Asian populations was in opposition to the Japanese government's grand vision of a Greater East Asia in which those groups were to play a vital role. As a consequence, outbursts of violence that was genocidal in character were relatively uncommon. Yet, they did occur. Where commanders made decisions to employ extreme measures, these were dependent to a large degree on the conditions on the ground, the wider international situation, and the attitudes of the local populations. Accordingly, genocidal violence, shaped by this range of contextual factors, was usually not sustained; it receded in intensity once those elements that had facilitated the embrace of such measures had either been mitigated or eliminated. Essentially, genocidal violence was deployed by commanders as a means to achieving objectives and was not an end in itself. The result was that violent extremes perpetrated by the Japanese military varied in scale and intensity, manifesting intermittently if at all across the occupied territories.

It is difficult then, as area specialists have pointed out, to view Japanese violence in the context of a concept that is commonly understood to be essentially synonymous with the Holocaust. Certainly, Japanese violence does not neatly conform to the parameters of an archetype that requires genocide to manifest as a sustained and overt state-driven policy that specifically intends to destroy other races. It is for this reason that area specialists have tended to eschew engagement with this conceptual field. It is this avoidance which I address in this thesis by identifying and analysing the genocidal dynamics of instances of extreme violence in the Japanese Empire between 1937 and 1945. In so doing, I leave aside Holocaust-

derived frameworks for examining genocide (which I will shortly explain have had a paralysing impact on scholarship) engaging with conceptualisations that have emerged out of more recent studies of mass violence in European empires. The underlying aim is to explain how and why, in lieu of an overarching plan for the destruction of Asian peoples and in the face of pan-Asian declarations for an 'Asia for the Asiatics', genocidal violence became an option in the Japanese Empire. By utilising this conceptual frame, I aim to enhance the understanding of certain facets of violence in the Empire which, as a result of the lingering influence of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE), continues to be ancillary to other research questions within English-language scholarship.

THE LEGACY OF THE IMTFE AND SCHOLARSHIP ON JAPANESE VIOLENCE

Japanese violence was addressed to a limited extent at the IMTFE where, between 1946 and 1948, twenty-eight Japanese leaders were indicted and seven subsequently hung for crimes against peace, conventional war crimes, and crimes against humanity. With the Allies 'leading the charge' at the tribunal, the primary focus lay in punishing Japan for its aggressive war apparently carried out in accordance with an 'evil plan' for world domination.¹ Consequently, the prosecution of war crimes and crimes against humanity – B and C crimes respectively – was a supplementary, if copiously documented, element directed towards providing evidence of this calculated plan. The prosecution attempted to construct an image of Imperial Japan as a counterpart to Nazi Germany and used atrocities to establish a pattern of violence that could be viewed as an overarching government policy linked to those

¹ Neil Boister & Robert Cryer (eds.), *Documents on the Tokyo Military Tribunal: Charter, Indictment and Judgements* (Oxford, 2008).

leaders on trial.² For its part, the defence did not dispute that crimes against humanity had occurred though did suggest that in many cases they were likely exaggerated. Their argument instead centred on countering the prosecution's supposition that atrocities were 'premeditated acts committed in pursuance of a national policy' by emphasising that the majority of B and C crimes had taken place during the final year of war and should be seen more as 'tragic' breakdowns of military discipline.³ Essentially, Japanese atrocities, secondary to the question of war responsibility, were prosecuted and defended in the shadow of Nazi Germany. This is important to note for it has been an enduring legacy shaping scholarly treatments of Japanese violence.⁴

Indeed, analysis of Japanese violence remained subordinate to other research questions and, in comparison to its supposed counterpart, has received limited attention in English-language scholarship. Early studies were shaped by the aforementioned polemical debates which remained unresolved since, though the prosecution was ultimately successful, the IMTFE has been criticised as victor's justice at its worst.⁵ Thus, early post-war scholarship concentrated on debates over war responsibility and, in doing so, analysed reasons for the war more than the way in which it was conducted.⁶ Scholars have since moved beyond a dichotomous approach which typically assessed Japanese imperialism as either 'calculated aggression' or 'self-defence' by examining its complex and mutable nature. However,

² R. John Pritchard & Sonia Magbanua Zaide (eds.), *The Tokyo War Crimes Trial: The Complete Transcripts of the Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East in Twenty Two Volumes* (hereafter *Tokyo Trial Transcripts*), (New York, 1981), 452–62.

³ *Ibid*, 17060–1.

⁴ Lord Edward Russell, for example, published *The Knights of Bushido: A Short History of Japanese War Crimes* (London, 1958) as a counterpart to his book on Nazi war crimes. Arnold Brackman also titled his account, *The Other Nuremberg: the Untold Story of the Tokyo Trials* (New York, 1988).

⁵ See the dissenting opinion of Justice Radhabinod Pal, in Boister & Cryer, *Documents*, 809–1427; Madoka Futamura, *War Crimes Tribunals and Transitional Justice: The Tokyo Trial and the Nuremberg Legacy* (London and New York, 2008), 68–86.

⁶ *Ibid*, 65; for a summary of this early literature see Marlene Mayo, 'Introduction', in Marlene Mayo (ed.), *The Emergence of Imperial Japan: Self-Defense or Calculated Aggression?* (Lexington, 1970), vii–viii.

discussions of violence in the Empire remained subordinate folded into studies rather than a focus of them. In fact, in some cases the legacy of the IMTFE has continued to impact the understanding of violence in the Empire. For example, Mark Peattie maintained the viewpoint established at the trial – that the 1931 to 1945 period was aberrant and a significant departure from earlier Japanese imperialism which, as Andre Schmid observed, had implications for the way in which he addressed violence perpetrated against the Taiwanese and the Koreans.⁷ Since violence did not fit well with the image of pre-1930s Japanese imperialism as the progressive, modernising force Peattie depicted, he was dismissive of its centrality as a means of population control, writing of brutalities in the earlier colonies as occasional ‘excesses’ and reasoning that ‘the ruthlessness and insensitivity with which Japan set about applying the Meiji domestic strategies overseas should not cloud our judgements about their purpose, work, or effectiveness.’⁸ As this example suggests, there has been an associated tendency to understand Japanese violence from 1937 through its nexus with war rather than as an inherent part of the empire-building process. While the wartime context was a crucial enabling factor in the perpetration of atrocities, the dominance of this focus has obscured the imperial character of violence perpetrated against Asians who stood in the way of the Japanese Empire.

More recent studies have situated Japanese imperialism in the 1930s and 1940s in a longer-term context; however, the inclination to view Japanese violence as a by-product of war has continued to shape English-language scholarship even in works where it was a subject of analysis in its own right. Accordingly, those few

⁷ Andre Schmid, ‘Colonialism and the “Korea Problem” in the Historiography of Modern Japan: A Review Article’, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 59(4) (2000), 958–61.

⁸ Mark Peattie, ‘Introduction’, in Ramon H. Myers & Mark R. Peattie (eds.), *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945* (Princeton, 1984), 25.

scholars who have examined the Nanjing Massacre, the bio-chemical experimentation units, the treatment of POWs, and the sexual enslavement of Asian women for use in military 'comfort stations', have concentrated on the battlefield context and the psychology of war, while also seeking explanations in a predominantly national context. For example, scholars have explored the role of Japanese ideologies, such as Bushidō and the Imperial Way (*kōdō*), as well as Japanese perceptions of human rights, attitudes towards POWs and surrender, and changes in military ethos.⁹ Though the wartime and national contexts are without question crucial to understanding the nature of violence in the Empire, this focus has overlooked the importance of imperialism and the broader historical backdrop in which Japanese violence was perpetrated. The Japanese Empire was not alone in its ruthlessness and brutality. All European empires were marked by violence towards the peoples they occupied and, in some cases, also engaged in genocidal violence. However, while an 'anti-imperial turn' has produced a corpus of knowledge on imperial violence, and more recently genocide, within European empires, the same has not been true of scholarship that deals with the Japanese Empire. As a result, Imperial Japan has remained conspicuously absent from the growing literature on empire, violence, and genocide. To a large degree, this is because, having been styled as a counterpart to Nazi Germany in the immediate post-war years, consideration of Japanese violence in respect to genocide has become a highly politicised, polemic, and given the relative dearth of scholarship on this subject, static debate.

⁹ For select examples see: Yuki Tanaka, *Hidden Horrors: Japanese War Crimes in World War II* (1993; Eng. edn, Boulder, 1996), 197–215; Daqing Yang, 'Atrocities in Nanjing: Search for Explanations', in Diana Lary & Stephen MacKinnon (eds.), *Scars of War: The Impact of Warfare on Modern China* (Vancouver, 2001), 76–96; Hata Ikuhiko, 'From Consideration to Contempt: The Changing Nature of Japanese Military and Popular Perceptions of Prisoners of War through the Ages', in Bob Moore & Kent Fedorowich (eds.), *Prisoners of War and Their Captors in World War II* (Oxford, 1996), 250–76; Ienaga Saburō, *Japan's Last War: World War II and the Japanese, 1931–1945* (1968; Eng. edn, Oxford, 1979).

THE POLITICS OF GENOCIDE AND THE SHADOW OF THE HOLOCAUST

In 1997, the American-Chinese journalist, Iris Chang, published her Pulitzer Prize winning book, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II*, becoming the first to explicitly use genocide rhetoric in connection with Japan. Giving little apparent consideration for what the term meant, Chang, as her subtitle indicated, made an explicit association with Nazi Germany arguing, within the first few pages, that, 'just as Hitler's Germany would do half a decade later, Japan used a highly developed military machine and a master-race mentality to set about establishing its right to rule its neighbours.'¹⁰ The book was criticised among American scholars for its inaccuracies and one reviewer, David Kennedy, lambasted Chang for failing to corroborate the above claims.¹¹ However, her express purpose had been to draw attention to an event which she saw as disturbingly neglected in English-language circles.¹² In doing so, she sought to capitalise on the unrivalled rhetorical power of genocide which the Polish-Jewish jurist, Raphael Lemkin, had coined in 1944 to 'chill listeners and invite immediate condemnation'.¹³ Enshrined in its own convention, genocide has become the maximal on some imaginary hierarchy of crimes, referred to by some even as the 'crime of crimes'.¹⁴ As a consequence, it has developed a role as an advocacy tool, used to raise awareness and invest moral authority with the group that claims the label.¹⁵ That role has contributed to, especially in the case of Japan, works that show a lack of real engagement with the concept or the copious literature that now accompanies it. Indeed, like Chang, whose reference to genocide appeared only in the introduction and epilogue, book-ending a case that was never

¹⁰ Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* (1997; Penguin edn, London, 1998), 3.

¹¹ David M. Kennedy, 'The Horror: Should the Japanese Atrocities in Nanjing be Equated with the Nazi Holocaust?' *The Atlantic* (April 1998).

¹² Chang, *Rape of Nanking*, 6.

¹³ Quoted in Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell: American and the Age of Genocide* (London, 2003), 42.

¹⁴ William Schabas, *Genocide in International Law: The Crime of Crimes* (2000; 2nd edn, Cambridge, 2009).

¹⁵ Adam Jones, *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction* (2006; 2nd edn, London, 2011), 540-1.

properly formulated, a number of other, usually non-academic, writers have made similar unsubstantiated comparative claims between Japanese violence and the Holocaust.¹⁶

The use of genocide rhetoric by these writers, however, has merely exacerbated ongoing history wars, particularly over the Nanjing Massacre, inciting passionate and irreconcilable debate.¹⁷ For example, the conservative revisionist historian, Yamamoto Masahiro, became determined to disprove the applicability of the term to the Nanjing Massacre (which he believed was best understood as a 'wartime tragedy') and took a firm stance against what he saw as a politically motivated use of 'genocide'.¹⁸ Concerned over the issue of reparations and the ostensible development of anti-Japanese sentiments in America due to the popularity of Chang's book, Yamamoto argued against comparisons with the Holocaust and advocated that genocide be removed from the discussion altogether claiming that applying it to this case would enable Holocaust denial.¹⁹ These examples represent a polarised, contentious, and fruitless debate over labelling the Nanjing Massacre 'genocide' which is of limited value to scholars since it rarely advances the understanding of Japanese violence. In fact, the continued controversy over these debates can be seen in recent studies, like that of Barak Kushner on Chinese national war crimes trials, where mere mention of the Nanjing Massacre is accompanied by a qualifying statement emphasising that it was 'unlike Nazi militarism', even when not

¹⁶ For examples see: Peter Li, 'The Nanking Holocaust: Memory, Trauma and Reconciliation', in Peter Li (ed.), *The Search for Justice: Japanese War Crimes* (2003; later edn, New Brunswick & London, 2009), 227–42; Mark Felton, *Japan's Gestapo: Murder, Mayhem and Torture in Wartime Asia* (Barnsley, 2009); Daniel Barenblatt, *A Plague upon Humanity: The Secret Genocide of Axis Japan's Germ Warfare Operation* (2004; pbk edn, London, 2006).

¹⁷ Takashi Yoshida, *The Making of the "Rape of Nanking": History and Memory in Japan, China, and the United States* (Oxford, 2006) is a detailed study of these debates.

¹⁸ Yamamoto Masahiro, *Nanking: Anatomy of an Atrocity* (Westport, 2000), 268, 282–3.

¹⁹ Yamamoto Masahiro, 'A Tale of Two Atrocities: Critical Appraisal of American Historiography', in Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi (ed.), *The Nanking Atrocity, 1937–38: Complicating the Picture* (2007; pbk edn, New York & Oxford, 2007), 299–300.

directly addressing such questions.²⁰ From these statements, one can surmise that there has been an avoidance of potentially fruitful enquiries into the genocidal character of extreme violence (like the massacre at Nanjing) in the Empire. This avoidance has largely been a consequence of the spectre of the Holocaust in genocide studies.

The Holocaust is the keystone around which genocide scholarship has been built and, as such, it has become the primary lens through which genocide is understood, analysed, and delimited. This is despite the fact that neither Lemkin nor the drafters of the Genocide Convention (with the exception of the delegate from the Soviet Union) viewed genocide as essentially synonymous with the 'final solution'. In fact, reflecting their intentions for a more universal and flexible application of the term than is generally accepted within scholarship, the preamble to the Convention explicitly recognised that: 'at all periods of history genocide has inflicted great losses on humanity ...'²¹ Scholars like Martin Shaw, Dirk Moses, and David Moshman have pointed to the paralysing and exclusionary impact this paradigm has had on genocide research.²² To be sure, as an archetype for understanding the concept, it has produced a framework for analysis that can be so restrictive and narrow in scope that it has been difficult, if not impossible, to use productively in respect to other cases. Take for instance the scant literature on genocide and Japan. While there was a genocidal character to some of this violence, with the exception of a handful of scholars who acknowledge this, most comparative scholars overlook if not outright

²⁰ See for example, Barak Kushner, *Devils to Men, Men to Devils: Japanese War Crimes and Chinese Justice* (Cambridge, MA, 2015), 23.

²¹ *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (9 December 1948), United Nations Treaty Series, Vol. 78, 277, Preamble; see *Ad Hoc Committee Draft* (24 May 1948), UN Doc. E/794, 8 for rejection of link with Nazism.

²² Martin Shaw, *What is Genocide?* (2007; 2nd edn, London, 2015), 53–65; A. Dirk Moses, 'Genocide and Settler Society in Australian History', in A. Dirk Moses (ed.), *Genocide and Settler Society: Frontier Violence and Stolen Indigenous Children in Australian History* (2004; reprint edn, Oxford, 2007), 3–4; David Moshman, 'Conceptions of Genocide and Perceptions in History', in Dan Stone (ed.), *The Historiography of Genocide Studies* (2008; pbk edn, Basingstoke, 2010), 71–89.

reject this case in their analyses.²³ For example, despite recognising some parallels, Manus Midlarsky and R. J. Rummell excluded Japan from the genocidal frame in the absence of a state policy that had, as its end goal, the extermination of certain races.²⁴ The limitations and restrictions of comparative studies that are based on Holocaust-derived analytical frameworks can obstruct efforts to further understand genocide. This is because, among other reasons, they typically overlook the potentially fruitful analyses that can emerge from examinations of instances of extreme violence that share commonalities with genocide, but do not neatly conform to parameters as established by the singular and extreme Nazi case. Explorations of cases of extreme violence that shares characteristics with genocide, though they may not ordinarily be viewed in these terms, are equally important to enhancing the understanding of this universally reviled phenomenon.²⁵

A further consequence is that area specialists continue to steer clear of engagement with this conceptual field, with some, like Joshua Fogel, arguing that genocide is an unhelpful analytical tool for understanding Japanese violence. Having selectively drawn on the older research of Henry Huttenbach, Zygmunt Bauman, and Michael Marrus in his analysis, Fogel reduced the concept of genocide to a 'pre-conceived master plan for mass murder'.²⁶ From there, he gave an overview of the myriad of ways in which the Nanjing Massacre (neglecting violence in the Empire as a whole) did not conform to this analytical model:

²³ For those that have acknowledged the genocidal qualities of Japanese violence, see: Martin Shaw, *War and Genocide: Organized Killing in Modern Society* (London, 2003), 98–9; Ben Kiernan, *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur* (New Haven, 2007), 455–85; Jones, *Genocide*, 72–4.

²⁴ Manus I. Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap: Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 2005), 28–30; R. J. Rummell, *Death by Government: Genocide and Mass Murder since 1900* (New Brunswick, 1994), 144–153.

²⁵ For further discussion of the obstructing impact of these restrictions see Martin Shaw, *Genocide and International Relations: Changing Patterns in the Transitions of the Late Modern World* (Cambridge, 2013), 28–47; A. Dirk Moses, 'Conceptual Blockages and Definitional Dilemmas in the 'Racial Century': Genocides of Indigenous Peoples and the Holocaust', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 26(4) (2002), 7–36.

²⁶ Joshua A. Fogel, 'The Nanking Atrocity and Chinese Historical Memory', in Wakabayashi, *Nanking Atrocity*, 278.

[a]n overarching purpose was missing. There was *nothing* political, military, ideological, or economic to be gained by committing this mass murder. And, there were no concentration - or death-camps, no elaborate system to distance the killers from the killing, and no bureaucratic organization for it except of the most primitive ad hoc sort.

In short, the Nanjing Massacre did not resemble his understanding of the 'final solution'. On the same basis, Fogel also rejected the idea that extreme violence in Cambodia and Rwanda (which, he acknowledged, shared similarities with the Japanese case) constituted genocide. In fact, he argued, 'not all genocides may be placed on a plain with the Holocaust.'²⁷ In doing so, Fogel exposed his analysis as an exercise in establishing Holocaust 'uniqueness' rather than a genuine engagement with this expanding conceptual field. Indeed, despite writing in 2007, he overlooked new directions in Holocaust scholarship which have moved away from analysis of this case exclusively in terms of a pre-meditated policy of mass murder, to underscore the more complex, disordered, and heterogeneous process of radicalisation at work in Nazi-occupied Europe.²⁸ His conclusion that genocide was not a useful analytical concept, then, was foregone, merely representing the controversy of this subject and the unsuitability of the Holocaust paradigm for understanding Japanese violence.

Area specialist Gavan McCormack was more receptive than Fogel to the analysis of Japanese violence through this conceptual lens. He recognised that the broad definition offered in the Genocide Convention could be used to make a case for cultural destruction in Korea, and physical violence in China, as genocidal. However, he was similarly unconvinced of the benefits of doing so, pointing out that Japanese scholars rarely viewed violence in such terms, querying whether 'anti-

²⁷ Fogel, 'Nanking Atrocity' 281.

²⁸ Donald Bloxham's work is an example of this trend, see A. Dirk Moses, 'Paranoia and Partisanship: Genocide Studies, Holocaust Historiography, and the "Apocalyptic Conjuncture"', *The Historical Journal*, 54(2) (2011), 577-81 for further discussion; Dan Stone, 'The Holocaust and Its Historiography', in Stone, *Historiography*, 373-99.

Japanese' groups, such as military-aged Chinese men, constituted a protected group, and reasoning that it did not share the same ideological underpinnings as other cases. Providing a further example of the politicisation of this debate, he also suggested that 'the case for extending it to incorporate Japan must argue plausibly that the Japanese record in the 1930s and 1940s is legally and morally on a par with the Nazi, Khmer Rouge, Turkish, and Rwandan genocides'.²⁹ McCormack found the issue further complicated since, he observed, the policies and practices of Western countries in their colonies were 'excluded from the genocidal frame'. Thus, he argued, '[i]f Japan is to be seen as genocidal because of its colonial and imperial crimes, then the question of the liability of the major Western powers to such charges stemming from their colonial (or post-colonial) record would also have to be reopened'.³⁰ This is precisely the trend that has been evident in genocide scholarship over the past fifteen years or so and it is in the context of this research that a more productive approach to the analysis of extreme violence in the Japanese Empire can be formed.

The growing body of literature that developed from studies which analyse the connections between empire and mass violence challenged the Holocaust as the foundation for understanding genocide. In doing so, it opened up new avenues for enquiry and the insights that have resulted from these enquiries have led to significant advances in the field.³¹ For the purposes of this study, there are two important theoretical trends that have emerged from this research. First, because genocidal violence within European empires was similarly complex, turbulent, and

²⁹ Gavan McCormack, 'Reflections on Modern Japanese History in the Context of the Concept of Genocide', in Robert Gellately & Ben Kiernan (eds.), *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, 2003), 265–86.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 268.

³¹ For overviews of this literature see Philip Spencer, 'Imperialism, Anti-imperialism and the Problem of Genocide, Past and Present', *History*, 98(332), (2013), 606–22; Robert Melson, 'Critique of Current Genocide Studies', *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, 6, 3 (2011), 279–86; A. Dirk Moses, 'Revisiting a Founding Assumption of Genocide Studies', *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, 6(3) (2011), 287–300; Ann Curthoys & John Docker, 'Introduction – Genocide: Definitions, Questions, Settler-colonies', *Aboriginal History*, 25 (2001), 1–15 for discussion of this research.

sporadic – hardly representative of a pre-meditated plan for the annihilation of native populations, these scholars focused their attention on the process rather than the outcome of genocide. In doing so, they have considered closely the relationship between structure and agency and some, like Moses, have come to conceptualise genocide more as a dynamic process that involves periods of radicalisation and de-escalation, than a pre-meditated policy of mass-murder.³² A second element that has developed from this research, one examined more extensively in the works of Michael Mann and Mark Levene, has been to contextualise individual case studies within a wider historical frame.³³ In doing so, these scholars have been able to formulate theories in respect to the relationship between imperialism, violence, and genocide which transcend the unique local circumstances in each case. In effect, they have posited a relationship between empire and genocide which suggests that all empires had the potential for extreme violence under particular conditions and, as discussed in more detail in Chapter One, have explored the conditions under which that potential was unleashed. Ultimately, these two trends are useful as a framework for analysis of Japanese violence in this thesis because, first, they allow for the inconsistent, chaotic, and contextually dependent nature of extreme violence in the Japanese Empire; and second, they will help to develop the understanding of that violence as part of a specific historical context which, while shaped by the local and geopolitical situation in Asia, was not an exclusively Japanese phenomenon.

AIMS, RATIONALE, AND PARAMETERS

This thesis revisits the genocidal nature of Japanese violence in light of the conceptual insights of this research. As the first in-depth study of this kind, I have

³² Moses, 'Genocide and Settler Society', 28–35.

³³ Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of the Nation State, Volume II: The Rise of the West and the Coming of Genocide* (2005; pbk edn, London & New York, 2013); Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge, 2005), 70–110.

three broad objectives. First and foremost, I aim to advance the understanding of instances of extreme violence in the Japanese Empire. In particular, I examine this violence as the product of a dynamic process of radicalisation, paying close attention to the interplay between constantly shifting geopolitical and local contexts, in order to explain how and why Japanese commanders came to embrace a military strategy that accepted the destruction of substantial parts and, in some cases, whole populations in specific areas of the Empire between 1937 and 1945. Second, by setting my analysis within the broader historical frame of the nineteenth and twentieth century pursuit of empire, I aim to formulate an understanding of Japanese violence beyond its national context. In doing so, I hope to highlight that outbursts of genocidal violence were shaped by the longer-term context of imperialism as much as by the circumstances in Asia and the occupied territories at that time. Third, I endeavour to bring discussion of Japanese violence from its comparatively marginalised position within area studies into dialogue with the expansive, interdisciplinary, and growing corpus of knowledge on empire, violence, and genocide. In doing so, I hope to stimulate further discussion and open up new avenues for analysing Japanese violence in this conceptual frame in the future.

As noted, genocide is a provocative and problematic concept. Given the difficulties highlighted in the above discussion, it would be reasonable to question, as those scholars have, the utility of approaching my analysis through this conceptual frame. There are arguments to be made against working with such a contentious term, especially for a case in which it is not an obvious 'fit'. Certainly, the politicisation of genocide, the dominance of the Holocaust paradigm, and the persistence of definitional challenges (to be discussed shortly) have led some scholars to favour seemingly more neutral terms like 'mass killing' and 'massacre' in their

studies.³⁴ Genocide, however, is most apposite for the primary aim of this thesis. My interest lies in understanding the dynamics involved when commanders ordered their troops to conduct military operations that targeted for destruction substantial parts (as in the mopping-up campaigns in Nanjing in 1937 and British Malaya in 1942) or the whole (as in occupied China in 1941 and the Philippines in 1945) of a population group in specific areas. To that end, the theoretical insights of what is now a considerable body of research on the dynamics of genocide in imperial settings, offers an excellent foundation from which to base my analysis of this aspect of Japanese violence. Furthermore, as touched on, the study of lesser known, smaller-scale, and ambiguously genocidal cases can be fruitful in respect to refining and adding to the understanding of genocide more generally. An analysis of violence in the Japanese Empire, one that embraces its ambiguities, inconsistencies, and complexities can add further insight into how and why, in lieu of an overt plan or intention for the elimination of particular peoples, especially within the context of an ideology that appeared to work against the logic of group destruction, genocidal measures became a viable option and, at times, a perceived necessity.

Aside from the political nature of the term and the dominance of the Holocaust as an archetype, a fundamental problem of utilising genocide as an analytical concept is the lack of consensus over definition within scholarship. There is, of course, a legal definition enshrined in the Genocide Convention. However, as the culmination of a 'tortuous political process in a divided Cold War atmosphere', this definition, in spite of being internationally recognised and ratified, has inspired

³⁴ For example: Benjamin A. Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the 20th Century* (Ithaca & London, 2004), 9–15; Christian Gerlach, *Extremely Violent Societies: Mass Violence in the Twentieth Century World* (Cambridge, 2010), 5–9; Philip Dwyer & Lyndall Ryan, 'Introduction: The Massacre and History', in Philip G. Dwyer & Lyndall Ryan (eds.), *Theatres of Violence: Massacre, Mass Killing and Atrocity throughout History* (2012; pbk edn, New York & Oxford, 2015), xi–xxv.

more criticism and dispute than consensus.³⁵ Indeed, animated debates over questions of intent, motive, scale, victims, perpetrators, and techniques of genocide, endure and are unlikely to subside in the near future.³⁶ The ambiguous wording of this definition and its origins within a convention designed to legislate against a crime, have also contributed to a tendency for scholars to approach the concept in a legalistic and definitive manner as they seek to find evidence of a criminal intent.³⁷ However, scholarship need not be beholden to the political and legal origins of 'genocide' and as Jacques Sémelin has noted, there is a difference between the work of the scholar and that of the politician or lawyer.³⁸ The chief purpose in utilising genocide in this thesis is to establish historical understanding of an understudied aspect of the Japanese Empire, not to construct a criminal case or inflame further political debate by 'labelling' Japan. As such, I will not approach genocide in a definitive, legalistic sense and do not mean to delve into the question of whether the case of Japan constitutes 'genocide' or not. To do so would be unproductive. Lemkin's and the UN's definitions are interpretive and there are so many different scholarly readings that it would be possible to manipulate an understanding of the concept to make a case either way. There is little academic value in achieving the goal when the goalposts can be moved and, as Donald Bloxham has advised, any genocide determination should be a by-product of scholarship, not its primary purpose.³⁹ Genocide, then, will be utilised in this thesis as a means to understanding facets of Japanese violence, not as an end in itself.

³⁵ Ann Curthoys and John Docker, 'Defining Genocide', in Stone, *Historiography*, 13.

³⁶ Anton Weiss-Wendt, 'Problems in Comparative Genocide Scholarship', in *ibid*, 44.

³⁷ Jacques Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy: The Political Uses of Massacre and Genocide*, Cynthia Schoch (trans.) (2005; pbk Eng. edn, London, 2013), 308-2.

³⁸ *Ibid*, 322.

³⁹ Donald Bloxham, 'The Armenian Genocide of 1915-1916: Cumulative Radicalization and the Development of a Destruction Policy', *Past and Present*, 181 (2003), 189.

In employing a broad, non-definitive approach I base my understanding of genocide on the fact that genocide is a type of violence that has considerable conceptual overlap with massacres, mass killings, and other atrocities. An analysis of similar types of violence can, as mentioned, be advantageous in terms of expanding the existing knowledge of genocide and, as Straus has argued, in locating it within a spectrum of other forms of mass and group violence.⁴⁰ Thus, genocide will be used more flexibly as an analytical tool in the same sense as other abstract terms such as war, imperialism, and empire. Embracing the ambiguities and complexities of Japanese violence, I intend to trace its group-destructive dynamics by considering genocide as an extreme type of violence that emerges through a process of radicalisation as opposed to a distinctive, singular event within the Empire. As such, influenced by the work of Shaw and Moses, I refer throughout this thesis to 'genocidal violence' rather than 'genocide'.⁴¹ The application of genocide, as a noun, must naturally lead to a definitive judgment. In contrast, 'genocidal' as an adjective describing violence that shares characteristics with genocide is more expedient to analyses of cases that skirt the boundaries of definition and where there are similarities but also crucial differences that make the use of genocide in a definitive sense more problematic. In keeping with my intention to avoid legalistic arguments and debates, I propose to differentiate genocidal violence from massacre, mass killing, and other atrocities through a general understanding of the concept rather than, what has become, an obligation to define the term. This understanding is based on scholarly consensus regarding the nature of the concept for, contrary to Anton Weiss-Wendt's argument that there has been no agreement in respect to defining genocide, there has, as Straus highlighted, been some convergence of ideas. While

⁴⁰ Scott Straus, "'Destroy Them to Save Us': Theories of Genocide and the Logics of Political Violence', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 24(4) (2012), 551.

⁴¹ Shaw, *What is Genocide?*, 193; Moses, 'Antipodean Genocide', 92-6.

debates persist over nuances in definition, most scholars understand genocide to be, at a basic level, a form of intentional group destruction.⁴² Though I recognise that the destruction of groups can be achieved by a variety of different physical, biological, social, and cultural means, I focus in this thesis on physical destruction of groups. That is not to say that other forms of group destruction were not present within the Japanese Empire. Certainly, there is a case to be made for further analysis of the institutionalised sexual slavery, the system of forced labour, the bio-chemical experimentation units, and the Japanization policies employed in Taiwan and Korea within this conceptual frame. Limiting my discussion to physical destruction of groups is necessary within what is already a broad and far-reaching study. Thus, I approach the analysis of Japanese violence in the context of genocide by identifying and examining those instances in which that violence involved the intentional, meaning deliberate or purposeful, physical destruction of groups.

MATERIALS, METHOD, AND CHAPTER OUTLINE

I have consulted a wide-range of diverse source types in conducting research for this thesis. Much of this was based on the extensive collections of the Library of Congress where I spent six months as a funded research fellow. This material included; published diaries and memoirs from Japanese and other Asian perspectives, contemporary accounts from foreign observers, edited volumes of translated Japanese documents, official publications and pamphlets, Japanese controlled English-language newspapers and periodicals, US government documents regarding the liberation of the Philippines, the Japanese Monograph series, and an enormous microfiche collection of captured and translated wartime Japanese documents and

⁴² Moshman, 'Conceptions of Genocide', 89; see Scott Straus, 'Contested Meanings and Conflicting Imperatives: A Conceptual Analysis of Genocide', *JGR*, 3(3) (2001), 350-55 for a succinct summary of key scholarly definitions.

interrogation reports. This was then supplemented by an additional two months research conducted at the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland (NARA) and the National Archives at Kew (TNA) where I utilised a range of military intelligence documents such as; military attaché reports, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) intelligence files, as well as interrogation reports and captured translated documents from a number of Allied intelligence agencies operating in the Pacific. I also accessed war crimes case files compiled by the Judge Advocate General (JAG) and the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP), various trial transcripts and evidentiary collections translated and assembled for use during the national war crimes trials conducted by Britain, the United States, and the Philippines, and the archives of the IMTFE.

This source base features English-language material, though much of it was originally produced in English and considerably more was translated from Japanese documents. There are obviously limitations in working with translations and I have made sure to be circumspect in my treatment of this material, cross-referencing with a wide-range of different source-types. Some case studies in the thesis would naturally be enhanced through engagement with original documents and multi-language archives. However, given that the originality and value of this thesis lies in its conceptual and contextual approach to the analysis of Japanese violence, this has not been detrimental. In fact, working with these materials has turned out to be a blessing in disguise. It has forced me to access a wider variety of documents than if I had been conducting a more focused study using a single collection and, as such, has provided a strong foundation from which to enhance my work with Japanese-language sources in the future. Moreover, in my rigorous search for English-language sources, I have made use of two under-utilised collections which have

proven to be of tremendous value to the study of Japanese violence.

The first was the large repository of captured, translated Japanese documents and interrogation reports. These documents, dispersed over the three archives, are expansive; the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section alone reportedly collected around 350,000 documents, of which 18,000 were translated.⁴³ This material has remained largely unexploited by scholars and yet, despite the selective and piecemeal nature of some of the translations, they provide useful insights into conditions in the occupied areas, the treatment of 'natives', information on guerrilla warfare and resistance from local populations as well as detailed reports on Japanese anti-guerrilla efforts. For Southeast Asia, this has been particularly useful since Japanese forces were ordered to destroy their documents from as early as 1942 and during the two-week period between the surrender and arrival of American troops in Japan, it is estimated that upwards of seventy percent of wartime documents were destroyed.⁴⁴

The second of these under-used archival collections was the immense compilation of materials amassed in preparation for the prosecution of war crimes trials in the immediate post-war years. These archives, held at NARA and TNA, include case files, investigation reports, trial transcripts, and evidentiary collections. While a challenging source base given that they were compiled with an agenda in mind, they are, as Yuma Totani has pointed out, a vastly untapped archive which, if treated with caution, can be indispensable to the study of Japanese violence.⁴⁵ Indeed,

⁴³ Edward Drea, 'Introduction', in Interagency Working Group (ed.), *Researching Japanese War Crimes: Introductory Essays* (Washington D.C., 2006), 14; for further detail on these materials see Greg Bradsher, 'The Exploitation of Captured and Seized Japanese Records Relating to War Crimes, 1942-1945', in *ibid.*, 151-68.

⁴⁴ 'Introduction', in Harry J. Benda, James K. Irikura, & Kōichi Kishi (eds.), *Japanese Military Administration in Indonesia: Selected Documents* (New Haven, 1965), iii.

⁴⁵ Yuma Totani, *Justice in Asia and the Pacific Region, 1945-1952: Allied War Crimes Prosecutions* (Cambridge, 2015), 4-5.

case files and investigation reports present a more complete picture of the scope, nature, and patterns of violence in the Empire than can usually be gleaned from diaries, memoirs, and oral histories. Since the war crimes process placed the Japanese Empire under the spotlight in a way that other European empires have not been, these sources offer unique oral testimonies that recorded the Empire at this time from the perspective of both the oppressed and the oppressor. They have also been useful because, as revealed during these very trials, Japanese commanders were issuing orders verbally rather than in writing during the latter stages of the war.

To restate, the central aim of this thesis is to trace the genocidal dynamics of violence in the Japanese Empire to understand how and why extreme group-destructive methods became possible in the absence of an overarching, specific intent to annihilate groups. Grounding my analysis in the theoretical insights that have emerged out of studies of genocide and mass violence in European empires, I examine instances of extreme violence in the Empire as the culmination of a dynamic process of radicalisation. Situated within the longer-term context of Japanese imperialism as it evolved through interactions with the others powers within the imperial system, I explore this process as it emerged in various localities, under diverse circumstances, and at different stages of the Empire between 1937 and 1945 in order to identify the factors involved in the embrace of genocidal violence at particular times. I employ an approach that combines elements of macro, meso, and micro level analysis. In doing so, I explore the local circumstances and conditions on the ground in which commanders made decisions to adopt genocidal measures. I contextualise these decisions within the long-term historical and more immediate geopolitical frame to draw out general patterns in the emergence of genocidal violence in the Empire. Essentially, this methodological approach takes into account

the complex, tumultuous, and heterogeneous process of radicalisation, arguing that while certain factors, such as resistance, acted to trigger genocidal violence, the emergence of such extreme measures was a result of a multitude of different but interrelated dynamics shaped by a highly mutable geopolitical context that, at times, seemed to necessitate the use of genocidal violence.

As stated, the Japanese were not alone in their brutality towards the people they occupied. All imperial powers had a proclivity for violence perpetrated against those they oppressed. In fact, conquest and the unequal power-dynamics of foreign domination was often contingent on it. Most importantly, as revealed by recent scholarship, the pursuit of empire carried within it the potential for genocidal violence. In Chapter One, I begin the thesis by exploring this potential. I examine the relationship between imperialism, violence, and genocide, drawing on the insights from the abundant scholarship on this subject. The purpose of the chapter is, first, to tease out the factors that proved to be essential pre-conditions for genocidal violence, and second, to examine the dynamics involved in the radicalisation process in other empires. I centre my discussion on three common elements grouped under the broad categories of ideology, resistance, and insecurity and detail the interplay between these factors as it drove the radicalisation to genocidal violence in the imperial space. The complex and interconnected relationship identified here will form the basis of the analysis in ensuing chapters. Furthermore, the conceptual discussion presented in this chapter will be vital to the development of an understanding of Japanese violence in the 1930s and 1940s as rooted in this specific historical context of imperialism.

Having established the genocidal potential of imperialism and explored the ways in which that came to be released in other European empires, I use the insights

derived from that analysis to focus my examination of violence in the Japanese Empire in subsequent chapters. In Chapter Two, I begin the empirical part of my thesis by examining the history of Japan's engagement with imperialism from the mid-nineteenth century to the outbreak of the war with China. This history was an important prelude during which significant elements that would prove conducive to the radicalisation of violence in later years evolved. Indeed, I argue that the insecurities and ideologies that would shape the Japanese leadership's perceptions of the geopolitical situation in the 1930s and 1940s, contributing to decisions for the liberation and reconstruction of Asia, were rooted in the longer-term context of interactions and engagement with the imperial system. Furthermore, as in other empires, violence became a recurring feature in the management of populations, especially as a response to resistance in the earlier territories brought under Japanese control. These encounters would provide opportunities for developing and honing techniques of suppression which in later years would be re-used and, on occasion, radicalised to more extreme, genocidal measures. The intent in this chapter then, is to take a broad temporal approach exploring the continuities, changes, and disruptions in the ideologies and insecurities that shaped Japanese imperialism from the mid-nineteenth century to the outbreak of war with China in 1937, as well as examining the relationship between resistance and violence as it emerged in these earlier colonies. Through considering the longer-term roots of genocidal violence in the 1930s and 1940s, I will be able pinpoint the factors involved in the radicalisation process more clearly in the subsequent analysis.

Following these important conceptual and contextual chapters, I move to the analysis of the selected case studies. I take an expansive approach by examining instances of extreme violence in different localities and at various stages of the

occupation. In order to strike a balance between breadth and depth, I have opted for analysis of just four case studies. These are divided between two chapters. In the first, Chapter Three, I concentrate on the emergence of extreme violence during the so-called 'China Incident'. This chapter is organised into three distinct sections. In the first section, I explore the wider context of the war with China and examine the ways in which the leadership created battlefield conditions that were conducive to the radicalisation of genocidal violence. In the subsequent two sections, I analyse two cases studies: the Nanjing Massacre of December 1937 and the so-called Three Alls scorched earth policy employed in occupied China from around mid-1941. Aside from the presence of genocidal characteristics, these cases have been chosen because they represent different stages of the Japanese occupation in China. The massacre at Nanjing, for example, took place during a period of initial conquest, during which Japan's aims in this war had not yet crystallised beyond an original punitive focus. The Three Alls policy, on the other hand, emerged as a technique of anti-guerrilla warfare during attempts to consolidate occupied north China after Japan's longer-term ideological strategies for the region had taken shape. Through analysis of these two case studies, I will highlight significant similarities and differences, underscoring key factors stimulating the radicalisation of violence in these instances.

In the final chapter, Chapter Four, I follow the same approach to analysing extreme violence in Southeast Asia. I begin in the first section by outlining the nature of the Japanese occupation of this region and locating the potential for genocide in this 'liberating mission'. In subsequent sections, I analyse two instances of extreme violence: the purge of 'treacherous Chinese elements' in Singapore and Malaya in February 1942 and the escalation of anti-guerrilla warfare in the Philippines from late 1944 into early 1945. As in the previous chapter, these cases have been selected for

their differences as much as for their similarities. In Malaya and Singapore, large-scale massacres specifically targeting the military-aged male Chinese population occurred at the outset of occupation whereas in the Philippines widespread, systematic violence escalated during the final months of occupation. Moreover, attitudes towards each population were entirely dissimilar at the outset (the Malayan Chinese were seen as anti-Japanese, while the Filipinos were viewed as potential collaborators) and the military had very different intentions regarding the place of these territories within the Empire (British Malaya was to become the core of the Empire while the Philippines would one day become, albeit nominally, independent). An analysis of the way in which violence manifested in conditions that were almost the inverse of each other, will highlight more clearly the similarities of the radicalisation process in Southeast Asia. Finally, given the parallels between the way in which the massacres at Nanjing and British Malaya, and the escalation of anti-guerrilla strategy in occupied China and the Philippines, manifested, these four cases complement each other and will enhance the understanding of genocidal violence in the Empire by revealing continuities and consistencies that will help to explain further the dynamics behind the radicalisation process.

1

There was no Nazi atrocity – concentration camps, wholesale maiming and murder, defilement of women or ghastly blasphemy of childhood – which the Christian civilization of Europe had not long been practicing against colored folk in all parts of the world in the name of and for the defence of a Superior Race born to rule the world.

[W.E.B. Du Bois, *The World and Africa*, 1947]

IMPERIALISM, VIOLENCE, AND GENOCIDE

The pursuit of empire has left a 'bloody stain' in its wake. Demographic disasters, extreme violence, and unimaginable cruelties have accompanied many encounters between the subjugator and the subjugated. Though anti-imperialist critiques were as old as imperialism, it was in the aftermath of the Second World War, as great strides were being taken in the development of universal human rights and wars of decolonisation were being fought, that the violence of imperial projects came under greater scrutiny.¹ Writing in the context of the fierce struggle for independence in Algeria (1954–1962), anti-imperial writers Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, and Albert Memmi emphasised the inherently violent nature of imperialism.² In doing so, these writers went further than earlier denunciations by making explicit connections with the genocide that had so recently shaken Europe. Fanon, for instance, argued that 'Nazism [had] transformed the whole of Europe into a veritable colony', while Césaire asserted that the shocking nature of Hitler's crime derived from the fact that 'he applied to Europe colonialist procedures which until then had been reserved exclusively for the Arabs of Algeria, the coolies of India, and the blacks of Africa.'³ Speaking out against the French government's efforts to maintain control in Algeria, political philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre even suggested that such efforts 'oblige[d] men to fight despite themselves and die for the Nazi principles that [were] fought against ten years ago.'⁴

In spite of these early associations, the relationship between empire and genocide had been, until the early 2000s, relatively neglected in scholarship which

¹ Martin Thomas, 'Introduction: Mapping Violence onto French Colonial Minds', in Martin Thomas (ed.), *The French Colonial Mind, Vol. 2: Violence, Military Encounters, and Colonialism* (Lincoln, 2011), xxii.

² Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, Joan Pinkham (trans.) (1955; Eng. edn, New York & London, 1972); Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961; later edn, London, 1990); Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (1957; Eng. edn, Boston, 1967).

³ Fanon, *Wretched*, 101; Césaire, *Discourse*, 3.

⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Colonialism and Neocolonialism* (1964; reprint Eng. edn, London & New York, 2006), 54.

had typically focused on Holocaust-derived frameworks for analysis. As Bart Luttikhuis and Dirk Moses have observed, the ‘messy complexities’ of extreme violence in the imperial space did not conform to the traditional understanding of genocide as ‘a fully developed European bureaucratic apparatus working hand in glove with military authorities to destroy a helpless enumerated community with ruthless efficiency’.⁵ Scholars who work on mass violence in European empires have played a significant role in challenging this conception as they explored those links first observed by the aforementioned writers in greater depth. Many grounded their studies in the theoretical insights of the rediscovered work of Raphael Lemkin and Hannah Arendt. Unpublished writings from Lemkin’s incomplete manuscript, which aimed to cover genocide through time, stimulated interest and added impetus to this avenue of enquiry because they confirmed the importance of colonialism to his conception of genocide.⁶ This was an association already implicit in his seminal tome, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, where he had explained that genocide involved the following two phases: ‘[o]ne, destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group; the other, the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor.’⁷ Arendt’s insights, especially her understanding of the roots of totalitarianism as lying partly within the mechanisms of population control and the racial ideologies that emerged through nineteenth-century imperialism, also inspired research into the colonial

⁵ Bart Luttikhuis & A. Dirk Moses, ‘Mass Violence and the end of the Dutch Colonial Empire in Indonesia’, *JGR*, 14(3–4) (2012), 261–2.

⁶ A special issue of *JGR*, 7(4) (2005) contains articles on Lemkin’s unpublished manuscripts. See Jürgen Zimmerer & Dominik Schaller, ‘From the Guest Editors: Raphael Lemkin: The “Founder of the United Nation’s Genocide Convention” as a Historian of Mass Violence’, *Journal of Genocide Research*, 7(4) (2005), 447–52, for an introduction.

⁷ Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation – Analysis of Government – Proposals for Redress*, (Washington D.C., 1944), 79; for further discussion see John Docker, ‘Are Settler-Colonies Inherently Genocidal? Rereading Lemkin’, in A. Dirk Moses (ed.), *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History* (2008; pbk edn, Oxford & New York, 2010), 83–8.

dynamics of genocide.⁸

As noted in the introduction, the analytical frameworks and conceptual observations that have emerged from this research, aside from enhancing the understanding of genocide in general, are particularly useful to this study because they embrace the complexities, ambiguities, and dynamic nature of radicalisation within imperial settings. Furthermore, much of this research has contextualised discussion of individual cases within a broader historical frame, highlighting important links between imperialism and genocidal violence. Through analysis of cases that cover diverse geographic locations and a range of different imperial contexts, this research has shown that all imperial powers had the potential for outbursts of extreme violence towards the populations they oppressed. However, contrary to Philip Spencer's supposition – that this 'anti-imperial turn' scholarship attempts to provide a 'catch-all' explanation for genocide, this literature has had to grapple with the fact that, while all empires had the potential for extreme violence, very rarely did the physical destruction of groups become an option in the imperial space.⁹ Accordingly, scholars like Moses and Dominik Schaller, in seeking to explain why violence did radicalise in their respective areas of interest, have addressed similar questions to those that form the basis of the analysis of Japanese violence in this thesis.¹⁰ Thus, I look to this research to develop a more general understanding of

⁸ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951; 3rd edn, London, 1967), 123–226; for detailed articles on Arendt and genocide see Richard H. King & Dan Stone (eds.), *Hannah Arendt and the Uses of History: Imperialism, Nation, Race, and Genocide* (2007; pbk edn, New York & Oxford, 2008). Much of this research has explored the roots of the Holocaust as lying in German colonialism, see Thomas Kühne, 'Colonialism and the Holocaust: Continuities, Causations, and Complexities', *Journal of Genocide Research (JGR)*, 15(3) (2013), 339–62 for a review of this literature.

⁹ Philip Spencer, 'Imperialism, Anti-imperialism and the Problem of Genocide, Past and Present', *History*, 98(332), (2013), 606–22.

¹⁰ A. Dirk Moses, 'Genocide and Settler Society in Australian History', in A. Dirk Moses (ed.), *Genocide and Settler Society: Frontier Violence and Stolen Indigenous Children in Australian History* (2004; pbk edn, New York & Oxford, 2007), 3–48; Dominik J. Schaller, 'Genocide and Mass Violence in the "Heart of Darkness": Africa in the Colonial Period', in Donald Bloxham & A. Dirk Moses (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies* (2010; pbk edn, Oxford, 2013), 345–64;

the dynamics at work in producing genocidal violence within the context of imperialism.

Accordingly, the purpose of this chapter is to draw on the theoretical insights of this research in order to dissect the relationship between imperialism, violence, and genocide. By developing an understanding of the process of radicalisation as it emerged in other empires, I build a foundation on which to base my analysis of Japanese violence. Furthermore, in establishing this theoretical base, I can situate the Japanese case within its broader historical frame showing, in subsequent chapters, how the backdrop of imperialism would shape the Japanese leadership's pursuit of empire, and ultimately, the embrace of more radical forms of violence in later years. I begin, then, by exploring the genocidal potential of imperialism, which is used as an umbrella term in this thesis to describe the diverse forms of domination extended over foreign lands, peoples, or resources in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. In particular, I analyse the imperial space as inherently violent (concentrating on physical, rather than structural or cultural violence), as a 'space of exception', and as a space founded on racist, negative constructions of native peoples. In this section, I show how violence was rationalised, accepted, and encouraged as a functional and necessary evil.

After briefly explaining how there were factors that could militate against genocide within imperialism, I then move to an exploration of how the potential for genocide came to be unleashed. First, I identify the important role of ideological factors in facilitating the embrace of more extreme measures. While ideas rarely drove or triggered genocidal actions, they contributed to a context and a mind-set that was conducive to them and without which, genocidal violence would have been inconceivable. Second, I examine the crucial role of resistance as a catalyst for

genocidal responses. I concentrate here on how opposition could cause native peoples to lose their putative right to exist in the imperial space and how it radicalised attitudes as the oppressors came to desire retribution for attacks on their lives and property. I also consider the nature of resistance in the imperial space as an asymmetric conflict characterised by guerrilla tactics which had implications in terms of driving a degeneration of conduct in anti-guerrilla efforts. I highlight, however, that while resistance was the most consistent factor in producing radicalising violence in the imperial space, not all outbreaks of opposition resulted in genocidal practices. Thus, in the final section of this chapter, I explore the role of insecurities in exacerbating the threat of resistance and further fuelling the radicalisation process. I explain how resistance in the imperial space could, at times, become a struggle for survival and show how the geopolitical context of competition and rivalry embedded in the imperial system could raise the stakes and intensify efforts to decisively suppress opposition.

THE POTENTIAL FOR GENOCIDE IN THE IMPERIAL SPACE

To state that violence was intrinsic to imperialism is now axiomatic. Scholars who work on empire have exposed the diversity of ways in which forms of physical, structural, and cultural violence permeated at all levels of the imperial project.¹¹ These studies have reinforced the early insights of Fanon who pointed out that, from the first, encounters between the coloniser and the colonised were ‘marked by violence’.¹² To be sure, sequestering and controlling foreign land, raw materials, markets, and labour – objectives at the heart of much of the ‘new imperialism’ of the nineteenth century – was achieved primarily through the use of force since would-be

¹¹ Samuel Kalman, ‘Introduction: Colonial Violence’, *Historical Reflections*, 36(2) (2010), 1–6.

¹² Fanon, *Wretched*, 28.

colonies were not 'empty spaces'.¹³ The realisation of imperial objectives hinged, as Sven Lindqvist observed, on violent conquest as the ultimate expression of European supremacy and power.¹⁴ Short but ferocious frontier wars characterised the expansion of empire as the oppressors, bent on securing dominance over foreign resources, reacted to the natural inclination of local inhabitants to resist encroachments on their lands, freedoms, and livelihoods. Though usually numerically superior and, in some cases, capable of organising stiff resistance against invading forces, the drastic disparity in military, economic, and political strength saw native populations around the world succumb to imperialism in these early encounters.¹⁵ The violence of the imperial space, however, rarely ended with triumphant conquest.

The success of imperial projects lay in the complete subservience of native populations to the demands of an invariably exploitative and oppressive system. As this was a system imposed through force, violence would become a vital component in the continual reinforcement of its attendant unequal subjugator-subjugated relationship.¹⁶ Capital and corporal punishments were institutionalised as principal mechanisms of population control and a constant affirmation of the supremacy of imperial power. In this way, violence became salutary; it was a necessary and functional evil that brought stability, security, and longevity to the project.¹⁷ In effect, the tools of conquest became the tools of management in the imperial space.

¹³ Frederick Cooper & Ann Laura Stoler, 'Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda', in Frederick Cooper & Ann Laura Stoler (eds.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley, 1997), 1.

¹⁴ Sven Lindqvist, "Exterminate all the Brutes": *One Man's Odyssey into the Heart of Darkness and the Origins of European Genocide*, Joan Tate (trans.) (1992; pbk edn, New York & London, 2007), 47-69.

¹⁵ Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge, 2005), 74.

¹⁶ Jock McCulloch, 'Empire and Violence, 1900-1930', in Philippa Levine (ed.), *Gender and Empire* (2004; pbk edn, Oxford, 2007), 220.

¹⁷ *Ibid*; Thomas, 'Introduction', xxii.

The use of physical violence as a means of ensuring obedience and cooperation was but a microcosm of the larger power struggle at work within imperialism. Indeed, the oppressors and the oppressed inhabited a space of perpetual, though highly disproportional, struggle as both sought to (re)assert their dominance.¹⁸ With violence so deeply embedded in the imperial apparatus, it is of little surprise that this struggle entailed viciousness and brutality on both sides. While the oppressors fought to maintain their power through recourse to ruthless techniques, the oppressed sought to overthrow foreign domination and could be equally ferocious in their efforts. As Fanon and Memmi pointed out, since violence was central to imperial power, the colonised came to accept the view that imperialism could only be supplanted with even greater violence.¹⁹ Ever fearful of the reprisals that might accompany eruptions of local unrest, oppressors, Michael Taussig noted, often acted first utilising violence to terrorise the oppressed into docility and, in doing so, further reinforced a two-way 'culture of terror' in the imperial space.²⁰ Pre-emptive acts could be rationalised as self-defence against perceived or actual threats by the subjugated. Violence then, was not only deemed functional, assisting in the management of native peoples, but it was also understood to be essential to the continued existence of the imperial project. In short, violence accompanied the establishment, management, and preservation of imperial projects, making the imperial space a fundamentally violent space.

SPACES OF EXCEPTION

However, the exploitation and violence of imperialism was in conflict with the ideals and humanitarian principles of post-enlightenment Western civilisation. Rights that

¹⁸ Raymond Evans, "'Crime without a Name': Colonialism and the case for 'Indigenocide'", in Moses, *Empire*, 140.

¹⁹ Fanon, *Wretched*, 48; Memmi, *Colonizer*, 151.

²⁰ Michael Taussig, 'Culture of Terror - Space of Death: Roger Casement's Putumayo Report and the Explanation of Torture', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 26(3) (1984), 467-97.

were deemed universal, self-evident truths by the nineteenth century were not extended to native populations.²¹ To do so would have made the cruelties and brutalities of imperialism unthinkable. The geographic separation between the metropolis and the imperial space became crucial to easing inherent tensions between the rights, liberties, and moralities that were guaranteed in the metropole and the realities of the treatment of native populations in the colonies. Lines were drawn, allowing for practices that were in contravention of basic rights and liberties in one space, while prohibiting them in the other.²² For instance, while European powers worked to 'humanise' warfare through prohibiting certain tactics, such as the use of poison gas or dum-dum bullets, there was little compunction about using these 'inhumane' practices in a colonial context.²³ Essentially, imperial projects became de facto 'spaces of exception' where the moral and legal constraints of the metropolis were suspended and where there was a greater potential for more 'exceptional' and abhorrent behaviours.²⁴

In these spaces, native populations were excluded from the 'universe of moral obligation'.²⁵ They were stripped of their humanity and, Abdelmajid Hannoum explained, relegated to 'a space of non-civilisation and of no right and no freedom.'²⁶ In other words, normal checks on violence were absent in a space where force, intimidation, and terror were acceptable, if not principal, means of population control. This also meant that institutions which, in the metropolis, would normally uphold basic rights and deter violent acts, such as courts, operated instead in the

²¹ Memmi, *Colonizer*, 85.

²² Lorenzo Veracini, 'Colonialism and Genocides: Notes for the Analysis of a Settler Archive', in Moses, *Empire*, 155.

²³ Michael Howard, 'Constraints on Warfare', in Michael Howard, George J. Andreopoulos, & Mark R. Shulman (eds.), *The Laws of War: Constraints on Warfare in the Western World* (New Haven, 1994), 5.

²⁴ The use of 'exception' in this way is based on Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben's concept of the 'state of exception'. See Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, Kevin Attell (trans.) (Chicago & London, 2005).

²⁵ Alison Palmer, 'Colonial and Modern Genocide: Explanations and Categories', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 21(1) (1998), 91.

²⁶ Abdelmajid Hannoum, *Violent Modernity: France in Algeria* (Cambridge, MA, 2010), 9.

reinforcement of exploitation and violence. As Jock McCulloch explained, in the rare instances in which oppressors were held accountable for their violence, the judicial process was 'stage-managed', jurors and judges were incompetent, the testimony of native people was often ignored, and doctors might be brought in to 'prove' that their deaths were not the result of multiple or excessive beatings but a consequence of their 'paper thin skull' or a 'fragile spleen' which ruptured at the slightest blow.²⁷ In imperial projects then, law became 'an instrument of violence' operating to preserve inequality and oppression.²⁸ What is more, the failure of justice in the imperial space contributed to the growing problem of excessive, sport-like atrocities because, as Elizabeth Kolsky discerned of perpetrators in British India, 'they knew they could get away with it.'²⁹ Indeed, Oxford University Professor, Herman Merivale, in a series of lectures delivered between 1839 and 1841, condemned the widespread destruction of native populations which he blamed on 'the uncontrolled violence of individuals and colonial authorities, followed by tardy attempts on the part of governments to repair the acknowledged crime.'³⁰ In effect, as Achille Mbembe summarised in his discussion of 'necropolitics' (an inversion of Michel Foucault's 'biopolitics' which he defined as the 'subjugation of life to the power of death'), colonies were 'the location par excellence where the controls and guarantees of judicial order can be suspended—the zone where the violence of the state of exception is deemed to operate in the service of "civilization."³¹

²⁷ McCulloch, 'Empire and Violence', 230–3.

²⁸ Laura Kunreuther, "'Pacification of the Primitive': The Problem of Colonial Violence', *Philosophia Africana*, 9(2) (2006), 75.

²⁹ Elizabeth Kolsky, *Colonial Justice in British India: White Violence and the Rule of Law* (Cambridge, 2010), 23; see also Benjamin Madley, 'Tactics of Nineteenth-Century Colonial Massacre: Tasmania, California and Beyond', in Philip G. Dwyer & Lyndall Ryan (eds.), *Theatres of Violence: Massacre, Mass Killing and Atrocity throughout History* (2012; pbk edn, New York & Oxford, 2015), 122–3.

³⁰ Herman Merivale, *Lectures on Colonization and Colonies* (London, 1842), 153.

³¹ Achille Mbembe, 'Necropolitics', *Public Culture*, 15(1) (2003), 23, 39.

RACIALIZED SPACES

However, the construction of spaces of exception which stripped peoples of their rights and allowed for otherwise unacceptable behaviours could not have been possible without, as Arendt noted, drawing on discourses about 'race' and 'civilisation'.³² Nineteenth-century race-thinking, as a corollary to imperialism, provided an abundant and wide-ranging set of ideas which could be mobilised in the justification of foreign domination and imperial violence. Central to such justifications were, what Memmi described as, 'mythical portraits of the colonized'. These 'mythical portraits' were fluid and usually contradictory since they were constantly adapted and reconceptualised according to the needs of the imperial project. In one breath, native populations could be child-like and helpless, in need of guidance and civilisation; in another they could be brutes or savages, incapable of understanding anything but force.³³ What was consistent, however, was that native populations were described in diverse, but consistently negative, racist ways which, if not completely dehumanising them, certainly placed them, as Norbert Finzsch has suggested, on the 'very bottom rung of humanity'.³⁴ Referred to as 'savage', 'barbaric', 'animal-like', and 'uncivilised'; native populations were discursively constructed as the very antithesis of their supposedly civilised oppressors.³⁵

Convinced of their superiority as the pinnacle of the current stage of human evolution, colonisers tapped into metanarratives of progress and modernity to justify their dominion over putatively backwards, inferior peoples deemed incapable of self-

³² Arendt, *Origins*, 183–5.

³³ Memmi, *Colonizer*, 79–89.

³⁴ Norbert Finzsch, "'It is scarcely possible to conceive that human beings could be so hideous and loathsome": Discourses of Genocide in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century America and Australia', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 39(2) (2006), 100.

³⁵ Alexander Laban Hinton, 'The Dark Side of Modernity: Toward an Anthropology of Genocide', in Alexander Laban Hinton (ed.), *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide* (Berkeley, 2002), 8.

government and in need of external guidance.³⁶ For instance, ardent supporters of empire in the United States, such as Albert Beveridge, assured those opposed to annexation of the Philippines following victory over Spain in the Spanish-American War of 1898 that, '[t]he rule of liberty ... applies only to those capable of self-government.'³⁷ In stripping native populations of basic human rights, imperialists could rationalise foreign domination as a benign, indeed benevolent, endeavour that would bring the 'blessings' of civilisation to lesser peoples. The use of violence in such efforts was permitted since it assisted in the 'greater good' of the 'civilising mission'.³⁸ As such, the civilisation-barbarism dichotomy, well-established in the imperial space, allowed for the celebration of violence as representing progress in the service of the so-called 'white man's burden'. Such was exemplified by the historical writer Edgar Sanderson who described the British victory in the 'half-hour' battle of Atbara against Sudanese rebels in 1898 as 'a grand feat of arms; a hurricane of war which had blown a great Dervish army away in annihilation; a deadly blow dealt at barbarism; a triumph gained for humanity and civilisation.'³⁹

Through characterising native populations as inhabiting the lowest place on a presupposed, biologically-determined, and thus, immutable hierarchy of races, violence was more directly legitimised as essential, warranted even, in the face of peoples who, divested of their humanity, were believed to be incapable of understanding anything but force. For instance, in his famous treatise on colonial warfare, *Small Wars*, first published in 1896, British Colonel Charles Callwell advised that 'uncivilized races attribute leniency to timidity' and warned that 'savages ...

³⁶ Roxanne Lynn Doty, *Imperial Encounters: The Politics of Representation in North-South Relations* (Minneapolis, 1996), 36-7.

³⁷ Albert Beveridge, *The March of the Flag* (16 September 1868), available at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1898beveridge.html> (Accessed February 2016).

³⁸ Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of the Nation State, Volume II: The Rise of the West and the Coming of Genocide* (2005; pbk edn, London & New York, 2013), 21.

³⁹ Edgar Sanderson, *Africa in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1898), 205.

must be thoroughly brought to book and cowed or they will rise again.’⁴⁰ Responsibility for imperial violence was placed squarely on the native populations who, in their propensity to resist the spread of civilisation, and because of their inherent and inexorable inferiority, forced their oppressors to resort to barbaric methods. In fact, the problem of excessive or sport-like imperial violence, condemned by anti-imperialists and damaging to the prestige of imperial projects, could also be excused on account of colonists ‘going native’.⁴¹ As Taussig has pointed out, the ‘wild’ and ‘savage’ attributes of native populations were often seen as a reflection of the spaces in which they inhabited.⁴² More importantly, such characteristics were believed to be infectious and violence by colonists was a manifestation of their having been consumed by the savagery and barbarism of the imperial space.⁴³ As Roxanne Doty remarked, the racialisation of the imperial space allowed oppressors to continue to portray themselves as superior, civilised peoples while simultaneously engaging in ruthless, cruel practices which were in conflict with the very principles and rights of the metropolis.⁴⁴

Imperialism, then, was intrinsically violent. Oppressors relied on force, exploitation, terror, and intimidation for the continued existence and success of their projects. The racialization of the imperial space justified the use of violence in the preservation of the unequal subjugator-subjugated relationship which was fundamental to the power dynamics of foreign domination. Geographically, as well as morally and legally, separated from the metropolis, normal constraints were not in place and behaviour was less restricted, making the imperial space one of exception and, most importantly, of possibility for the embrace of more extreme, genocidal

⁴⁰ Charles E. Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice* (1896; 3rd edn, London, 1906), 148.

⁴¹ Kolsky, *Colonial Justice*, 4-5.

⁴² Taussig, ‘Cultures of Terror’, 482-4.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 483.

⁴⁴ Doty, *Imperial Encounters*, 41.

violence. Whilst not inherently genocidal, there was, nevertheless, an underlying potential for group destruction within imperialism.

UNLEASHING THE GENOCIDAL POTENTIAL OF IMPERIALISM

Despite the potential for genocide within the imperial space, such extremes were uncommon. As Sartre reflected, a paradox of the imperial system was that, while conducive to violence as fundamental to its establishment and maintenance, there were constraints on genocide since the 'liquidation' of local populations was 'not possible without at the same time eliminating the colonial economy and the colonial system.'⁴⁵ Native peoples, as a source of cheap labour, vast markets, and in some cases revenue (through taxation), were important to the capitalist foundations which, though manifesting in diverse forms of rule, was an important driving force for nineteenth-century imperialism.⁴⁶ While competition over land and resources in the imperial space might intensify and allow the embrace of genocidal violence as a means of triumphing in this struggle, many recognised that extermination policies could also have dire economic consequences.⁴⁷

Furthermore, genocidal violence could undermine the prestige of imperial projects and have serious political repercussions in the metropolis. Vocal criticism of British 'reprisals, devastation, and extermination' during the Second Boer War (1899–1902), for example, shifted public opinion against the war and contributed to the decisive defeat of the Conservative Party in 1906.⁴⁸ Extreme violence might also be used by anti-imperialists to challenge the legitimacy of foreign domination as was the case in America where the extremes of anti-guerrilla efforts during the

⁴⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, 'On Genocide', *Ramparts* (February 1968), 38–9.

⁴⁶ Patrick Wolfe, 'Land, Labor, and Difference: Elementary Structures of Race', *American Historical Review*, 106(3), (2001), 866–905; Mann, *Dark Side*, 70–3.

⁴⁷ Levene, *Rise of the West*, 241.

⁴⁸ See for example, 'Mr. Frederic Harrison on War and Liberalism', *Manchester Guardian* (31 December 1900); Levene, *Rise of the West*, 269–70.

Philippine-American War (1899–1902) – which featured the exceptional and notorious case of General Jacob Smith ordering everyone over the age of ten killed on Samar Island following attacks on US soldiers in September 1901 – were used to bolster arguments that imperialism was against American ideals.⁴⁹ Even worse was international criticism which could be disastrous to the success of imperial projects.⁵⁰ King Leopold II had been forced, under international pressure, to relinquish the Congo Free State as his private possession after the cruelties and barbarities of his rule were publicised through the writings of Joseph Conrad, British diplomat Roger Casement, and George Washington Williams, a veteran of the American Civil War.⁵¹ Indeed, violent extremes could be used as justification for divesting imperial powers of their colonial possessions. After the First World War, for instance, the British used the German extermination campaign during the Herero Wars (1904–8) to validate the institution of British rule and to ‘scuttle any attempt by Germany to retain their control over Namibia.’⁵² There could be serious domestic and international repercussions associated with the use of genocidal violence in the imperial space which generally militated against adopting such extreme measures. However, as recent scholarship has shown, intentionally group-destructive violence, though infrequent, was unleashed in some imperial projects. When this occurred, it usually involved a complex process of radicalisation which saw the violence of the imperial space intensify as the destruction of native populations became an acceptable and, for some, attractive prospect. In the subsequent analysis, I examine what the current

⁴⁹ See for example, *Secretary Root's Record: "Marked Severities" in Philippine Warfare* (Boston, 1902); Stuart C. Miller, *"Benevolent Assimilation": The American Conquest of the Philippines, 1899–1903* (New Haven, 1982), 220; Paul A. Kramer, *Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill, 2006), 144–6.

⁵⁰ Cooper & Stoler, ‘Between Metropole and Colony’, 31.

⁵¹ See documents from those men in Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness: Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Contexts, Criticism*, Paul B. Armstrong (ed.) (1963; 4th edn, New York, 2006).

⁵² Jeremy Silvester & Jan-Bart Gewald (eds.), *Words Cannot Be Found, German Colonial Rule in Namibia: An annotated Reprint of the 1918 Blue Book* (Leiden, 2003), xix.

literature suggests are three central, interconnected factors which, aside from the unique contexts of each case, influenced this radicalisation process.

LAYING FOUNDATIONS: IMPERIAL IDEOLOGIES AND THE EMBRACE OF GENOCIDAL VIOLENCE

Ideological factors are typically seen to lie at the root of genocide. In fact, Ben Kiernan has argued that, while all genocides had their own unique historical contexts, there were often shared ideological features in the perpetrator mentality.⁵³ The work of comparative scholars, like Kiernan, in addition to Eric Weitz and Jacques Sémelin, have identified the importance of ideologies in classifying difference, constructing group identities, mobilising support for genocidal enterprises, and most importantly, in legitimising genocide.⁵⁴ In short, ideological factors are crucial to laying the foundations for an embrace of genocidal violence. Within the imperial space, as already touched on, ideas about 'race' and 'civilisation' permitted the dehumanisation and moral exclusion necessary to justifying foreign domination. Furthermore, the rationalising ideologies of imperialism allowed for and encouraged violence against peoples perceived to be inhuman and uncivilised. While these factors would also be crucial to the acceptance of more extreme measures, there were some specific ideological aspects of imperialism that further facilitated the embrace of genocide.

'US AND THEM'

Genocide, as a type of violence that targets individuals on the basis of their (perceived) group membership, is conditioned by a process of 'othering' that excludes, differentiates, and ultimately, makes warranting the use of exterminatory

⁵³ Ben Kiernan, *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur* (New Haven, 2007), 21–33.

⁵⁴ Eric D. Weitz, *A Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and Nation* (Princeton, 2003), 21–2; Jacques Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy: The Political Uses of Massacre and Genocide*, Cynthia Schoch (trans.) (2005; pbk Eng. edn, London, 2013), 21–41.

violence.⁵⁵ As scholars, such as Aristotle Kallis, have shown, perceptions of 'otherness' are central to the embrace of genocidal violence because, when imbued with fears, hatreds, and prejudices, the excluded 'other' can come to be seen as necessitating elimination.⁵⁶ This process also lends itself to group violence because it divests peoples of their individuality and imposes homogenous, usually negative, group identities which, as might be expected, can lead to the targeting of whole groups. For example, in his reflections on the role of nationalism in constructions of the 'other', Ryszard Kapuściński observed that 'for the nationalist the person of the Other has just one single feature - national affiliation. It does not matter if someone is young or old, clever or stupid, good or bad - the only thing that counts is whether he or she is Armenian or Turkish, British or Irish, Moroccan or Algerian.'⁵⁷ This insight is applicable to the imperial space where individuals, as Memmi wrote, 'drown in an anonymous collectivity', referred to as 'they' and 'them' rather than 'he' or 'she'.⁵⁸ Aside from the imposition of homogenising group identities, the 'us' and 'them' binary that typically resulted from the construction of the 'other' was also more clearly demarcated in the imperial space where differences were drawn along racial lines. The process of 'othering' in the imperial space, then, established a rigid 'us' and 'them' mentality, centred on irreconcilable differences, which established some of the necessary preconditions for extreme, group-destructive violence.

'VANISHING RACES'

A further facilitating factor in the embrace of genocidal violence in the imperial space

⁵⁵ Hinton, 'Dark Side', 6.

⁵⁶ Aristotle Kallis, *Genocide and Fascism: The Eliminationist Drive in Fascist Europe* (New York & London, 2009), 23-47; Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 41-51.

⁵⁷ Ryszard Kapuściński, *The Other*, Antonia Lloyd-Jones (trans.) (2006; Eng. edn, London & New York, 2008), 55.

⁵⁸ Memmi, *Colonizer*, 85.

was the trope of 'vanishing races' in nineteenth-century discourses.⁵⁹ The drastic demographic declines of native populations throughout the world did not escape attention. Neither did their apparent connection to imperialism. For instance, the British politician John Arthur Roebuck, in his 1849 treatise, *The Colonies of England*, acknowledged that many Europeans passed over the fact that 'when the European comes into contact with any other type of man, that other type disappears.'⁶⁰ While some, like Merivale, recognised the active role of imperialists in bringing about these declines, for the most part, the destruction of native populations was described as a natural consequence of encounters with progress and civilisation.⁶¹ The ethnologist, James Cowles Prichard, for example, accepted that the arrival of Europeans was the 'harbinger of extermination to the native tribes' and, reflecting his views on the inevitability of this, called upon his peers to begin recording the cultures of these peoples before they disappeared.⁶² In this way, genocide could be regarded, as Lindqvist noted, as an 'inevitable by-product of progress.'⁶³ Indeed, Reverend John George Wood, in his survey, *Uncivilised Races of Men in All Countries of the World*, was convinced of the blamelessness of the white races for, he argued, 'the inferior must always make way for the superior.' As such, extinction 'ought not to be attributed to the white man, who comes to take the place which the savage has practically vacated.'⁶⁴ Aside from removing any sense of responsibility for the destruction of peoples who were depicted as victims of the passive forces of progress and evolution,

⁵⁹ Elazar Barkan, 'Genocides of Indigenous Peoples: Rhetoric of Human Rights', in Robert Gellately & Ben Kiernan (eds.), *The Specter of Genocide Studies: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, 2003), 119–20; for a more detailed treatment of these discourses see Patrick Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800–1930* (Ithaca, 2003).

⁶⁰ John A. Roebuck, *The Colonies of England: A Plan for the Government of Some Portion of our Colonial Possessions* (London, 1849), 138.

⁶¹ Merivale, *Lectures*, 150–82.

⁶² James C. Prichard, 'On the Extinction of Human Races', *Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal*, 28 (1839), 169–70

⁶³ Lindqvist, "Exterminate", 123.

⁶⁴ John George Wood, *The Uncivilized Races of Men in All Countries of the World*, Volume II (Hartford, 1879), 790–1.

such ideas could, as Benjamin Madley pointed out, be mobilised in support of genocidal methods which would simply accelerate a predetermined outcome.⁶⁵ In justifying his orders for the extermination of the Herero in 1904, for example, General Lothar von Trotha advised that 'at the outset we cannot do without the natives. But they finally have to melt away. Where the climate allows the white man to work, philanthropic views cannot banish Darwin's law of "Survival of the Fittest"'.⁶⁶

'SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST'

As this example suggests, this 'vanishing races' rhetoric was given added legitimacy with the emergence of evolutionary theories in the mid-nineteenth century. Most famously articulated by Charles Darwin, ideas about natural selection, or to use Herbert Spencer's popularised phrase, 'survival of the fittest', reinforced the belief that the extinction of native populations was part of a natural process. Extinction, according to Darwin, went 'hand in hand' with natural selection as 'parent-forms' of a species gave way to their improved offspring.⁶⁷ In a later work, *Descent of Man*, Darwin further explained the implications of his theory for human interaction when he wrote that 'extinction follows chiefly from the competition of tribe with tribe, and race with race ... When civilised nations come into contact with barbarians the struggle is short, except where a deadly climate gives its aid to the native race.'⁶⁸ These ideas, which circulated widely and informed various theories at this time, made the extermination of native populations less of a concern. As Lindqvist bluntly put it, 'after Darwin, it became acceptable to shrug your shoulders to genocide.'⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Barkan, 'Genocides of Indigenous Peoples', 120; Benjamin Madley, 'Pattern of Frontier Genocide 1803-1910: The Aboriginal Tasmanians, the Yuki of California, and the Herero of Namibia', *JGR*, 6(2) (2004), 169.

⁶⁶ Quoted in Schaller, 'Genocide and Mass Violence', 355.

⁶⁷ Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection: or, the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (1859; later edn, New York, 1882), 134.

⁶⁸ Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* (1871; later edn, New York, 1875), 182.

⁶⁹ Lindqvist, "Exterminate", 130.

Furthermore, characterising this as a law of nature, 'survival of the fittest' gave legitimacy to the belief that it was natural, indeed, right that those with more power displaced others.⁷⁰ James Barnard, Vice-President of the Royal Society of Tasmania, speaking in 1890 of the extinction of the Tasmanian aborigines, for instance, declared that: '[i]t has become an axiom that, following the law of evolution and survival of the fittest, the inferior races of mankind must give place to the highest type of man'.⁷¹ As implied, extreme violence could be justified since it was not only a predestined and natural outcome, but was in the service of the betterment of the species. Writing on the disappearance of the 'savage' before civilisation as 'nature's method', Henry Keylock Rusden, offered the following rationalisation for extermination of aboriginal peoples in Australia in 1876:

survival of the fittest means that might – wisely used – is right. And thus we invoke and remorselessly fulfil the inexorable law of natural selection (or of demand and supply), when exterminating the inferior Australian and Maori races ... The world is better for it; and would be incalculably better still, were we loyally to accept the lesson thus taught by nature, and consistently apply the same principle to our conventional practice.⁷²

In effect, evolutionary theories could be mobilised in support of a kind of salutary genocide within the imperial space. Assured of their superiority over 'primitive' peoples, imperialists' perceptions of extermination as a natural element of human progress, made genocidal violence more acceptable and eased the leap to such extreme measures.

Thus, in addition to the dehumanisation, moral exclusion, and negative construction of native populations as inferior, uncivilised savages, the us and them dichotomy, the ideas about the inevitability and naturalness of the extinction of

⁷⁰ Tony Barta, 'Mr Darwin's Shooters: On Natural Selection and the Naturalizing of Genocide', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 39(2) (2005), 135; see also David Maybury-Lewis, 'Genocide against Indigenous Peoples', in Hinton, *Annihilating Difference*, 45.

⁷¹ James Barnard, 'Aborigines of Tasmania', *Report on the Second Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science* (Melbourne, 1890), 597.

⁷² Henry Keylock Rusden, 'Labour and Capital', *The Melbourne Review*, Vol. I (Melbourne, 1876), 82.

native populations, and the putative right of 'superior races' to supplant others in the evolutionary struggle for survival, facilitated genocidal violence as morally acceptable. Nevertheless, as a number of scholars have pointed out, while ideological factors created contexts conducive to the embrace of more extreme measures, ideology rarely, if ever, triggered the radicalisation process.⁷³ More often, the catalyst for an escalation of violence in the imperial space proved to be outbursts of native resistance which, enabled by the aforementioned ideological factors, could result in vicious and extreme responses from oppressors.

TRIGGERING THE RADICALISATION PROCESS: NATIVE RESISTANCE AND EXTREME RESPONSES

The role of uprisings and rebellions in stimulating the drive towards the physical destruction of native populations was originally discerned by Lemkin during research for his unfinished manuscript.⁷⁴ Sartre's observations regarding extreme conduct in wars for independence in Algeria and Vietnam also saw connections between resistance and genocidal violence, which he argued, was employed as a military strategy when oppressors faced opposition to their objectives.⁷⁵ More recent scholarship has confirmed such assertions. Scholars working on the Herero genocide, like Schaller, pointed out that it had been a massive revolt by the Herero that had triggered the 'bloody violence' of the colonists.⁷⁶ Others working on genocide in Australia, such as Moses, have similarly shown that the colonial experience was punctuated by 'genocidal moments' triggered by attacks and uprisings from the

⁷³ Madley, 'Pattern of Frontier Genocide', 170; Martin Shaw, *What is Genocide?* (2007; 2nd edn, London, 2015), 177-8; Levene, *Rise of the West*, 241.

⁷⁴ Michael A. McDonnell & A. Dirk Moses, 'Raphael Lemkin as Historian of Genocide in the Americas', *JGR*, 7(4) (2005), 506.

⁷⁵ Sartre, 'On Genocide', 39.

⁷⁶ Dominik J. Schaller, 'From Conquest to Genocide: Colonial Rule in German South West Africa and East Africa', in Moses, *Empire*, 297.

aboriginal peoples.⁷⁷ While resistance often resulted in violent responses as an inherent part of maintaining imperialism, there are a number of ways in which it could trigger the radicalisation of that violence leading to genocidal responses.

LOSING THE RIGHT TO EXIST

Resistance eased the leap to more extreme violence because it could obviate some of the practical constraints on such measures. Since native populations were stripped of their rights as inferior, if not inhuman, beings, their continued right to exist in the imperial space after conquest typically hinged on their perceived utility or willingness to acquiesce to the demands of imperialism. As Weitz has summarised, nineteenth-century race-thinking, given added legitimacy through claims to a scientific basis, explained the existence of inferior races in terms that equated their existence to serving those deemed superior.⁷⁸ For instance, describing German views of the Herero in Southwest Africa, Missionary Elger observed that 'the settler holds that the native has a right to exist only in so far as he is useful to the white man.'⁷⁹ Such was confirmed by Paul Rohrbach, German Settlement Commissioner, who wrote in 1907 that 'for a people, as for an individual, an existence appears to be justified in the degree that it is useful for general development.'⁸⁰ The damage caused by native resistance and the costs involved in suppressing it called into question the perceived utility or value of the continued existence of unruly populations in the imperial space. More importantly, it added to the conviction that these were incurably savage peoples and legitimised their removal as obstructions, obstacles, and nuisances. For example, unrelenting attacks by Native American tribes in California in the 1850s led Governor John Bigler to the conclusion that 'Whites and

⁷⁷ Moses, 'Genocide and Settler Society', 32-5.

⁷⁸ Weitz, *Century*, 45.

⁷⁹ Cited in Horst Drechsler, *"Let us Die Fighting": The Struggle of the Herero and Nama against German Imperialism (1884-1915)* (1966; Eng. edn, London, 1980), 349.

⁸⁰ Cited in Levene, *Rise of the West*, 240.

Indians cannot live in close proximity in peace' and resulted in an ominous request to the army for their removal.⁸¹ Similarly, Moses noted that, in Australia, persistent native resistance to, and the commensurate failure of, civilising projects was a crucial factor in the escalation of violence for it changed optimism that 'savages' could be civilised into confirmation that they were 'irredeemably inferior, indeed vermin that should be exterminated.'⁸² In effect, through resistance, native peoples came to be perceived as more trouble than their worth, and thus, could lose their right to exist in the imperial space. Social psychologists, Daniel Bar-Tal and Philip Hammack, have observed a similar phenomenon, called delegitimisation, during intergroup conflicts. Delegitimisation is described as a form of social categorisation which, like moral exclusion and dehumanisation, makes certain groups 'deserving of maltreatment' as they come to be viewed as having violated basic human norms or values.⁸³ Such was evident in the imperial space where native populations were delegitimised as a result of their resistance. For example, after the massive Herero revolt in 1904, von Trotha declared that, having 'murdered and stolen [and] ... cut off the ears, noses and other body-parts of wounded soldiers', the Herero were 'no longer German subjects' and were encouraged to leave the country for 'within the German borders every Herero, with or without a gun, with or without cattle, will be shot.'⁸⁴ In short, resistance made native populations more vulnerable to, if not warranting of, genocidal violence in the imperial space.

⁸¹ Mann, *Dark Side*, 91.

⁸² Moses, 'Antipodean Genocide', 96.

⁸³ Daniel Bar-Tal & Philip L. Hammack, 'Conflict, Delegitimisation, and Violence', in Linda R. Tropp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Intergroup Conflict* (Oxford, 2012), 3.

⁸⁴ Quoted in Jan-Bart Gewald, 'The Great General of the Kaiser', *Botswana Notes and Records*, 26 (1994), 68.

RETRIBUTION AND RETALIATION

A further element in triggering genocidal violence lay in the radicalisation of attitudes and the desire for retribution that so often accompanied the shock of native resistance. As mentioned, the imperial space was one in which physical violence was already a principal component of efforts to pre-empt, deter, and suppress opposition from local populations. Since the main object of these campaigns, as explained by Callwell, was to demonstrate the might of the imperial power and to punish those who had taken up arms, exemplary and collective measures became well-established tactics.⁸⁵ An American soldier documented such techniques as used in the course of suppression of Filipino resistance:

We make everyone get into his house by seven p.m., and we only tell a man once. If he refuses we shoot him. We killed over 300 natives the first night. They tried to set the town on fire. If they fire a shot from a house we burn the house down and every house near it, and shoot the natives, so they are pretty quiet in town now.⁸⁶

While Callwell had stressed that there was a 'limit to the amount of licence in destruction which [was] expedient', punitive campaigns regularly devolved into extreme, retributive violence.⁸⁷

Indeed, since uprisings usually involved attacks on colonists and their families, they often exacerbated the hatreds and fears attendant to the racialized imperial space which, in turn, fuelled vicious reprisals. Frederick Selous, a well-known British explorer who participated in the First Matabele War in Zimbabwe in 1893, for example, explained that the murder of women and children during the first days of the uprising 'had excited a desire for vengeance, which could only be satisfied by a personal and active participation in the killing of the murderers.'

⁸⁵ Callwell, *Small Wars*, 41.

⁸⁶ Cited in Miller, "*Benevolent Assimilation*", 89.

⁸⁷ Callwell, *Small Wars*, 41.

Aware of anti-imperial critiques in Britain, Selous further explained that such sentiments:

can only be understood by those Europeans who have lived through a native rising, in which women and children of their race have been barbarously murdered by savages; by beings whom, in their hearts, they despise; as rightly or wrongly they consider that they belong to a lower type of human family than themselves ... the murder of white women and children, by natives, seems to be to the colonist not merely a crime, but a sacrilege, and calls forth all the ferocity of the more civilised race.⁸⁸

As this example reveals, the civilisation-barbarism dialectic that characterised the imperial space further intensified desires for retribution and, driven by such ideas, punitive violence could get out of hand as it became not simply enough to suppress rebellion, but to make the natives pay ten-fold for their insolence in attacking their 'superiors'. According to Lord Edmund Ironside, a British military officer who witnessed the atrocities against the Herero while spying on German forces in Southwest Africa during 1904, German rage at the death of white families 'would be satisfied with nothing less than the annihilation of all coloured men.'⁸⁹ During the first weeks of rebellion in February, Elger confirmed that: 'the Germans are consumed with inexpiable hatred and a terrible thirst for revenge ... All you hear these days is "make a clean sweep, hang them, shoot them to the last man, give no quarter"'.⁹⁰ Alexander Hinton's observation that revenge during the Cambodian genocide (1975-78) became 'a head for an eye', then, holds true for the imperial context as disproportional, collective punishments were meted out.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Frederick Courteney Selous, *Sunshine and Storm in Rhodesia* (1893; 2nd edn, London, 1896), 30.

⁸⁹ Cited in V. G. Kiernan, *European Empires from Conquest to Collapse, 1815-1960* (Bath, 1982), 166.

⁹⁰ Cited in Jeremy Sarkin, *Germany's Genocide of the Herero: Kaiser Wilhelm II, His General, His Settlers, His Soldiers* (Cape Town, 2011), 132.

⁹¹ Alexander Laban Hinton, 'Oppression and Vengeance in the Cambodian Genocide', in Adam Jones & Nicholas A. Robins (eds.), *Genocides by the Oppressed: Subaltern Genocide in Theory and Practice* (Bloomington, 2009), 86.

Aside from stimulating extreme retributive violence among those at a local level, anti-colonial revolts could also radicalise the attitudes of more moderate elements in the metropolises further diminishing constraints on genocide. Continued resistance to the expansion of the American frontier had radicalised the attitude of President Thomas Jefferson, who commented of the tribes that stood in their way that, 'nothing is more desirable than total suppression of their savage insolence and cruelties' and that their 'ferocious barbarities justified extermination'.⁹² As intimated, the nature of native resistance was an important contributing factor in triggering the radicalisation of attitudes and the desires for retribution in the imperial space.

FIGHTING SAVAGES

In their efforts to resist imperialism, native populations had limited chance of victory using conventional tactics due to the significant disparity of military power between them and their oppressors. As such, rebellions often took the form of asymmetric conflicts during which unconventional, guerrilla tactics were employed. Typically avoiding direct engagements, rebels would remain mobile staging hit-and-run attacks while then disappearing among civilians and relying on local communities for shelter and supplies. Studies of guerrilla warfare have shown that such tactics proved exceptionally difficult to combat using conventional battle tactics.⁹³ Callwell explained that suppression of resistance which involved guerrilla tactics was 'troublesome' bringing about 'protracted, toilsome warfare' and was 'always most trying to the troops.'⁹⁴ As Madley noted, guerrilla-style tactics also 'set the stage' for genocidal violence since irregular warfare was likened to criminal

⁹² Cited in Mann, *Dark Side*, 92.

⁹³ George J. Andreopoulos, 'The Age of National Liberation Movements', in Howard et al., *Laws of War*, 195; Benjamin Valentino, Paul Huth, & Dylan Balch-Lindsay, 'Draining the Sea: Mass Killing and Guerrilla Warfare', *International Organization*, 58(2) (2004), 375–407.

⁹⁴ Callwell, *Small Wars*, 26–32.

behaviours and prevented the swift suppression of resistance.⁹⁵ What is more, the nature of this type of warfare served to reinforce the belief in native peoples as uncivilised savages, reduced moral constraints, and as such, further facilitated the embrace of extreme measures. In suppressing the Herero, for instance, one German soldier had recommended poisoning the water wells since ‘we are not fighting against an enemy respecting the rules of fairness but savages.’⁹⁶

As a consequence, conflicts in the imperial space, as Schaller observed, often saw a degeneration of normal conduct since conventional battle tactics were often useless in the face of an enemy that could neither be pinned down nor easily identified.⁹⁷ Frustrated and suffering humiliation at the continued failure to suppress guerrilla resistance, regular armies resorted to lashing out at civilian populations. Indeed, as scholars have shown, guerrilla warfare lent itself to attacks on civilian populations as the primary support bases of the rebels.⁹⁸ In December 1900, for instance, General Douglas MacArthur issued a proclamation to the Filipino population warning that non-combatants would be punished if they should offer support for the guerrillas.⁹⁹ Under such circumstances boundaries between combatants and non-combatants were blurred, taboos were broken, and methods of suppression became increasingly systematic and indiscriminate as civilian lives and livelihoods became military targets. Essentially, the very nature of native resistance as involving guerrilla warfare could ease the leap to genocidal measures and trigger the radicalisation process as oppressors resorted to extremes in suppressing it.

⁹⁵ Madley, ‘Pattern of Frontier Genocide’, 173.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Schaller, ‘Genocide and Mass Violence’, 356–60.

⁹⁸ Benjamin Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the 20th Century* (Ithaca, 2004), 200; Christian Gerlach, *Extremely Violent Societies: Mass Violence in the Twentieth Century World* (Cambridge, 2010), 177.

⁹⁹ MacArthur’s Proclamation (20 December 1900), in *Annual Reports of the War Department* (Washington, 1901), Vol. 1, Part 4, 91–3.

Thus, there were a number of ways in which resistance could trigger the radicalisation of violence in the imperial space. However, as Mark Levene has pointed out, while the 'bitter pill of resistance' could serve to ignite the radicalisation process, the frequency of revolts and rebellions in comparison to the infrequency of genocidal violence is suggestive of a more complex relationship.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, while resistance could spark extreme responses, there was something further at work in bridging the moral gulf between legitimate suppression of resistance and genocidal actions, actions which might also incite ire and condemnation in the metropolis and among other imperial powers.

US AND THEM BECOMES US OR THEM: INSECURITIES AND THE ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE

Genocide is not typically the preserve of the strong. The role of threat, loss, paranoia, trauma, fear, essentially, the role of insecurities as pre-conditions for extreme violence, has become a pillar of genocide scholarship. Comparative studies, like those of Manus Midlarsky and Sémelin, have shown how security imperatives can enable the leap to genocide as perpetrators embrace extreme methods to mitigate perceived threats or compensate for losses.¹⁰¹ Fears and paranoias fuel hatreds, prejudices, and exacerbate difference, facilitating the transition of particular 'out-groups' into 'dangerous others' that must be eliminated.¹⁰² Hannoum has suggested that there has been 'no massacre or genocide - small or large, organised or spontaneous - that was not preceded by a discourse in which the other is created as a dangerous enemy and a threat to "our" own existence.'¹⁰³ Indeed, when threats and fears come to be viewed as existential in nature, genocide can become an attractive

¹⁰⁰ Levene, *Rise of the West*, 249.

¹⁰¹ Manus I. Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap: Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 2005), 4, 113-4; Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 42-8.

¹⁰² Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 41-51; Kallis, *Genocide and Fascism*, 24-30.

¹⁰³ Hannoum, *Violent Modernity*, 9-10.

solution. In their comparison of the mentalities behind the Holocaust and the potential use of nuclear weapons, for example, psychologists, Robert Jay Lifton and Eric Markusen, explained that fears and insecurities could rationalise genocide as necessary for guaranteeing survival in the face of a perceived existential threat.¹⁰⁴ In other words, existential insecurities support the emergence of a ‘destroy them to save us’ mentality.¹⁰⁵ Accordingly, genocidal violence is most often located in periods of instability and uncertainty, as in wars when underlying insecurities are exacerbated.¹⁰⁶ In the imperial space, it was in those moments when the project became insecure and its existence appeared to be threatened that the radicalisation process, usually triggered by resistance which generated conflict and instability, escalated to genocidal violence. In fact, there are certain aspects of imperialism that transformed the challenge of native resistance into an existential threat, making genocide a permissible, if not necessary, measure.

STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL

While military superiority usually favoured the oppressors, at times, resistance could seriously undermine the economic viability of the imperial project and, at others, imperil its very existence. Indeed, the power dynamics of the imperial space made native resistance a zero-sum game which, as Moses has pointed out, could lend itself to a struggle for survival.¹⁰⁷ The Social Darwinian theories that came to be embedded in the imperial system intensified the threat of resistance for, as Patrick Brantlinger observed, the oppressors recognised that they were not exempt from the natural laws

¹⁰⁴ Robert Jay Lifton & Eric Markusen, *The Genocidal Mentality: Nazi Holocaust and Nuclear Threat* (New York, 1990), 51–76.

¹⁰⁵ Sémelin, *Purify and Destroy*, 48;

¹⁰⁶ Scott Straus, ‘“Destroy Them to Save Us”: Theories of Genocide and the Logic of Political Violence’, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 24(4) (2012), 544–60. For further discussion of the connections between war and genocide see Martin Shaw, *War and Genocide: Organized Killing in Modern Society* (Cambridge, 2003).

¹⁰⁷ Wolfe, ‘Land, Labor, and Difference’, 867; Moses, ‘Antipodean Genocide’, 97.

governing the extinction of races.¹⁰⁸ When native peoples offered stiff resistance, the putative superiority of their oppressors and the ideological framing of the legitimacy and rightfulness of foreign domination as a civilising endeavour were put to the test. In fact, failure to quickly suppress opposition posed not only a challenge to the imperial project but to the notion that 'civilised' races were superior and, thus, had a greater legitimacy than 'inferior' races. In effect, within the imperial space, it was not just loss of territory or resources at stake, but the success of civilisation and progress; the failure of imperialism was a failure of civilisation. Thus, in suppressing resistance, oppressors had to reassert their supremacy, mitigate direct threats to the imperial project, and uphold the ideological foundations that legitimated imperialism.

The instability and turmoil generated by resistance intensified insecurities and fears creating a context conducive to the unleashing of the genocidal potential of the imperial space as a necessary measure to ensuring the project's survival. In Australia, for instance, attacks on settlers and their property hindered colonial development, caused setbacks, and were obstacles to the continued expansion of the frontier.¹⁰⁹ As endemic conflict came to be viewed in existential terms, as in Tasmania during the 1820s and 1830s, this led to an escalation of tactics as more extreme measures were embraced.¹¹⁰ As Tom Lawson has shown, while not necessarily encouraged by the British government, more drastic measures were at least tolerated as a means of ensuring the success of the imperial project.¹¹¹ Similarly, the Herero revolt in 1904 had stimulated fears and hatreds among German colonists, especially after the Herero had won striking victories against the outnumbered German troops

¹⁰⁸ Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings*, 196–7.

¹⁰⁹ Moses, 'Antipodean Genocide', 97

¹¹⁰ See for example a government order from 9 September 1830 explaining the adoption of more drastic measures in James Bonwick, *The Last of the Tasmanians or the Black War of Van Diemen's Land* (London, 1870), 133–6.

¹¹¹ Tom Lawson, *The Last Man: A British Genocide in Tasmania* (London & New York, 2014), 58–60.

in the first few months.¹¹² Jürgen Zimmerer has noted that, while past conflicts had ended in peace treaties, this time was different; the Herero had been 'too successful'.¹¹³ Since the colony held great significance to German prestige, and as an outlet for surplus capital and overpopulation, the government sanctioned von Trotha to 'crush the rebellion by all means available.'¹¹⁴ Interestingly, once the Herero were in retreat from August 1904, von Trotha's extermination campaign came under criticism in Germany for militating against the economic success of the colony and damaging German reputation around the world.¹¹⁵ Rohrback, for example, denounced von Trotha's continued extermination policies arguing that it would 'harm our reputation in the whole world and will be of no benefit here.'¹¹⁶ Once the threat had been mitigated, genocidal violence was no longer an acceptable option highlighting the importance of insecurity to the escalation and admissibility of such measures.

IMPERIAL RIVALRY

As the above examples suggest, the escalation to genocide was highly contextual, shaped to a large degree by security imperatives and driven by conditions on the ground. However, while decisions to employ extreme violence usually radicalised in the imperial space, they were also influenced by the wider geopolitical context, and particularly, by the nature of the imperial system as fuelled by competition and rivalry. As Mark Levene's work has shown, imperialism, linked to emergence of the nation-state system and the concomitant pursuit of progress and modernisation, was

¹¹² Tilman Dederling, "'A Certain Rigorous Treatment of All Parts of the Nation': The Annihilation of the Herero in German South West Africa, 1904', in Mark Levene & Penny Roberts (eds.), *The Massacre in History* (Oxford, 1999), 206–7.

¹¹³ Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide: The Herero and Nama War (1904–8) in German South West Africa and Its Significance', in Dan Stone (ed.), *The Historiography of Genocide* (2008; pbk edn, Basingstoke, 2010), 326.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, 208; Sarkin, *Germany's Genocide*, 51–9.

¹¹⁵ Dederling, 'Certain Rigorous Treatment', 213–5; Schaller, 'From Genocide', 305; Zimmerer, 'Colonial Genocide', 327.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Sarkin, *Germany's Genocide*, 132.

infused with insecurities as states struggled to become one of the 'strong' in a perilous and competitive world.¹¹⁷ Control over foreign resources was perceived to be essential for the continued expansion and development of the metropolis. More than that, empire was a symbol of strength and prestige in a world conceived in increasingly Social Darwinian terms. Indeed, notions of a struggle for survival included the conflict and rivalry between the 'strong' who were understood to be engaged in a competition for resources and dominance over the 'weak'.¹¹⁸

The result of this context was to raise the stakes in the suppression of resistance. Aside from damaging the prestige and embarrassing the oppressors whose claims to strength and superiority hinged on the success of imperial projects, there was a real fear that the inability to decisively and swiftly suppress native resistance would expose vulnerabilities and weaknesses, opening the door to imperial rivals.¹¹⁹ It had been the insurrection in the Philippines that had enabled the US to divest Spain of its colonial possessions, after all. Thereafter, a continued American presence in the colony was justified by imperialists, like Beveridge and President William McKinley, on the basis that otherwise the islands were open to Germany, Britain, and Japan who were 'hungering after them'.¹²⁰ At times then, against the backdrop of a competitive imperial system, there could be more at stake in quashing resistance which further facilitated the escalation of violence. According to Giuseppe Finaldi, the logic of massacre in Ethiopia stemmed from the perceived importance of establishing Italian rule over the country in the 1930s. Indeed, the success of the fascist regime in Italy hinged on its successful acquisition and

¹¹⁷ Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of the Nation State, Volume I: The Meaning of Genocide* (2005; pbk edn, London & New York, 2008), 174–8.

¹¹⁸ Kallis, *Genocide and Fascism*, 63.

¹¹⁹ Levene, *Rise of the West*, 265–6.

¹²⁰ Beveridge, *March of the Flag*; General James Rusling, "Interview with President William McKinley," *The Christian Advocate* (22 January 1903), 17, available at <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5575/> (Accessed March 2016).

development of a colony.¹²¹ It also added to the zero-sum nature of conflict in the imperial space since in the context of the competition and rivalry of the imperial system, relinquishing control over a colony was not an option. This mentality, as revealed by Selous, contributed to the acceptance of genocidal violence as a last resort. Explaining this in Social Darwinian terms, he reasoned: 'Matabeleland is doomed by what seems a law of nature to be ruled by the white man, and the black man must go, or conform, to the white man's laws, or die in resisting them.'¹²² Essentially, genocide was an option when deemed necessary to securing the existence of the imperial project. As such, insecurities and threats in the imperial space were central to the escalation of violence as oppressors acted to alleviate perceived existential crises with a 'destroy them to save us' mentality.

The imperial space was one of exception, terror, and exclusion. Founded on negative racist constructions that legitimised a binary unequal subjugator-subjugated relationship, imperial projects were, from the moment of inception, dependent on the use of violence. What is more, in this racialized space of exception, agents of imperialism were not only predisposed to violence, but were also open to the possibilities of genocide. The release and escalation of the genocidal potential of imperialism, however, was uncommon. In fact, the underlying objectives of imperialists and the repercussions of 'excesses' tended to militate against the destruction of peoples who could be useful to the success of imperial projects. Nevertheless, at times, imperial violence, so prevalent in the management of native populations, radicalised as more genocidal measures became an option. Regularly, if

¹²¹ Giuseppe Finaldi, 'Method in their Madness: Understanding the Dynamics of the Italian Massacre of Ethiopian Civilians, February–May 1937', in Dwyer & Ryan, *Theatres of Violence*, 253–5.

¹²² Selous, *Sunshine*, 67.

not always, triggered by local resistance, the ideologies of imperialism facilitated this process through providing a rationale, justification even, for such methods, as well as intensifying the threat of rebellion as potentially existential in nature. When these threats came to be perceived as dangerous to the continued existence of the project, usually due to outbreaks of armed resistance from local populations, the imperial space as a space of violence and exception facilitated genocide as a retaliatory and acceptable option in response. Under certain conditions, then, the 'us and them' relationship of the imperial space transformed into one of 'us *or* them'.

The analysis of this chapter, then, has revealed an interconnected relationship between three essential elements. While the embrace of genocidal violence was, of course, shaped by diverse contextual factors, the radicalisation process inherent to this was usually facilitated by imperial ideologies, triggered by resistance, and exacerbated by insecurities that were inherent to the wider context of the imperial system. Although there would be some fundamental differences in the nature of Japanese imperialism, as a part of this system, the radicalisation of violence in Japan's occupied territories in later years would also be shaped by the ideological factors and insecurities that derived from engagement and interactions with the other powers within that system. As such, in the following chapters, I use the above framework to analyse the ways in which genocidal violence emerged in the Empire of Japan.

2

The ancient world was a world in which barbarians threatened civilized peoples with their might. The world of today is a world in which civilized peoples are swallowing up barbarians with their atrocities...

...If we hope for our country to exist in the battleground where the civilized world struggles for the survival of the fittest, then...we must place our nation in the ranks of the fittest.

[Tokutomi Sohō, *The Future Japan*, 1886]

'PRELUDE'

At the time of the outbreak of war with China in 1937, Japan was a well-established, leading imperial power in East Asia. Despite having become one of the so-called Great Powers by the early twentieth century, however, the nation's first interactions with nineteenth-century imperialism saw it initially become an unequal, perhaps even semi-colonial, nation. The arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry and his use of 'gunboat diplomacy' in 1853 had forced the Tokugawa government, which had eschewed involvement in international affairs for over two hundred years, to negotiate unfavourable trade agreements with the US. By 1858, treaties had been signed with five of the main powers and Japan had become part of the treaty system in Asia. These treaties deprived the nation of trade autonomy, allowed foreigners to penetrate parts of the homeland, and were later dubbed the 'unequal treaties' since they offered no reciprocal advantages.¹ Heavily criticised for what the prominent figure, Tokugawa Nariaki, called the 'greatest disgrace' since the dawn of the nation's history, the already ailing government was overthrown and Emperor Meiji restored to the centre of political life in 1868.²

With the fate of China in the wake of the Opium Wars (1839-1842, 1856-1860) providing a clear example of the risk of an unsuccessful military clash with a materially superior power, the new Meiji leadership responded to the loss of national prestige and the looming threat of European imperialism in Asia by embarking on an ambitious strategy of modernisation and reform under the slogan 'rich country,

¹ See Michael R. Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism: The Unequal Treaties and the Culture of Japanese Diplomacy* (2004; pbk edn, Cambridge, MA, 2006) for further detail.

² Tokugawa Nariaki (14 August 1853), in David J. Lu (ed.), *Japan: A Documentary History, Volume II: The Late Tokugawa Period to Present* (Armonk, 1997), 282.

strong army' (*fukoku kyōhei*).³ As Emperor Meiji explained in a letter to US president, Ulysses Grant, the aim was to learn from the 'enlightened nations' and to selectively adopt and re-contextualise aspects of their civilisation 'best suited' to Japan 'so as to be upon an equality' with them.⁴ In other words, the leadership aimed for Japan to become a Great Power and, to get there, would employ a policy which, Robert Tierney has pointed out, was akin to self-colonisation.⁵ As they effectively took up the 'civilising mission', Japanese leaders were exposed to ideas about race, civilisation, and the struggle for survival which, as discussed in the previous chapter, were fundamental to nineteenth-century imperialism. The circulation of these ideas in Japan cultivated a view of the world as divided between the oppressors and the oppressed, exacerbated the perceived threat of European imperialism, sparked insecurities about the nation's future place in a competitive imperial world, and encouraged the development of ideologies that shaped Japanese attitudes towards other Asian peoples.

These early experiences with the imperial world order also brought unique dynamics to Japanese imperialism. The Meiji leadership became preoccupied, obsessed even, with national security which, due also to being a late-comer to the imperial game, led to policies of expansion directed at areas of close proximity and caused imperialism to be viewed as essential to the survival of Japan.⁶ In dominating racially similar peoples, the Japanese also had a different, more fluid interaction with those they subjugated which added a distinctive dimension to the formation of

³ 'Memorial on the Opening of Foreign Intercourse by Matsudaira Yoshinaga and Others' (29 February 1868), in *Meiji Japan through Contemporary Sources, Volume II: 1844-1882* (Tokyo, 1970), 76; Soejima Taneomi, 'Japan's Foreign Relations', in Ōkuma Shigenobu (ed.), *Fifty Years of New Japan: Volume I* (1907; Eng. edn, London, 1909), 94.

⁴ 'Emperor Meiji's Letter to President Grant on Iwakura Mission, 1871', in Lu, *Documentary History*, 324.

⁵ Robert T. Tierney, *Tropics of Savagery: The Culture of Japanese Empire in Comparative Frame* (Berkeley, 2010), 16.

⁶ Mark R. Peattie, 'Introduction', in Ramon H. Myers & Mark R. Peattie (eds.), *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945* (Princeton, 1984), 6; Peter Duus, 'Introduction', in Peter Duus (ed.), *Cambridge History of Japan, Vol. 6: Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 1988), 6.

rationalising ideologies and opened possibilities for the paternalistic pan-Asianism of later years.⁷ Finally, as Tierney has further pointed out, Japanese imperialism was not characterised by a binary subjugator-subjugated relationship but, as a result of its initial unequal status, was based on a more triangular relationship influenced by both interactions with those they dominated and with the other imperial powers.⁸ Thus, while early insecurities and ideas about the imperial world would change over time as Japan's international status grew, they remained at the heart of Japanese imperialism, becoming recurrent, though mutable, themes in the rhetoric of the Empire. Indeed, persistent concerns over the nation's future in the world system, insecurities and frustrations in respect to engagement with the other powers, and embedded perceptions of other Asians as inferior, having evolved over ensuing decades, aided in the discursive construction of Japan's self-proclaimed 'benevolent mission' in Asia and informed strategies of region-building in the 1930s and 1940s. The history of the evolution of these elements, then, is vital to understanding the ideological and geopolitical context perceived by Japanese leaders which, as explained in the previous chapter, would prove important to the radicalisation of violence in later years.

Furthermore, early encounters with other Asians, particularly challenges to the establishment of Japanese rule in Taiwan and Korea, provided opportunities for learning, developing, and refining techniques for quashing resistance. Despite later claims to a more benign imperialism, like other empires, the establishment and maintenance of peace and order in the imperial space often saw ruthless measures employed, especially when local communities proved to be unruly. While early

⁷ Marino Asano Tamanoi, 'Who Classified Whom and for What Purpose? The "Japanese" in Northeast China in the Age of Empire', in Rotem Kowner & Walter Demel (eds.), *Race and Racism in Modern East Asia: Western and Eastern Constructions* (Leiden, 2012), 452.

⁸ Tierney, *Tropics*, 21,

methods of suppression were intrinsically violent and showed a potential for escalation, extremes were typically condemned and, with the possible exception of the treatment of the Taiwanese aborigines between 1909 and 1914, genocidal measures were not generally an option in the formative years of Japan's empire. That being said, summary executions of male suspects, scorched earth strategies, and indiscriminate reprisal massacres of civilians employed in China and Southeast Asia between 1937 and 1945, far from an aberration, had become normalised tactics in addressing resistance. In other words, these early encounters had laid the foundations for the genocidal practices analysed in later chapters.

Thus, there are two objectives in this chapter. The first involves examining the development and evolution of Japanese imperialism from the Meiji Restoration to the outbreak of war with China in order to develop a clearer understanding of the context of the late 1930s and 1940s in subsequent chapters. The second objective is to explore encounters with resistance in Japan's early colonies of Taiwan and Korea. I analyse military responses to armed resistance, paying particular attention to physically violent reactions, teasing out patterns of behaviour, and documenting moments of escalation. By interspersing discussions of resistance in Japan's early colonies with a broad analysis of pre-1937 Japanese imperialism, I aim to contextualise and, as a result, enhance the understanding of the radicalisation process of later years. However, this is an immense, complex, and highly nuanced history. As Louise Young has summarised, like other imperialisms, Japanese imperialism was influenced by a multitude of different interest groups, diverse political, economic, social, and cultural factors, as well as constantly shifting and

interconnected domestic and international contexts.⁹ Thus, I have used the analysis of the preceding chapter to focus my examination on insecurities and ideological imperatives which would later re-emerge, albeit in modified forms, and influence the radicalisation of violence in the 1930s and 1940s. Furthermore, since the intention is to examine violence in the Empire as inherent to imperialism rather than as a uniquely Japanese phenomenon, I concentrate on the interplay between Japanese imperialism and the international world in which it emerged. I pay close attention to the fluid ideological climate in Japan as it pertained to attitudes and interactions with other Asian peoples and the 'West'. I also examine changing Japanese perceptions and associated misgivings about the nation's place in the world order through situating these aspects within important shifts in the international and domestic contexts of the time.

First, I detail early Japanese perceptions of a competitive imperial world, the emergence of insecurities about the threat of European imperialism in Asia, and the development of ideologies that positioned other Asians as inferior, aiming to show how these factors provided an impetus to imperialism which resulted in the acquisition of Japan's first official colony in 1895. Following this, I explore Japanese efforts to consolidate Taiwan, a first test of the nation's colonising ability, amid resistance between 1895 and 1915. In this section, I highlight how, in facing guerrilla tactics from a people perceived to be inferior, the Japanese, like other imperial powers, embraced more violent, systematic, and indiscriminate measures in suppressing opposition. In the next section, I examine Japan's rise to Great Power status, the development of a more-assured sense of superiority over other Asian peoples, the leadership's shifting imperatives as a Great Power, including lingering

⁹ Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley, 1998), 10-4.

insecurities about Japan's capacity to compete with the economic imperialism of the other powers, and finally will detail the growing influence of pan-Asian and anti-Western ideas. Following this, I discuss the role of the First World War and the ensuing peace process in bringing about an important shift in the international system, showing how the pan-Asian and anti-Western ideas of the pre-war years became more firmly rooted as some groups in Japan began to call for an 'Asian Monroe Doctrine'. I also explain how the military, having learned important lessons from the war had begun to advocate a regional solution to perceived natural security concerns. Since the peace process had also sparked a resurgence of resistance in Korea at this time, I then analyse Japanese responses to a relatively peaceful independence movement. Emphasising continuity and shared techniques with suppression at an earlier stage in the colony, I also underscore the importance of context in driving disproportionately violent responses to an embarrassing situation in the peninsula. In the last section of this chapter, I explore the shift from cooperation within the new internationalist system of the post-war years to a more autonomous imperialism in the 1930s. In particular, I detail how developments on the continent, the global economic crisis, and ensuing domestic upheaval towards the end of the 1920s undermined Japanese democracy, brought the pan-Asian and anti-Western ideas of earlier years to the fore, and secured the ascendancy of the military. I end the chapter with a discussion of the Manchurian Incident showing how international condemnation resulted in a rejection of the international system, a 'return to Asia', and set the stage for the grand strategies of region-building of subsequent years.

AWAKENING TO THE IMPERIAL WORLD: EMBRACING THE PURSUIT OF EMPIRE

Having been forced into the imperial world of the nineteenth century as an unequal member of the treaty system in Asia, Japanese leaders came to believe that if they were to guarantee the nation's independence, restore its lost prestige, and raise Japan's status to that of one of the so-called 'civilised' nations, they would have to adapt to, and navigate, an international system constructed and dominated by Western ideals.¹⁰ This was understood to be a competitive and perilous system. Viewed through the binary lens of imperialism, Japanese leaders saw the world as dominated by a strong state–weak state dialectic whereby the 'strong' fought for supremacy over the 'weak'.¹¹ For example, having travelled through European colonies with the Iwakura Mission in 1871, Kume Kunitake concluded that '[t]he strong feed on the flesh of the weak. Ever since the Europeans began to undertake sea-voyages in search of trade, they have competed with one another to feed off the weak countries in the tropics and import their rich natural produce to their own countries.'¹² This world-view was widely accepted by Meiji statesmen and intellectuals, including such prominent figures as Kido Takayoshi and Fukuzawa Yukichi, the latter of which warned of the menace posed by European imperialism in 1875 in writing that: 'wherever the Europeans touch, the land withers up, as it were... Sometimes even whole populations have been wiped out'.¹³ A renewed thrust into Asia by European powers in the 1880s contributed further to the leadership's insecurities as they witnessed more and more Asian countries come

¹⁰ See Shogo Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire: China and Japan's Encounter with European International Society* (London & New York, 2009), 56–88 for further discussion.

¹¹ Marius Jansen, 'Japanese Imperialism: Late Meiji Perspectives', in Myers & Peattie, *Japanese Colonial Empire*, 62.

¹² Kume Kunitake, *Japan Rising: The Iwakura Mission to the USA and Europe, 1871–1873*, Tsuzuki Chushichi & Jules R. Young (ed. & trans.) (Cambridge, 2009), 509.

¹³ *Diary of Kido Takayoshi, Vol. I: 1868–1871*, Sydney Devere Brown & Akiko Hirota (trans.) (Tokyo, 1983), 147; Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, David A. Dilworth & G. Cameron Hurst (trans.) (1875; later Eng. edn, Tokyo, 1973), 188–9.

under foreign domination. Inoue Kaoru, a respected elder statesman (*genrō*) and first Foreign Minister, for instance, cautioned critics of his treaty revision policy in 1887 that, '[a]ll countries of the west have schemes for engulfing the east by force and we must devise plans for defence against them.'¹⁴

The translation of Social Darwinian works in the mid-1880s reinforced these perceptions. These texts exposed Meiji thinkers to discourses on race from the likes of Herbert Spencer and Jean-Baptise Lamarck which, as briefly outlined in the preceding chapter, situated the different peoples of the world as existing in a biologically determined and fixed racial hierarchy that placed some as inherently more superior to others.¹⁵ As one of the 'coloured' races, Japan was characterised as inferior, contributing to existing apprehensions that the nation was at risk of becoming one of the weak states – a concern made more acute by the circumstances in Asia at this time. For example, the editor of the journal *Nihonjin*, Shiga Shigetaka, writing in an article published after a trip to the South Pacific Islands in 1887, presupposed Japanese inferiority and cautioned that:

According to existing records, the population of the most inferior race decreases quickly once they commence intercourse with the white ... Unless the inferior race ... is determined to improve this condition, it will gradually be destroyed and the whole world will fall into the hands of the white one day.¹⁶

The well-known and prolific journalist, Tokutomi Sohō, in his first bestseller, *The Future of Japan* (*Shōrai no Nihon*) published in 1886, was similarly alarmist when he advised his readers that '[i]f we hope for our country to exist in the battleground where the civilized world struggles for the survival of the fittest, then ... we must

¹⁴ Document in Ian Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy, 1868–1942: Kasumigaseki to Miyakezaka* (London, 1977), 269–70.

¹⁵ Michael A. Weiner, 'The Invention of Identity: "Self" and "Other" in Pre-War Japan', in Michael A. Weiner (ed.), *Japanese Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity* (London, 2009), 5.

¹⁶ Quoted in Masako Gavin, *Shiga Shigetaka, 1863–1927: The Forgotten Enlightener* (2001; later edn, London & New York, 2004), 70

place our nation in the ranks of the fittest.¹⁷ As supporters of the government's reform policies, Shiga and Tokutomi were optimistic that Japan could improve its position showing that, while highly influential, Western ideas were not accepted indiscriminately.

Indeed, Meiji ideologues adapted and reframed these discourses in accordance with the Japanese context which led to a general diminishing of the biological aspects of race, a challenge to the fixity of the racial hierarchy, and a fusion of these ideas with the concepts of 'nationality', 'ethnicity', and 'civilisation'.¹⁸ The writings of Fukuzawa, one of the most influential thinkers of this time, were the most famous examples of this. In *An Outline of a Theory of Civilisation* (*Bunmeiron no Gairyaku*) published in 1875, Fukuzawa located Japan as inhabiting a position of 'semi-civilisation' in the racial hierarchy. However, he emphasised that because civilisation was a linear, open-ended, and universal process, the nation could work to elevate its status to that of the 'civilised' white races in the future.¹⁹ In fact, he argued, Japan was much better equipped to do so than, for example, China due to peculiarities of Japanese national history that made it more suited to the assimilation of Western civilisation.²⁰ Such arguments were illustrative of a trend among Meiji intellectuals who were developing an increased interest in tracing the origins of the Japanese race in the 1880s. This interest was a reaction to what was seen to be the over-zealous and thoughtless Westernisation of the previous two decades and to the growing sense of crisis in respect to European imperialism and Japan's ability to

¹⁷ Tokutomi Sohō, *The Future Japan*, Vinh Sinh (ed. & trans.) (Edmonton, 1989), 187.

¹⁸ For more detail see Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan: Time, Space, Nation* (Armonk, 1998); Kevin B. Doak, *A History of Nationalism in Modern Japan: Placing the People* (Leiden, 2007); Michael A. Weiner, *Race and Migration in Imperial Japan* (London & New York, 1994); Oguma Eiji, *A Genealogy of 'Japanese' Self-Images*, David Askew (trans.) (1995; Eng. edn, Melbourne, 2002).

¹⁹ Fukuzawa, *Outline*, 13–6

²⁰ *Ibid*, 23–32.

resist it, especially given its supposedly inherent inferiority.²¹ Aside from contributing to the creation of a unifying and robust national identity, deemed to be an essential part of the modernising process, in constructing Japanese identity through alluding to the nation's unique historical and cultural development, these intellectuals aimed to mitigate the insecurities associated with the characterisation of the Japanese as a member of the ostensibly inferior 'yellow' race. Taguchi's work, for example, emphasised that Japan had a long history of assimilation which gave it a distinctive ability to adapt to other cultures, enabling it to integrate elements of Western civilisation, maintain its independence, and move out into the world.²²

Despite considerable variation within these theories, which evolved and transformed according to the demands and context of the time, an underlying and consistent theme was the assertion that Japan had characteristics that set it apart from other Asians who, as Stefan Tanaka and John Dower argued, became a point of comparison from which to measure Japanese civilisation and advancement.²³ While the plight of their neighbours remained a source of insecurity, the fact that Japan had yet to fall under foreign domination added to a growing conviction that the nation was different, indeed more advanced, than other Asians. In fact, Japanese intellectuals modified concepts of race to create a two-tiered understanding that allowed for the recognition of the nation's Asian heritage, but also would enable Japan to transcend the label of inferiority and advance to Great Power status through constituting distinct differences with other Asian peoples.²⁴ The dissemination and acceptance of such ideas resulted in the emergence of denigrating attitudes that

²¹ Oguma, *Genealogy*, 10–2.

²² *Ibid.*, 26–7.

²³ Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History* (Berkeley, 1995), 12–3; John W. Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York, 1986), 203–5.

²⁴ Michael A. Weiner, 'The Invention of Identity: Race and Nation in Pre-war Japan', in Frank Dikötter (ed.), *The Construction of Racial Identities in China and Japan: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (London, 1997), 110.

would shape interactions with other Asian peoples over subsequent years and which, ultimately, encouraged the adoption of imperial policies towards them.

With European encroachment into China having shaken the status quo in respect to the traditional tributary system, Japanese leaders, determined to advance their international status, looked to re-orienting relations with their neighbours. Meiji interactions with other Asian countries in the 1870s progressed in a 'mimetic' fashion. For instance, the imperial tactics of punitive expeditions and 'gunboat diplomacy' were adopted in Taiwan and Korea in 1874 and 1876, respectively.²⁵ For the most part, however, policies of expansion at this time were concentrated on those islands, such as Okinawa and Hokkaido, which lay at the Japanese periphery since Meiji statesmen were aware that Japan was still not strong enough to risk war with other imperial powers in the scramble for territory in Asia.²⁶ Thus, despite calls for a punitive expedition to Korea in 1873, primarily as a distraction from domestic problems at home, prominent figures like Ōkubo Toshimichi and Iwakura Tomomi cautioned restraint, emphasising the continued necessity of internal reconstruction.²⁷ By the 1880s, however, imperialism had come to be seen in various quarters as essential for the survival of Japan, particularly since the acquisition of foreign resources was understood to be a symbol of strength and success in the Darwinian struggle for survival'.²⁸ For example, Soejima Taneomi, a diplomat and staunch supporter of expansion, argued in 1885 that:

²⁵ See Peter Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895–1910* (1995; pbk edn, Berkeley, 1998), 43–9 for discussion of 'gunboat diplomacy' in Korea; Robert Eskildsen, 'Of Civilization and Savages: The Mimetic Imperialism of Japan's 1874 Expedition to Taiwan', *American Historical Review*, 107(2) (2002), 388–418 for discussion of the punitive expedition in Taiwan.

²⁶ Young, *Total Empire*, 23.

²⁷ See 'Ōkubo Toshimichi's Opinion against Korean Expedition, October 1873', in Lu, *Documentary History*, 325–6; Iwakura Tomomi's Address to the Emperor in Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy*, 267–8.

²⁸ Tierney, *Tropics*, 14; Tessa Morris-Suzuki, 'Becoming Japanese: Imperial Expansion and Identity Crises in the Early Twentieth Century', in Sharon A. Minichiello (ed.), *Japan's Competing Modernities: Issues in Culture and Democracy, 1900–1930* (Honolulu, 1998), 160–1.

Strong countries make it their business to conquer weak ones and constantly increase the territories ... It is certain that the powers will choose a time that is best for them and annex Korea. Japan too faces the same danger ... Therefore, if we want to preserve Japan's independence permanently, we must possess territory on the continent.²⁹

As this example indicates, proponents of expansion saw Japan's future in terms of a binary choice between becoming a strong power, which meant an embrace of imperialism, or of accepting Japan's weakness and inevitable subjugation. Such was reflected by Sugita Teiichi's shift in views after a trip to China in 1884. A politician known for his involvement in the democratic Freedom and People's Rights Movement, Sugita initially proposed cooperation with and the 'raising up' of other Asians as a means of fending off European imperialism. Having witnessed that imperialism in action, he began to fear that 'the yellow race is about to be devoured by the white' and wondered whether 'Japan will be served up as the main dish in the coming feast, or whether it should join the guests at the table.'³⁰

However, the Japanese government's explicit embrace of imperialism emerged through the opportunities presented by the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–5), out of which Japan gained its first official colony. While Peter Duus has shown that there were economic imperatives underlying this conflict, this war, primarily a competition over influence in Korea, was also driven by the insecurities and ideological context of this time.³¹ By the 1890s, Japanese national security requirements had come to be defined in relation to the weakness of its neighbours. In his now-famous 'cordons of interest' speech, then Prime Minister and 'father' of Japan's modern army, Yamagata Aritomo warned the first Imperial Diet in 1890 that

²⁹ Soejima Taneomi (1885), quoted in Marlene J. Mayo, 'Introduction', in Marlene J. Mayo (ed.), *The Emergence of Imperial Japan: Self-Defense or Calculated Aggression?* (Lexington, 1970), ix.

³⁰ Sugita Teiichi (1884), quoted in Bunsō Hashikawa, 'Japanese Perspectives on Asia: From Dissociation to Coprosperity', in Akira Iriye (ed.), *The Chinese and the Japanese: Essays in Political and Cultural Interactions* (Princeton, 1980), 331–3.

³¹ Duus, *Abacus*.

'In order to maintain the independence of the country at the present time among the Powers of the world, it is not sufficient to defend the 'cordons of sovereignty' alone; it is also necessary to defend the 'cordons of interest.'³² Korea fell into Japan's 'cordons of interest' and, by this time, had become a particular source of concern since many believed it to be a 'dagger pointed at the heart of Japan', especially if, as seemed likely, it fell under foreign domination.³³ Efforts to encourage reform so that the Korean government might strengthen its defence against European encroachment – the failure of which prompted Fukuzawa to famously declare that Japan should 'leave Asia' in 1885 lest it continue to be associated with these more backwards countries in the future – were hampered by the Qing government's support for traditionalist elements in a bid to reassert Chinese influence on the peninsula.³⁴ Sino-Japanese competition for influence in Korea over subsequent years came to a head in 1894 after a contingent of Chinese troops arrived to suppress the anti-foreign Tonghak rebellion. The situation quickly devolved into war after the Japanese leadership reacted by sending a much larger force whose main aims, according to the diplomat, Uchida Sadatsuchi, involved seizing the opportunity to make Korea into a strong bulwark for Japan.³⁵ The initial impetus towards imperialism then, was shaped considerably by the insecurities that emerged out of Japan's first experiences with the nineteenth-century imperial world.

After Japan's decisive defeat of China, it was not Korea that emerged as its first colony. Though not initially planned, Foreign Minister Mutsu Munemitsu had seized the opportunity presented by the war to push for the annexation of Taiwan

³² Yamagata Aritomo, 'The National Policy under the Constitution' (6 December 1890), in Alfred Stead (ed.), *Japan by the Japanese* (London, 1904), 84.

³³ Duus, *Abacus*, 49–51.

³⁴ Fukuzawa Yukichi, 'Datsu-A-Ron [On Leaving Asia]' (1885), in Lu, *Documentary History*, 351–3.

³⁵ Quoted in Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism*, 48; for further discussion of the origins of the war see Duus, *Abacus*, 49–65 & Stewart Lone, *Japan's First Modern War: Army and Society in the Conflict with China, 1894–95* (London, 1994), 12–29.

during the peace negotiations at Shimonoseki in 1895. Among a multitude of factors shaping Mutsu's decision, including; the attitudes of the military, the fear that Taiwan might be swallowed up by a rival imperial power, and popular support for the capture of Chinese territory within Japan, the acquisition of a colony was seen to present an opportunity to demonstrate to the Great Powers the nation's abilities as a 'civilising' imperial nation.³⁶ Indeed, Takekoshi Yosaburō, a journalist and long-time advocate of Japanese expansion, would later claim that successes in Taiwan were 'proof' of Japan's 'worthiness to be admitted into the community of the world's greatest colonial powers.'³⁷ The successful consolidation of Taiwan, therefore, would be crucial to Japan's imperial prestige.

JAPAN'S FIRST TEST: ENCOUNTERS WITH RESISTANCE IN TAIWAN

With the Taiwanese having a reputation as a 'lawless and rebellious people', it came as little surprise to contemporary observers that Japanese forces would encounter difficulties in efforts to consolidate their control.³⁸ Since the cessation of Taiwan to Japan, in accordance with the Treaty of Shimonoseki, had been affected without consultation with the local population, a group of intellectuals, balking at the prospect of becoming Japanese subjects, had issued a proclamation inciting armed resistance.³⁹ This was followed by the establishment of a new republic and a declaration of independence on 23 May 1895 which assured that the population was 'irrevocably resolved to die before [they] will serve the enemy'.⁴⁰ For the next two decades, Taiwanese resistance would continue intermittently, frustrating Japanese

³⁶ George Kerr, *Formosa: Licensed Revolution and the Home Rule Movement, 1895-1945* (Honolulu, 1974), 17-8; Edward I-te Chen, 'Japan's Decision to Annex Taiwan: A Study of Ito-Mutsu Diplomacy, 1894-5', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 37(1) (1977), 61-72 for more detail.

³⁷ Cited in Leo T. S. Ching, *Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation* (Berkeley, 2001), 17.

³⁸ Charlotte M. Salwey, *The Island Dependencies of Japan* (London, 1913), 15.

³⁹ James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa Past and Present* (London and New York, 1903), 279.

⁴⁰ 'The Chino-Japanese Treaty: A Republic declared in Formosa', *The Manchester Guardian* (27 May 1895).

efforts to consolidate and develop the new colony. During this time, Japanese forces first encountered the asymmetric, unconventional tactics that usually characterised conflict in the imperial space and learned valuable lessons, particularly about the nature of guerrilla warfare. Like other imperial powers, efforts to decisively stamp out resistance involved progressively more ruthless practices.

In spite of the formal transfer of Taiwan to Japan on their arrival at the end of May, Japanese forces had to fight a war of conquest. Remnant Chinese soldiers, militias, and volunteers determined to defend the new Republic of Formosa, organised armed resistance throughout the island. Initially, such efforts were not taken seriously by Governor-General Kabayama Sukenori who depicted Japanese military campaigns more as a mopping-up of nuisance 'local brigands and insurgents' than the war of resistance it later became.⁴¹ It is true that after landing at Keelung, Japanese troops swiftly advanced through the north where they met limited opposition. In fact, in some areas, they were welcomed due to an increase in lawlessness following the departure of the majority of Chinese soldiers and officials from the island.⁴² However, in the south, where the new Republic's capital was based at Tainan, conquest proved more challenging, particularly due to the propensity of the rebels to engage in guerrilla tactics. It would take five months to crush the new republic and it was during these southern expeditions that more violent, irregular tactics first became an option for Japanese commanders.

⁴¹ Harry J. Lamley, 'The 1895 War of Resistance: Local Chinese Efforts against a Foreign Power', in Leonard H. D. Gordon (ed.), *Taiwan: Studies in Chinese Local History* (New York, 1970), 24; Davidson, *Island*, 294.

⁴² George Mackay, 'Japanese Administration in Formosa', *Journal of Race Development*, 2(2) (October, 1911), 172; 'The Surrender of Formosa to Japan: Chinese Soldiers Rioting and Plundering', *The Manchester Guardian* (6 June 1895).

Initially, soldiers abided by Kabayama's stated intentions of 'treat[ing] all good citizens with consideration and clemency'.⁴³ Having travelled with troops on their expeditions, James Davidson, a correspondent for the *New York Herald* and later US consul in Taiwan, developed a favourable impression of the Japanese whom, he observed, in contrast to the rebels, refrained from looting and violence. However, Davidson soon became 'struck' by the leniency of the commanders, especially given the insurgents' accomplished use of guerrilla tactics, in addition to the Janus-faced nature of the population. At Hsinchu, for instance, Davidson witnessed a 'sudden transformation scene' as Chinese soldiers shed their uniforms and hid among a colluding population. He was surprised that since they had greeted Japanese soldiers under the pretence of surrender, commanders had made no attempt to identify, arrest, or punish those who had been, or had assisted, the rebels. In Davidson's view, this was a 'weak policy' that contributed to the worsening conditions of July 1895 since 'the large bodies of insurgents learned that they could harass the Japanese with comparative safety, and the villagers that killing under the white flag, brought no punishment.'⁴⁴ Since unrest often resumed soon after Japanese troops left an area, commanders, according to Davidson, came to a realisation that there would be no option but to employ more 'vigorous methods'. Subsequently, soldiers were to seek out insurgents who may be disguised among civilians and were to employ scorched earth strategies in villages suspected of harbouring 'brigands'.⁴⁵ Such tactics proved somewhat more successful for, after the eventual capture of Tainan in October, Kabayama could officially declare the island to be pacified.⁴⁶

⁴³ Translation from *Japan Mail* cited in Davidson, *Island*, 294.

⁴⁴ Davidson, *Island*, 319–20; see also Takekoshi Yosaburō, *Japanese Rule in Formosa*, George Braithwaite (trans.) (London, 1907), 87–8.

⁴⁵ Davidson, *Island*, 326–9.

⁴⁶ Harry J. Lamley, 'Taiwan under Japanese Rule, 1895–1945: The Vicissitudes of Colonialism', in Murray A. Rubinstein (ed.), *Taiwan: A New History* (Armonk, 1999), 207.

This announcement was premature, however. Though it marked the end of organised resistance due to the dissolution of the Republic, a rebellion in southern Taiwan later that year, followed by an insurrection of a 'considerable scale' in the north in January 1896, began a period of recurrent disturbances.⁴⁷ Uprisings of varying scales and intensities would surge sporadically over the next few years.⁴⁸ These uprisings differed in nature from the previous few months' war, motivated less by a sense of nationalism and more the experience of harsh military rule.⁴⁹ Contemporary observers explained that intense resentment and hatred had emerged among the Taiwanese as Japanese soldiers began to treat them as their inferiors, looted and wantonly destroyed property, and raped women.⁵⁰ In effect, the use of more 'vigorous methods' of suppression had served to intensify hatreds and inspired further opposition from angry civilians. No longer contending with semi-organised forces, the difficulties of subduing unrest became even more pronounced as the insurgent's tactics became exclusively guerrilla in nature. Partisans launched hit-and-run attacks on Japanese installations and evaded capture by hiding among a population usually willing to shelter them.⁵¹ Although just a small section of the population engaged actively in armed resistance, the undetermined nature of the guerrilla threat and their apparent support among the populace inspired fear. As such, Japanese conduct, like that of other imperial powers when faced with prolonged guerrilla resistance, came to include ruthless measures of suppression, such as the burning of villages and the summary execution of men, which increasingly allowed for indiscriminate attacks on civilians. As the following caustic account by George Mackay, son of a Presbyterian missionary and his Taiwanese wife,

⁴⁷ 'The Latest Insurrection in Formosa', *The Times* (2 March 1896).

⁴⁸ Takekoshi, *Japanese Rule*, 92; Denny Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History* (Ithaca, 2003), 34.

⁴⁹ Paul R. Katz, *When Valleys Turned Blood Red: The Ta-pa-ni Incident in Colonial Taiwan* (Honolulu, 2005), 55.

⁵⁰ Mackay, 'Japanese Administration', 174; 'Japanese in Formosa', *The Times* (1896).

⁵¹ Lamley, 'Taiwan under Japanese', 207; Roy, *Taiwan*, 34.

emphasised, efforts to identify what were termed 'bandits' or 'brigands' were rarely thorough:

One night a surprise attack was made upon the town and all the male citizens were placed under arrest. They were then brought to a river bank, and tied in groups of five. A minute later the Japanese officers with lanterns in their hands appeared. They gazed intently into the faces of the frightened men, and woe unto him who wore a stern countenance and was tall and strong. Such physical characteristics to these expert phrenologists were considered as proofs that the bearer was a traitor. At once a black mark was placed on his forehead and without further ado, he was executed.⁵²

In his celebrated history of Japanese rule in Taiwan, Takekoshi also acknowledged that, '[o]wing to the difficulty of distinguishing them, it often happened that common people were mistaken for brigands by our troops; sometimes a peaceful village was attacked by surprise in the belief that it harboured bandits, and some of the peaceful villagers killed.'⁵³ As in European empires, the worst atrocities were often committed in reprisal for large rebellions, heavy losses, and particularly, to the mutilation of captured Japanese soldiers which fuelled both fury and terror.⁵⁴ A major uprising which occurred in June 1896 in Yunlin County where Japanese troops suffered early defeats, for example, was met with a reprisal massacre of up to six thousand Taiwanese.⁵⁵ A detailed account of the massacre by Presbyterian missionary, Thomas Barclay, reported in the liberal and anti-war *Manchester Guardian*, explained that, although scorched earth strategies and indiscriminate reprisal killings had become normalised practices for Japanese troops who were rarely called to account by their superiors when engaged in subjugation campaigns, the scale of violence in Yunlin had been exceptional and foreign speculation of a widespread

⁵² Mackay, 'Japanese Administration', 175.

⁵³ Takekoshi, *Japanese Rule*, 96.

⁵⁴ Davidson, *Island*, 367.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 367; Lamley, 'Taiwan under Japanese', 207; Rebellion in Mid Formosa', *The Times* (25 August 1896).

extermination policy in Taiwan was 'quite imaginary'.⁵⁶ Indeed, though representing an underlying potential for an embrace of genocidal measures in Taiwan, military conduct, having come under international and domestic scrutiny had resulted in the Imperial Household granting limited compensation to the communities affected in Yunlin county, was more restrained thereafter.⁵⁷

The continued embarrassing failure to end the cycle of rebellion and reprisal violence ongoing in Taiwan resulted in further censure and later a shift in policy.⁵⁸ In fact, the military's costly and seemingly ineffective efforts caused the leadership to consider selling Taiwan due to the strain it placed on Japan's still-developing capitalist infrastructure.⁵⁹ This so-called 'age of mistakes' came to a gradual end after 1898 when, under the direction of the fourth Governor-General Kodama Gentarō and his civilian advisor Gotō Shinpei (renowned for their accomplishments in the economic and social development of Taiwan), a variety of different 'carrot and stick' methods were employed.⁶⁰ Though capable of sanctioning astonishing acts of violence, Gotō's plans for subjugation centred on intensive reform efforts and attempts to entice rebels to surrender with promises of leniency and bribes in the form of money or choice employment opportunities.⁶¹ However, though more conciliatory than their predecessors, they remained, as Harry Lamley observed, highly security conscious after years of prolonged resistance.⁶² Thus, while responsibility for the suppression of unrest passed from the military to the civilian police at this time, Kodama also implemented the Penal Laws against Banditry, a

⁵⁶ 'The Japanese in Formosa: Strong Protest to the British Consul', *The Manchester Guardian* (11 December 1896).

⁵⁷ Kerr, *Formosa*, 29.

⁵⁸ Takekoshi, *Japanese Rule*, 94; Davidson, *Island*, 369.

⁵⁹ Ching, *Becoming "Japanese"*, 16.

⁶⁰ Takekoshi, *Japanese Rule*, 97-101; Lamley, 'Taiwan under Japanese', 209-19.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 96; Kerr, *Formosa*, 65.

⁶² Lamley, 'Taiwan under Japanese', 212.

special law which effectively circumvented the legal system and allowed for the continuance of the practice of summary execution for suspected 'bandits'.⁶³ To supplement this, the oppressive *hokō* system, an adaption of the *baojia* system which the Chinese had previously used in Taiwan, was implemented as a means of controlling the population through establishing collective responsibility and threatening group punishments for crimes.⁶⁴ Reflecting Gotō's belief in the uncivilised and inferior status of the Taiwanese people who, because of this, could not be governed in the same manner as the Japanese, these punishments were typically corporal in nature. In fact, flogging, having been abolished as a barbaric practice in 1895, was reintroduced as a main punishment from 1904.⁶⁵ In effect, like other imperial powers, the Japanese employed methods of population control infused with violence. Such measures were possible because of embedded perceptions of the Taiwanese as inferior as well as through the creation of a space of exception. Indeed, in 1896, the Diet had passed controversial legislation, known as Law No. 63, which gave the Governor-General extensive powers to enact laws in Taiwan outside the oversight of the government in Tokyo.⁶⁶ Ultimately, these efforts proved more successful for the period of almost continuous unrest had drawn to a close by 1903.⁶⁷

As armed resistance began to ebb, more attention was paid to the development and expansion of territory in the interior, particularly after General Sakuma Samata took over as Governor-General in 1906. Sakuma proved more

⁶³ Hideo Naito (ed.), *Taiwan: A Unique Colonial Record* (Tokyo, 1938), 73–6.

⁶⁴ See Hui'yu Caroline Ts'ai, 'The Hoko System in Taiwan, 1895–1945: Structure and Functions', *Journal of the College of Liberal Arts*, 23 (1993), 126–48; ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 358: 'Hokō System in Formosa and Proposed for Philippines' for more detail on this system.

⁶⁵ Takekoshi, *Japanese Rule*, 191–4; see Gotō's reasoning in 'Japan's Policy in Formosa', *Japan Magazine* (October 1912), 345–50.

⁶⁶ Hideo, *Taiwan*, 75.

⁶⁷ Kerr, *Formosa*, 65–6; Takeoshi, *Japanese Rule*, 100; Katz, *When Valleys*, 54.

determined than his predecessors to exploit the forests in the mountainous regions which had previously been left untouched to avoid inevitable conflict with the aboriginal tribes who resided in those areas.⁶⁸ Aside from limited efforts to subjugate the aborigines during the first years of occupation, earlier administrations had been preoccupied with the poor state of law and order throughout the island and had generally ignored these tribes. However, sporadic attacks by so-called 'head-hunters' became a problem under Gotō's tenure leading to the implementation of a guard-line to segregate aboriginal land.⁶⁹ Entry by either Taiwanese or Japanese civilians was forbidden and though punitive expeditions were sent out periodically, aborigines were left in relative peace.⁷⁰ However, by the end of the Gotō's tenure, this situation was deemed to be unsatisfactory; as Takekoshi wrote in 1907, 'the economic development of the island cannot be stopped for ever on account of a few thousand savages.'⁷¹

Sakuma's arrival heralded a new era in Japanese-aboriginal relations as increased competition over land erupted into violent conflict.⁷² Over these years, the Japanese encroached further and further into aboriginal territory through a strategy that involved sending out punitive expeditions while simultaneously advancing the guard line.⁷³ However, these efforts were often hampered by the proficient use of guerrilla tactics. More so than the Taiwanese insurgents, aborigines proved adept in unconventional techniques and knowledge of the mountainous terrain made them a formidable enemy in spite of the considerable technological advantages that Japanese soldiers had. In describing the lack of success in punitive expeditions, for instance,

⁶⁸ Kerr, *Formosa*, 100-3.

⁶⁹ Takekoshi, *Japanese Rule*, 211-7.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*; see also *Report on the Control of the Aborigines in Formosa* (Taiwan, 1911).

⁷¹ Takekoshi, *Japanese Rule*, 212.

⁷² Roy, *Taiwan*, 51.

⁷³ *Report on Control of Aborigines* for further details of this strategy.

Takekoshi explained that 'the savages can run like deer and climb like monkeys, sometimes springing up into trees for refuge when closely pursued'.⁷⁴ By 1909, little progress had been made causing Sakuma to embark on a more intensive 'five year plan for the subjugation of Aborigines'. The basic tenet of this plan was simple; they would be given a choice between surrendering unconditionally, forced then to vacate the area and live a 'civilised' life in the lowland plains, or face extermination. As in other empires, the decision to employ such harsh measures was conditioned by perceptions (evident in Takekoshi's comment above) of the aborigines as little more than dangerous 'savages', enemies of civilisation.⁷⁵ With little consideration given to the welfare of those who stood in the way of Japanese expansion, punitive expeditions became merciless often ending with indiscriminate slaughter, destruction of entire villages, and devastation of the aboriginal tribes in the region.⁷⁶ Under relentless pressure and suffering heavy losses, more and more tribes yielded to Japanese forces and, by the time Sakuma's long administration came to an end in 1915, he was widely admired for his successes.⁷⁷ A large-scale, joint Taiwanese-aborigine revolt in 1915, swiftly suppressed using what was by now characteristically brutal reprisal violence, marked the end of the period of consolidation.⁷⁸ With the exception of a further small-scale uprising by the Seediq tribe in 1931, Taiwan was considered, and is largely remembered as, peaceable from 1915.⁷⁹

Thus, the Japanese military's first dalliance with resistance to the institution of their rule was characteristic of imperial conflicts at this time. Taiwan became a space of exception founded on negative perceptions of those they oppressed as

⁷⁴ Takekoshi, *Japanese Rule*, 217.

⁷⁵ *Civil Affairs Handbook: Taiwan*, OPNAV 50E-12 (Washington D.C., 1944), 140; Hideo, *Taiwan*, 17.

⁷⁶ See summaries of these expeditions in *Report on Control of Aborigines*.

⁷⁷ Hideo, *Taiwan*, 45.

⁷⁸ See Katz, *When Valleys*, for a detailed study of this incident.

⁷⁹ Michael Hechter, *Alien Rule* (New York, 2013), 78; Roy, *Taiwan*, 51.

uncivilised and inferior and which, as a consequence, facilitated more violent methods of suppression. Experiencing and learning from difficulties in combatting guerrilla warfare, Japanese commanders also embraced measures which, in permitting attacks on the lives and livelihoods of the civilian population, had the potential for escalation to extreme violence.

'HUNTING WITH THE HOUNDS': JAPAN AS A GREAT POWER

Despite the difficulties and costs of consolidating Taiwan, the acquisition of a colony and the defeat of China were seen as confirmation of Japan's rise to Great Power status. Reflecting the immense national pride that swept through Japan, Tokutomi wrote of Japan's triumph that 'we are no longer ashamed to stand before the world as Japanese.'⁸⁰ Indeed, victory had enabled the leadership to realise their long-term goal of revising the 'unequal treaties', to become a participant in that treaty system alongside the other powers and, with the financial boost gained through the indemnity from China, to join them on the gold standard. Japan could now claim parity with 'the strong'.⁸¹ Moreover, since war had been characterised as a clash between civilisation and barbarity, victory over China (the traditional leader of Asia) had cemented the belief that the Japanese were distinct from and now undoubtedly more advanced than their neighbours.⁸²

However, the nation's enhanced international standing did not bring an end to the leadership's trepidations about Japan's place in the world. In some respects, it paradoxically intensified them.⁸³ Meiji statesmen faced an international climate of renewed rivalry and competition in the wake of China's defeat. Japanese victory,

⁸⁰ Tokutomi Sohō extract in Wm Theodore De Bary, Carol Gluck, & Arthur E. Tiedemann (eds.), *Sources of Japanese Tradition: Volume 2. Abridged: Part 2: 1868–2000* (New York, 2006), 133.

⁸¹ Okuma Shigenobu, 'Foreign Policy', in Stead, *Japan*, 219–21.

⁸² Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton, 1985), 135–6; Lone, *Japan's First Modern War*, 142.

⁸³ Sandra Wilson, 'The Discourse of National Greatness in Japan, 1890–1919', *Japanese Studies*, 25(1) (2005), 35–40.

having highlighted the Qing government's weak position, had precipitated a further 'carving up' of territory by European powers who gave up their earlier pretence of respecting Chinese sovereignty and established 'spheres of influence' in strategic locations.⁸⁴ For those, such as first Prime Minister Itō Hirobumi, the preservation of China's independence was important to the continued growth of the Empire since it was deemed the most suitable and natural market for Japanese products.⁸⁵ While fears that the nation might be colonised had been mollified over past decades, the menace of more indirect, economic forms of domination continued to haunt the Meiji leadership. In particular, they were concerned about the ability of Japan to compete with the robust and more developed economies of their rivals.⁸⁶ The apparent hostility of the other Great Powers to Japanese expansion - signified by the intervention of Germany, France, and Russia to force the return of the Liaodong Peninsula to China in 1895 - in addition to a growing Russo-Japanese rivalry, added to these insecurities.⁸⁷ Taking advantage of the power vacuum left by China, Russian influence had expanded into Korea and, by 1898, much to the chagrin of Japanese leaders, they had occupied the Liaodong Peninsula. These moves, in addition to the stationing of Russian troops in Manchuria during the joint international effort to suppress the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, were perceived to be a threat to Korean independence. Foreign Minister Komura Jutarō even described it as a 'matter of life and death' for Japan because an independent Korea was deemed necessary for the nation's future security.⁸⁸ The next few years saw cautious attempts to develop a 'sphere of influence' in Korea while at the same time working to check Russian

⁸⁴ Taneomi, 'Foreign Relations', in Ōkuma, *Fifty Years*, 114.

⁸⁵ Itō Hirobumi, 'The Growth of Japan', in Stead, *Japan*, 70.

⁸⁶ Michael Shiltz, *The Money Doctors from Japan: Finance, Imperialism, and the Building of the Yen Bloc, 1895-1937* (Cambridge, MA, 2012), 16-8.

⁸⁷ 'Imperial Rescript relating to the Retrocession of the Peninsula Feng-tien (Liaotung)' (10 May 1895), in Stead, *Japan*, 14-5.

⁸⁸ Quoted in Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism*, 77; see also Komura's Memorandum for the Imperial Conference (23 June 1903) in Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy*, 275-8.

expansion on the continent through diplomatic means.⁸⁹ These endeavours failed. By 1904, pro-war groups had successfully incited popular support and pressure for a more forceful stance in defence of Japanese interests which, with the security afforded by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902, encouraged the government to accept, and instigate, war with Russia.⁹⁰

Japanese victory the following year solidified the nation's status as a leading power in East Asia. As part of the peace process, Japan had procured the lease to the Liaodong Peninsula, acquired rights in South Manchuria, including control over the lucrative South Manchurian Railway, received the southern half of Sakhalin and, with its superior interests recognised by Russia, established a protectorate over Korea. These achievements augmented self-assurance in the uniqueness and superiority of the Japanese nation. More confident in their ability to defend their interests, lingering uncertainties about the nation's future independence began to recede among those statesmen outside of military circles. However, emerging concerns about Japan's economic viability and the capacity to compete with the economic imperialism of the powers, particularly in China where Japan had recently procured extensive interests, were exacerbated in the aftermath of the war. Japan's war effort had resulted in substantial social upheaval due, in large part, to the heavy burden it placed on the economy.⁹¹ The struggle to recover financially continued to aggravate social unrest among an increasingly nationally conscious populace who demanded greater levels of representation and a higher degree of political participation. By 1912, these factors contributed to a constitutional crisis when the Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) tried to force a larger military budget, exposing further

⁸⁹ For efforts in Korea see Duus, *Abacus*, 171-7; see also Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy*, 69-71.

⁹⁰ Naoko Shimazu, 'Patriotic and Despondent: Japanese Society at War', *Russian Review*, 67 (2008), 36-8.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 41-4.

the vulnerabilities and weaknesses of the Japanese economy.⁹² Aside from the problems of an expanding population, an adverse balance of trade, and a large national debt, alarming was the increased reliance on American and European financial backing. In fact, as a number of financiers, seven-time Finance Minister Takahashi Korekiyo among them, realised, the war had only been won through securing foreign loans.⁹³ A number of leaders, therefore, recognised and were distressed by the implications of this dependency for, as the diplomat Hayashi Kiroku later observed, it would compromise the nation's ability to pursue an autonomous foreign policy.⁹⁴

Influenced by this adverse economic situation and by Japan's new status as a major imperial power, the leadership looked more to redefining the Empire's role in Asia. As articulated by Foreign Minister, and later Prime Minister, Ōkuma Shigenobu, who wrote a number of articles on this subject between 1907 and 1915, Japan now had a responsibility, born out of its new superior status and its insights as an Asian race that had successfully assimilated Western civilisation, to lead Asia. The nation should work to raise the status of other Asians who, he emphasised, were inferior due only to circumstance and not to race.⁹⁵ Through becoming a leader, saviour of Asia even, Japan could foster a closer relationship with other Asian countries, especially with China, which increasingly came to be seen as vital for the Empire's continued economic growth.⁹⁶ Furthermore, it would shore up China's

⁹² For further details regarding the economic context in Japan at this time see Mark Metzler, *Lever of Empire: The International Gold Standard and the Crisis of Liberalism in Prewar Japan* (Berkeley, 2006), 45–90; Andrew Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan* (1991; pbk edn, Berkeley, 1992) offers further discussion of the social transformations and upheaval at this time.

⁹³ Richard J. Smethurst, *From Foot Soldier to Finance Minister: Takahashi Korekiyo, Japan's Keynes* (Cambridge, MA, 2007), 188–9; Metzler, *Lever of Empire*, 50–2.

⁹⁴ Hayashi Kiroku, 'Racial Reconciliation and Economic Pressure', *Japan Magazine* (July 1912), 156–9.

⁹⁵ See for example 'Summary', in Ōkuma, *Fifty Years*, 1–16; 'Old and New Japan', *Japan Magazine* (March 1910), 76–83; 'Our National Mission', in Masaoka Naoichi (ed.), *Japan to America* (New York & London, 1915), 1–5.

⁹⁶ Ijūin Hikokichi, 'Sino-Japanese Economic Alliance', *Japan Magazine* (April 1914), 734–6.

independence and alleviate underlying concerns about the continued European dominance of Asian countries that, it appeared, were in 'imminent danger of losing their national existence'.⁹⁷ This concept of a Japanese 'civilising mission' resonated with supporters of empire, such as the intellectual and diplomat, Nitobe Inazō.⁹⁸ More importantly, it exposed subtle shifts in Japanese perceptions of the world order due to the rising influence of pan-Asian and anti-Western ideas around this time.

Pan-Asian thought had emerged in Japan in the 1880s as an alternative to the government's 'westernising' approach to the defence against the looming threat of European imperialism.⁹⁹ At this time, it had been a loose collection of ideas. However, in tandem with Japan's growing power in the 1890s, a number of writers, such as the Christian pacifist Uchimura Kanzō and the prominent Meiji statesman Konoe Atsumaro, began to evoke Asianist sentiments more and more in their recommendations for the direction of Japanese foreign policy.¹⁰⁰ In his arguments for an alliance with China in anticipation of a 'final contest' between the races in 1898, however, Konoe reflected mounting Japanese dissatisfaction with the West due to the perceived injustice of the Triple Intervention of 1895 and the 'yellow peril' rhetoric that accompanied it.¹⁰¹

The defeat of Russia in 1905 intensified these trends. Japan's victory, having shattered the illusion of white invincibility, saw pan-Asian discourses become a more

⁹⁷ Ōkuma, 'Summary', in Ōkuma, *Fifty Years*, 1.

⁹⁸ Mark R. Peattie, 'Japanese Attitudes toward Colonialism, 1895-1945', in Myers & Peattie, *Japanese Colonial Empire*, 92; Nitobe Inazō, *Thoughts and Essays* (Tokyo, 1909), 210-6, 386.

⁹⁹ See Nakae Chōmin, *A Discourse by Three Drunkards on Government*, Nobuko Tsukui (trans.) (New York, 1984) gives a useful contemporary summary of this alternative; see also Miwa Kimitada, 'Pan-Asianism in Modern Japan: Nationalism, Regionalism and Universalism', in Sven Saaler & J. Victor Koschmann (eds.), *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, Regionalism, and Borders* (London & New York, 2007), 21-6 for further discussion.

¹⁰⁰ Uchimura Kanzō, *Japan and the Japanese: Essays* (Tokyo, 1894), 108-10.

¹⁰¹ Konoe Atsumaro, 'A Same-race Alliance and on the Necessity of Studying the Chinese Question' (1898), in Sven Saaler & Christopher W. A. Szpilman (eds.), *Pan-Asianism: A Documentary History, Volume 1: 1850-1920* (Lanham, 2013), 89-92.

cohesive and widespread ideology, particularly outside Japan.¹⁰² The concomitant eruption of nationalist movements throughout the region had also deepened European fears of a united Asia that would rise up to threaten their hegemony.¹⁰³ Thus, while the Japanese government worked to assure other imperial powers that Japan had, as Suematsu Kenchō relayed in his position as an ambassador to London in 1904, ‘cast her lot with the Occident’, ‘yellow peril’ rhetoric contributed to growing disillusionment with the international order in Japan.¹⁰⁴ As politicians and intellectuals, like Baron Kaneko Kentarō and the historian Shiratori Kurakichi, pointed out, it brought to the fore the issue of race in Japanese interactions with the other Great Powers.¹⁰⁵ Indeed, it racialized the perceived slights of the Triple Intervention and the Portsmouth Peace Treaty which, because wartime censorship had led the population to believe that Japan had won ‘tremendous victories’, was not believed to be fair and resulted in outbursts of nationalist sentiment in the form of riots at Hibiya Park, Tokyo.¹⁰⁶ Against the backdrop of anti-immigration policies targeting East Asians in the US, the continued propensity of the other powers to view Japan as a ‘yellow’ race and to associate it with those that the Japanese now joined in denigrating for their backwards, uncivilised state frustrated a number of leading figures, such as Gotō Shinpei, who stressed that Japan was ‘no common Oriental country’.¹⁰⁷ Shiratori also complained that the Japanese, ‘differing radically’ from other Asians, were ‘mistakenly classed with the latter and subjected to the same

¹⁰² Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War, 1931–1945* (2007; pbk edn, New York, 2013), 59–66.

¹⁰³ Sven Saaler, ‘Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Overcoming the Nation, Creating a Region, Forging an Empire’, in Saaler & Koschmann, *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History*, 5; Cemil Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought* (New York, 2007), 91–2.

¹⁰⁴ Suematsu Kenchō, *The Risen Sun* (New York, 1905), 295.

¹⁰⁵ Kaneko Kentarō, ‘What Japan Has to Teach’, in Masaoka, *Japan to America*, 7; Shiratori Kurakichi, ‘The Struggle between the East and West’, *Japan Magazine* (November, 1913), 399.

¹⁰⁶ Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy*, 76; Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths*, 90.

¹⁰⁷ Gotō Shinpei, ‘The Real Character of the Japanese Race’, in Masaoka, *Japan to America*, 11–3; see also Ōkuma Shigenobu, ‘Japanese Immigration to the South’, *Japan Magazine* (August 1913), 217.

offensive discrimination'.¹⁰⁸ Having long coveted a position as an irrefutable Great Power, 'yellow peril' discourse as an expression of continued racial discrimination, aside from straining relations and seeming to undermine Japanese claims to civilised status, fuelled anti-Western ideas as many in Japan began to question whether they would ever truly be welcomed as a member of this exclusive club.¹⁰⁹ Thus, as writers, like Nitobe and the pan-Asian politician Nagai Ryutarō, warned of a potential for an east-west clash should the injustices of racial discrimination not be addressed, a growing number of Japanese politicians, diplomats, and intellectuals began to promote pan-Asian ideas.¹¹⁰ However, where early Japanese pan-Asianists, such as Tarui Tōkichi, had proposed a relationship based on equality, the nation's new Great Power status produced a hybridisation of pan-Asian and imperial ideologies, causing the former to become distinctly paternalistic in nature. For instance, though by no means a staunch advocate of imperialism, having written that 'Asia is one' in 1903, the writer Okakura Kakuzō, well-known for his English works on Asian culture, justified Japanese expansion on the basis that, without guidance from superior Japan, the rest of Asia would be doomed to remain in a 'decadent condition', imperilled by the 'white disaster' of European imperialism.¹¹¹

By the time of the First World War then, Japan had become a Great Power. Though Japanese imperialism would continue to be shaped by insecurities, albeit mutated ones, in respect to the nation's capacity to compete with the other powers, the leadership remained committed to cautious expansion through careful

¹⁰⁸ Shiratori, 'Struggle', 399.

¹⁰⁹ Naoko Shimazu, *Japan, Race and Equality: The Racial Equality Proposal of 1919* (London & New York, 1998), 101; for discussion of Japanese racial sensitivities see Ayu Majima, 'Skin Colour Melancholy in Modern Japan: Male Elites' Racial Experiences Abroad, 1880s-1950s', in Kowner & Demel, *Race and Racism*, 391-410.

¹¹⁰ Nitobe Inazō, *The Japanese Nation* (New York, 1912), 2-20; see also *Thoughts and Essays*, 138-40; Nagai Ryutarō, 'White Peril', *Japan Magazine* (May 1913), 40.

¹¹¹ Okakura Kakuzō, *The Awakening of Japan* (New York, 1904), 101, 203-8; see also *The Ideals of the East* (1903; later edn, New York, 1920), 1-5.

navigation and cooperation within the imperial system. As Japanese accomplishments became subject to the rivalries, competition, and suspicions of this system, however, pre-existing racial sensitivities, exacerbated by 'yellow peril' rhetoric, intensified in Japan and led to the emergence of pan-Asian and anti-Western undercurrents. Though not accepted within official policy since the leadership was a 'team player' in the imperial game at this time, these developments were significant, particularly as they began to take a firm root during the upheavals of war in Europe and the ensuing peace process.¹¹²

THE ECLIPSE OF THE IMPERIAL WORLD ORDER

For Japanese leaders, like Foreign Minister Katō Takaaki, who was particularly vocal on this matter, the eruption of war in Europe presented an unmatched opportunity to enhance the nation's interests.¹¹³ In fact, for some, such as the aging *genrō*, Yamagata Aritomo, it was imperative that Japan act to shift the balance of power in Asia because, after the war, there was sure to be renewed competition, particularly in China, as European powers reasserted their position.¹¹⁴ Thus, the Japanese, much to the alarm of their British allies, went beyond the role expected of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and, by the end of 1914, had seized control of German possessions in Asia. The main emphasis of the leadership's wartime efforts thereafter involved initiatives to develop a 'special position' in China. Against the backdrop of political turmoil in China following the Chinese Revolution of 1911, the government sought to capitalise on the distraction of the European powers by pursuing an overtly imperial agenda on the continent. Representing a significant departure from the more cautious policy of the Meiji Period (having ended in 1912), the war years saw the nation's position in

¹¹² Kimitada, 'Pan-Asianism in Modern Japan', 26-9; Hotta, *Pan-Asianism*, 68-71.

¹¹³ For an overview of Katō's opinions see Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy*, 83-104.

¹¹⁴ Quoted in Katō Yōko, 'Pan-Asianism and National Reorganization: Japanese perceptions of China and the United States, 1914-19', in Saaler & Koschmann, *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History*, 76; see also 'Japan and the European Armageddon', *Japan Magazine* (November 1914), 383-6.

China enhanced through initiatives including the notorious Twenty-One Demands of May 1915 and the Nishihara loans of 1917.¹¹⁵ These heavy-handed efforts were criticised for stimulating anti-Japanese sentiments among the Chinese. Yamagata was particularly disparaging since he had warned of needing to cultivate friendly relations with China as an ally in an impending clash with the West.¹¹⁶ More importantly, Japan's international reputation was seriously damaged, especially with the US which had emerged not only as the Empire's chief rival in Asia, but as a major world power.

International disapproval of these more aggressive efforts in China contributed to mounting dissatisfaction with the existing world order within Japan. For supporters of Empire, Japanese imperialism was not undertaken on a 'whim', it was deemed necessary for the nation's survival.¹¹⁷ Therefore, criticism of Japan's expansion was perceived to be unfair, hypocritical, and to stem more from extant racism than from the competition and rivalry inherent to the imperial system.¹¹⁸ Thus, some notable men, like Tokutomi, embracing pan-Asian thinking, began to endorse the idea of constructing an Asian Monroe Doctrine as a means of ensuring that 'Asiatic affairs [would] be dealt with by the Asiatics.'¹¹⁹

Notions of greater autonomy for Asian countries continued to gain influence in the aftermath of the war as the peace conference at Paris served to deepen resentment at a world order that seemed to discriminate against Japan. Although Japanese delegates had been invited to participate as one of the so-called 'Big Five' and Japan had been granted a permanent seat as a founding member of the League

¹¹⁵ For further details of these initiatives see Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism*, 85-115; Schiltz, *Money Doctors*, 21-54.

¹¹⁶ Yamagata extract in Tsunoda, De Bary, & Keene, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 715.

¹¹⁷ Jansen, 'Japanese Imperialism', 66.

¹¹⁸ See for example K. K. Kawakami, *Japan in World Politics* (New York, 1917), 2.

¹¹⁹ See extracts in Saaler & Szpilman, *Pan-Asianism: Vol. 1*. 282-6.

of Nations, the rejection of a racial equality clause and the apparent reluctance to accept Japanese claims to former German possessions in Asia, was seen as another racially-inspired rebuff.¹²⁰ Many in Japan, such as Tokutomi, Sugita Teiichi, and Nagase Hosuke, a known commentator on foreign policy, remained unconvinced of the benefits of the post-war peace should racial discrimination be allowed to continue.¹²¹ Aside from seeming to have little direct benefit for Japan whose two main rivals in Asia at this time – the Soviet Union and the US – were not members, the League of Nations was criticised by future three-time Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro as an instrument for upholding ‘Anglo-American hegemony’. Konoe and others sympathised with German efforts to overthrow the status quo since, like Japan, Germany was a ‘have not’ nation, limited in resources and late to the imperial game.¹²² Hayashi Kiroku, having participated in the Paris Peace Conference, had also warned that the principles of the League would ‘militate’ against Japanese interests since the Empire would no longer be able to expand without violating them.¹²³ Thus, there was a great deal of Japanese scepticism about a new international system that would no longer allow imperial expansion. As far as those aforementioned men understood, this was a new world order that would stifle the advance of developing ‘have not’ countries while upholding the gains made by others through the very system they now claimed to abjure. Such views contributed to a greater acceptance of pan-Asian proposals for a regional alliance against ‘the West’ in Japan during the interwar years.

¹²⁰ Yukiko Koshiro, ‘East Asia’s “Melting Pot”: Re-evaluating Race Relations in Japan’s Colonial Empire’, in Kowner & Demel, *Race and Racism*, 476–7; for a detailed treatment of the racial equality clause see Shimazu, *Japan, Race and Equality*.

¹²¹ John D. Pierson, *Tokutomi Sohō, 1863–1957: A Journalist for Modern Japan* (Princeton, 1980), 326; Sugita Teiichi extracts, in Saaler & Szpilman, *Pan-Asianism: Vol 1*, 264–9; Nagase Hosuke, ‘A Basis for Peace’, *Japan Magazine* (May 1919), 32–3.

¹²² Konoe Fumimaro, ‘A Call to Reject the Anglo-American Peace’ (1918), in Saaler & Szpilman, *Pan-Asianism: Vol. 1*, 315–7; Shimazu, *Japan, Race and Equality*, 172–6.

¹²³ Hayashi Kiroku, ‘Japan and the League of Nations’, *Japan Magazine* (February 1919), 507.

These proposals were supplemented by calls for autarky in military circles as strategists began to analyse the important lessons of the war. The startling defeat of Germany, whose militarism was believed to be invincible, impressed upon Japanese strategists the increased importance of a robust economy.¹²⁴ Admiral Katō Tomosaburō, for example, would later defend proposals for naval limitation at the Washington Conference in 1921 on the basis that ‘one has to admit that, if one has no money, one cannot make war’.¹²⁵ In scrutinising the German defeat, Japanese military thinkers had come to realise that the nature of warfare had changed. It would no longer be a short clash determined by military prowess, but would demand the mobilisation of the entire nation, especially its economic resources, in order to sustain this new total war effort. Japan was understood to be at a considerable disadvantage. As a small island nation, it had limited access to natural resources and was seen to lag behind the other powers in its economic development. Moreover, the war had further exposed the vulnerabilities of the Japanese economy. Initially, the war years had been a boost to the nation’s finances, resolving pre-war financial difficulties, creating substantial growth in heavy industries, and transforming the nation from debtor to creditor.¹²⁶ However, Japan had come to rely more and more on imports of essential raw materials particularly from its main rival, the US, had been unable to keep up with the technological advancements of the European powers during the war, and had experienced a period of rapid inflation in the aftermath which culminated in a series of riots over the price of rice in 1918, a dip into recession in 1920, and a stagnated economy for much of the post-war years.¹²⁷ Adding to the concerns of military thinkers, like Ishiwara Kanji, was the fact that

¹²⁴ Y. Kamada, ‘End of Militarism’, *Japan Magazine* (February 1919), 503.

¹²⁵ Document in Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy*, 290.

¹²⁶ Thomas W. Burkman, *Japan and the League of Nations: Empire and World Order, 1914–1938* (Honolulu, 2008), 3

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 6; see Metzler, *Lever of Empire*, 115–58 for the post-war economic situation.

both of Japan's hypothetical enemies at this time had access to vast resources at home, had the capacity for mobilisation of considerable manpower, and were largely opposed to imperialism. Thus, in addressing these issues and preparing for future total wars, military strategists began to advocate for the creation of a self-sufficient regional bloc that would strengthen the Japanese economy and end the nation's dependency on trade and finance from other powers by providing access to markets and resources essential to important war industries.¹²⁸ In short, economic imperatives, which had typically been a secondary element of national defence, had become crucial.¹²⁹ As a result, those in military circles, disillusioned with the 'Western' world order, but convinced of the necessity of expansion to achieving defence requirements, advocated a more autonomous imperial approach.

However, the disruptions and upheavals of the First World War had drastically altered the balance of power and precipitated the eclipse of the old imperial system. The US, having emerged as an economic powerhouse after the war, took a leading role in the peace process. As a consequence, more liberal ideas of self-determination and an open-door trade policy challenged the way in which foreign relations had been conducted and laid the foundations for a different international system. Aside from bringing new challenges for the Japanese leadership who would now have to adapt their expansionist policies to this more cooperative, internationalist framework, the anti-imperial rhetoric that permeated the peace process appeared to threaten Japan's hard-won interests in Asia and brought added tribulations in the form of disorder and unrest.¹³⁰ For the Japanese, this meant a

¹²⁸ Mark R. Peattie, *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan's Confrontation with the West* (Princeton, 1975), 3–85; Michael A. Barnhart, *Japan Prepares for Total War: The Search for Economic Security, 1919–1941* (Ithaca, 1987), 22–49.

¹²⁹ Lewis H. Gann, 'Western and Japanese Colonialism: Some Preliminary Comparisons', in Myers & Peattie, *Japanese Colonial Empire*, 502–6.

¹³⁰ For more detailed discussion of the impact of the First World War and the peace process see Burkman, *Japan and the League*, 1–28.

resurgence of resistance in Korea as a massive independence movement emerged in March 1919.

THE CHALLENGES OF THE NEW SYSTEM: MAINTAINING CONTROL IN KOREA

A resurgence of resistance in Korea was unexpected in 1919. The *Annual Report on Reforms and Progress in Chosen* (Korea), published by the Government-General of Korea (GGK) the year before, had celebrated the 'tranquillity' that prevailed since the last insurgents surrendered in 1916.¹³¹ This was a recent peace, however. As indicated by the report, Korean resistance had troubled the Japanese from the outset of the establishment of the protectorate in 1905. These early experiences had shaped the nature of Japanese rule in the peninsula after its official annexation in 1910 and, with General Hasegawa Yoshimichi presiding over subjugation efforts in both cases, underpinned the violent Japanese reactions to the uprisings of 1919.

While intellectuals had sought to subvert Japanese rule through propagating a Korean reform movement after Japan had established its protectorate in 1905, small, irregular militias, known as the 'Righteous Armies' (*ũibyŏng*), began armed resistance activities throughout the peninsula.¹³² Their numbers were supplemented over time by civilians angered by the abusive and exploitative policies of the Japanese who, according to Homer Hulbert, an American missionary openly critical of Japanese policies in Korea, treated them as the 'scum of society'.¹³³ By late 1907, Korean opposition was a significant problem. The forced abdication of King Kojong and the disbandment of the Korean Army had led to riots in Seoul and swelled the ranks of

¹³¹ *Annual Report on Reforms and Progress in Chosen (1916-1917)* (Seoul, 1918), 133.

¹³² Andre Schmid, *Korea between Empires, 1895-1919* (New York, 2002), 44-5.

¹³³ Homer B. Hulbert, *The Passing of Korea* (New York, 1906), 213-4.

the rebels with trained, enraged, and partially equipped former soldiers.¹³⁴ From September that year, the insurgents became more audacious and, like those in Taiwan, relied predominantly on guerrilla tactics to overcome the military superiority of Japanese troops. Such tactics proved similarly difficult to combat with conventional techniques. Fighting became fierce and, as rebels began to inspire terror through attacks on collaborators and the mutilation of Japanese soldiers, foreign observers thought it would be 'impossible to discourage the spirit of universal rebellion.'¹³⁵

Thus, the 'mild and gradual' policy initially employed by Japanese forces gave way to more 'strenuous measures' and, towards the end of 1907, the IJA embarked on a large-scale subjugation campaign.¹³⁶ Charged with 'stamping out the insurrection', Hasegawa warned that '[t]hose that join insurgents or afford them refuge or conceal weapons will be severely punished. More than that, the villages that such offenders belong to shall be held responsible and punished with rigour.'¹³⁷ The Scottish-Canadian journalist, Frederick McKenzie, having successfully circumvented military restrictions on foreign travel, visited the countryside where campaigns were in operation. There he witnessed scenes of comprehensive destruction, had spoken to survivors who told of Japanese soldiers raping, looting, and killing civilians indiscriminately and with impunity, and heard of commanders who, in addition to presiding over the execution of suspicious men, had ordered all

¹³⁴ 'Koreans' Anger: Many Japanese Killed in Seoul', *Manchester Guardian* (22 July 1907); Duus, *Abacus*, 224-5; C. L. Eugene Kim & Han-Kyo Kim, *Korea and the Politics of Imperialism, 1876-1910* (Berkeley, 1968), 197-8.

¹³⁵ In the Hands of Japan: Insurgents' Struggle in Korea', *Manchester Guardian* (14 October 1907); 'The Revolt in Korea: Alleged Excesses', *Manchester Guardian* (9 September 1907); George Trumbull Ladd, *In Korea with Marquis Ito, Part: II: A Critical and Historical Inquiry* (London, 1908), 438-9.

¹³⁶ 'Pacifying Korea: Japan's Failure and her Fresh Schemes', *Manchester Guardian* (17 June 1908).

¹³⁷ Cited in Frederick A. McKenzie, *The Tragedy of Korea* (New York, 1908), 171-2.

wounded and surrendered rebels killed.¹³⁸ When discovered, such tactics were denounced in Japan. However, while Resident-General Itō Hirobumi advised the military to tone down their methods, Korean resistance and severe Japanese reprisals continued over the next few years.¹³⁹ The persistence of uprisings and the assassination of Itō in 1909 contributed to the decision to annex the territory in 1910.¹⁴⁰ Thereafter, the first Governor-General, Terauchi Masatake, became determined to subdue Korea and would do so through wielding an 'iron hand' because, he explained in an article published in the Japanese-controlled *Seoul Press* in 1910, 'there is but one way to deal with these people, and that is by stern and relentless methods.'¹⁴¹ Thus, Korea became another space of exception where the military became an omnipresent part of Korean life and where violence and oppression became central mechanisms of population control. Through diverse, but invariably repressive measures, resistance was gradually brought under control in this 'dark period' of brutal military rule.¹⁴²

However, Terauchi was unsuccessful in stamping out a sense of nationalism among Koreans which, influenced by the rhetoric of liberalism and self-determination espoused by President Woodrow Wilson, resurged in 1919.¹⁴³ On 1 March a series of mass demonstrations and peaceful protests erupted across the country. These demonstrations were part of an organised independence movement timed to coincide with the Paris Peace Conference. Korean elites sent representatives

¹³⁸ McKenzie, *Tragedy*, 185–207.

¹³⁹ Hilary Conroy, *The Japanese Seizure of Korea, 1868–1910: A Study of Realism* (Philadelphia, 1960), 367.

¹⁴⁰ 'Imperial Rescript on Annexation', *Annual Report on Reforms and Progress in Chosen (1918–1921)* (Seoul, 1921), 201.

¹⁴¹ Quoted in David Brudnoy, 'Japan's Experiment in Korea', *Monumenta Nipponica*, 25(1/2) (1970), 163.

¹⁴² Geoff Simons, *Korea: The Search for Sovereignty* (New York, 1995), 126–32; Kang Man-Gil, *A History of Contemporary Korea* (Folkstone, 2005), 5–11; see Edward I-te Chen, 'Colonialism in Korea and Taiwan: A Comparison of the Systems of Political Control', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 30 (1970), 126–58 for insight into political aspects; *Results of Three Years' Administration of Chosen since Annexation* (Seoul, 1914) details measures undertaken in the peninsula.

¹⁴³ Ou-Byung Chae, 'The "Moment of the Boomerang" Never Came: Resistance and Collaboration in Colonial Korea, 1919–1945', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 23(3) (2010), 404.

to argue their case at the peace talks and to present a declaration of independence, a provisional constitution, and several petitions documenting Japan's oppressive and brutal rule.¹⁴⁴ Drawing on the principles of Wilson's Fourteen Points which Japan had outwardly accepted, Korean delegates hoped to make a strong case for the nullification of the Annexation Treaty of 1910.¹⁴⁵ Organised mass demonstrations, protests, and strikes in the peninsula were designed to draw international attention to Korea and to undermine Japanese claims of presiding over a peaceful and contented colony.¹⁴⁶ As such, leaders of the movement instructed that there should be no violence towards the Japanese as it could undermine their moral position.¹⁴⁷ However, the movement had been planned at a time of increased tension in Korea after the sudden, and according to contemporary observers, suspicious death of King Kojong in January that year.¹⁴⁸ The funeral, which was to take place in Seoul in early March, had presented an opportunity to circumvent the rigid restrictions forbidding group gatherings and allowed for large numbers of Koreans to travel and meet in cities under the pretext of mourning.¹⁴⁹ Thus, while directions for non-violence were followed for the first few days, underlying friction soon erupted into violent clashes.

Demonstrators began throwing stones, charging police stations, and assaulting the considerably outnumbered *Kempeitai* (military police units). Though caught by surprise, initial Japanese responses had been calm and controlled, aiming

¹⁴⁴ See Carlton Waldo Kendall, *The Truth About Korea* (San Francisco, 1919), 47–93 for copies of these documents.

¹⁴⁵ 'Claim of the Korean People and Nation for the Liberation from Japan and for the Reconstitution of Korea as an Independent State', in *ibid*, 72.

¹⁴⁶ Yong-Jick Kim, 'Politics of Communication and the Colonial Public Sphere in 1920s Korea', in Hong Yung Lee, Yong-Chool Ha, & Clark W. Sorensen (ed.), *Colonial Rule and Social Change in Korea, 1910–1945* (Seattle, 2013), 76; E. Taylor Atkins, *Primitive Selves: Koreana in the Japanese Colonial Gaze, 1910–1945* (Berkeley, 2010), 27.

¹⁴⁷ Kendall, *Truth*, 51.

¹⁴⁸ Louise Yim, *My Forty Year Fight for Korea* (New York, 1951), 101–2; Henry Chung, *The Case of Korea: A Collection of Evidence on the Japanese Domination of Korea, and on the Development of the Korean Independence Movement* (New York, 1921), 193–5.

¹⁴⁹ Chung, *Case of Korea*, 196; Kendall, *Truth*, 26.

simply at dispersing large crowds and arresting principal leaders of the movement. However, as unrest spread throughout the country, showing no signs of abating, efforts to restore peace and order became more violent as the *Kempeitai* stormed crowds with bayonets and on occasion opened fire.¹⁵⁰ The situation quickly devolved and began to garner international attention. Demands for independence challenged claims of the magnanimity of Japanese rule and their potential as a benevolent leader in Asia. Consequently, widespread and mounting disorder soon became an embarrassment, especially in Paris where delegates were arguing for Japan to retain control of former German possessions in the Pacific and were working to secure acceptance of the racial equality clause. Thus, there was a sense of urgency in quickly suppressing the movement and the leadership in Tokyo recommended that Governor-General Hasegawa use harsh measures to swiftly and decisively crush the movement.¹⁵¹

Soon after receiving military reinforcements, Hasegawa issued warnings to the Korean people threatening to 'relentlessly punish anybody daring to commit offences against the peace.'¹⁵² In the cities, crowds were dispersed with force which included bayonettings, beatings, and indiscriminate firing of weapons into large groups.¹⁵³ In a letter written on 10 April 1919, a foreign observer noted that 'men are being arrested here every day, and even before a question is asked they are flogged with a two-inch square rod.'¹⁵⁴ Thousands were arrested and imprisoned, often for simply being present at a demonstration or for a trivial crime such as shouting 'long-

¹⁵⁰ Frank Baldwin, 'Participatory Anti-Imperialism: The 1919 Independence Movement', *Journal of Korean Studies*, 1 (1979), 125–6; *Annual Report (1918–1921)*, 158–9; *The Korean Situation: Authentic Accounts of Recent Events by Eye Witness* (New York, 1919), 22.

¹⁵¹ Dae-Yeol Ku, *Korea under Colonialism: The March First Movement and Anglo-Japanese Relations* (Seoul, 1985), 100–1.

¹⁵² *Ibid*, 104.

¹⁵³ *Korean Situation*, 83; Chung, *Case of Korea*, 216.

¹⁵⁴ *Korean Situation*, 67.

live Korea' (*mansei*). In prisons, people were treated to appalling conditions due to overcrowding, limited rations, and, on some occasions, were even tortured.¹⁵⁵ Such measures were restrained in comparison to subjugation efforts undertaken in the countryside, however. A number of American missionaries residing in Korea at this time reported instances of entire villages being destroyed and reprisal massacres of men, women, and children.¹⁵⁶ In Suwon during early April, the IJA engaged in scorched earth operations and punitive expeditions leaving the area desolate. According to a correspondent for the *Japan Advertiser*, H. H. Underwood, who had travelled through Suwon soon after, the region was marred by burning villages and smoking ruins while bodies lay 'strewn about'.¹⁵⁷ One of the most famous incidents reported at this time involved the burning to death of twenty-nine inhabitants in Cheam-ni who had been locked inside a church after which the building was set alight.¹⁵⁸ Such acts garnered international attention after being publicised by the foreign community in Korea, some of whom accused Japanese forces of planning to exterminate the Christian population of the peninsula.¹⁵⁹ By the end of April, the situation had been brought under control, though not without damage to Japan's international reputation and domestic criticism of the military.¹⁶⁰ Facing condemnation over what were deemed to be excessive and unprovoked subjugation efforts, the Japanese government were forced to reassess colonial policies in Taiwan and Korea. In the aftermath, a number of administrative changes were implemented marking an end to repressive military rule. By 1921, both Taiwan and Korea had come under the Japanese Constitution and were to be governed as an extension of

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 16–22; Frederick A. McKenzie, *Korea's Fight for Freedom* (New York, 1920), 256–60; Chung, *Case of Korea*, 216; Ku, *Korea under Colonialism*, 110–1.

¹⁵⁶ Chung, *Case of Korea*, 231–9.

¹⁵⁷ Underwood's Account, in *Korean Situation*, 68–70.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*; Chung, *Case of Korea*, 233–5.

¹⁵⁹ Newell Martin, *Japan's Attempt to Exterminate Korean Christians* (Milford, 1919).

¹⁶⁰ *The Korean 'Independence' Agitation: Articles reprinted from the 'Seoul Press'* (Seoul, 1919), 28–9; Cablegram from Prime Minister Hara (10 July 1919), in *Korean Situation*, 3.

Japan Proper through encouraging assimilation (*dōka*).¹⁶¹

Thus, as in Taiwan, Japanese efforts to address resistance in Korea were inherently violent and showed a potential for escalation. They were also consistent in the practices employed as Japanese forces engaged in scorched earth policies, executed suspicious men, and enacted violent reprisal massacres. Early efforts to crush insurgency in Korea often intensified according to the situation on the ground and the difficulties of countering guerrilla warfare, emphasising the importance of the local situation in driving more extreme responses. However, the analysis of the Japanese reaction to the independence movement in 1919 underscores the added importance of the wider geopolitical context. The use of harsh measures at this time, condemned internationally and within Japan, was related more to the embarrassment of the movement (which had the potential to harm Japanese efforts at the Peace Conference), than it was a reaction commensurate with conditions on the ground. Japanese forces were ordered to quickly suppress the demonstrations and harsh methods were condoned by the government who sent military reinforcements to achieve this. These developments are significant for they highlight that, like other imperial powers, when facing resistance that was deemed to be threatening in some way, the Japanese leadership could be tolerant of more drastic solutions. The escalation in this case, as in Taiwan, was not sustained and had repercussions in respect to reinforcing calls for reform of colonial policy at home. This shift in attitudes towards the colonies, while a reflection of the anti-imperial international atmosphere, was also due to important domestic changes. Indeed, despite the rise of anti-Western and pan-Asian ideas in Japan, particularly within military circles where

¹⁶¹ For further information see Ching, *Becoming "Japanese"* for discussion of assimilation policies in Taiwan; see Mark E. Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910–1945* (Seattle & London, 2009) for Korea.

a more autonomous foreign policy was promoted, the post-war leadership proved willing to adapt to, and work within, an international framework based on cooperation rather than competition with the other powers.¹⁶²

FROM COOPERATIVE IMPERIALISM TO AUTONOMOUS IMPERIALISM: JAPAN'S 'RETURN TO ASIA'

In 1918, the turbulent move towards democracy in Japan had come to fruition when, against the backdrop of rice riots and social unrest, the first party cabinet was established by the *Seiyūkai* under the leadership of Hara Takashi (Kei).¹⁶³ The 1920s witnessed a shift in the interest groups which dominated government policy. Typically, decisions had been made through coalition and compromise between the bureaucrats and the military, overseen and balanced by the influential *genrō*. However, in the 1910s, the political parties had mounted a challenge to this coalition and, with the First World War accelerating social changes within Japan, had begun to win favour among an increasingly nationally conscious populace.¹⁶⁴ At the same time, the aging *genrō*'s influence was waning and a new generation of statesmen proved determined to wrest their remaining power from them – an example of which can be seen in the issuance of the Twenty-One Demands, pursued without consultation with, and against the wishes of, Yamagata Aritomo.¹⁶⁵ Most importantly, the military was relegated to a peripheral position in policy making. The defeat of Germany by countries whose war efforts had been mobilised by their civilian rather than military governments had damaged the military's esteem.¹⁶⁶ As the Japanese economy suffered under the strain of post-war recession, the military lost popular support for

¹⁶² 'Ministerial Speeches from 50th Imperial Diet', *Japan Magazine* (January 1925), 136–42.

¹⁶³ Gordon, *Imperial Democracy*, 13.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 13–25; James B. Crowley, *Japan's Quest for Autonomy: National Security and Foreign Policy, 1930–1938* (Princeton, 1966), 10–5.

¹⁶⁵ For discussions of attempts by Foreign Minister Katō to subvert the *genrō*'s power see Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy*, 86–104.

¹⁶⁶ F. C. Jones, 'Japan: The Military Domination of Japanese Policy, 1931–1945', in M. Howard (ed.), *Soldiers and Governments: Nine Studies in Civil-Military Relations* (London, 1957), 121; Kamada, 'End of Militarism', 503–5.

its costly and unsuccessful five-year intervention in Siberia.¹⁶⁷ Their decline in power at this time coincided with the rising status of the *zaibatsu*, a group of important financial and business cliques that had benefitted from economic expansion brought about by the war.¹⁶⁸ In short, the military and the *genrō* had lost influence while the financial conglomerates and party politicians had come to the fore.¹⁶⁹ As a consequence, military spending was much reduced and, as Akira Iriye noted, the civilian-dominated government, in spite of discord at home, embraced peaceful economic expansion under the rhetoric of ‘coexistence and common prosperity’.¹⁷⁰

The leadership at this time meant to salvage foreign relations, especially with the US, in the aftermath of the more aggressive policies of the war years. The changed nature of warfare and Japan’s unpreparedness to meet the demands of that change, in addition to continued economic instability and dependency on foreign trade, increased awareness among politicians of needing to retain good relations with the other powers.¹⁷¹ Thus, regardless of hostility from some quarters in Japan, the leadership ratified, and later complied with, the terms of important treaties agreed at the Washington Conference between 1921 and 1922. These treaties appeared to offer only limited benefits to Japan while at the same time diluting earlier agreements which had ensured national security and the Empire’s ‘special position’ in China.¹⁷² The acceptance of them had only been possible in the more democratic and liberal domestic climate of this time. However, important international developments towards the end of the decade undermined Japanese

¹⁶⁷ Robert A. Scalapino, *Democracy and the Party Movement in Prewar Japan* (Berkeley, 1953), 216.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 270–1.

¹⁶⁹ Katō, Shūichi. ‘Taishō Democracy as the Pre-Stage for Japanese militarism’, in Bernard S. Silberman & H. D. Harootunian (eds.), *Japan in Crisis: Essays on Taishō Democracy* (Princeton, 1974), 235.

¹⁷⁰ Akira Iriye, ‘The Ideology of Japanese Imperialism: Imperial Japan and China’, in Grant K. Goodman (ed.), *Imperial Japan and Asia: A Reassessment* (New York, 1967), 39.

¹⁷¹ This was the essence of Katō’s acceptance of naval limitation, see extract in Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy*, 289–90; Smethurst, *From Foot Soldier*, 210–3.

¹⁷² For a detailed discussion see Ian Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy in the Interwar Period* (Westport, 2002), 33–47.

democracy, hastened the return of the military to the centre of political life, challenged the efficacy of cooperative foreign policy, and paved the way for the more autonomous and aggressive imperialism of the 1930s.

In addition to a burgeoning communist influence in China, the growth and increased belligerency of Chinese nationalism intensified concerns for Japan's position on the continent. Since the First World War, there had been a greater determination on the part of the Chinese to overthrow the unequal treaties and subvert foreign rule. During the early 1920s, this had taken the form of anti-foreign movements, boycotts, and attacks. Such efforts had a profound effect on Japanese interests in Manchuria and, as Young pointed out, significantly altered relations with collaborators, like the warlord Zhang Zuolin.¹⁷³ By 1926, there was even greater cause for alarm. Chiang Kai-shek, leader of the Guomindang (GMD), the Chinese Nationalist Party, had temporarily allied with the nascent Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and launched the Northern Expedition to subdue unruly warlords in the northeast and unite China. These efforts threatened Japan's long-held position in Manchuria which was increasingly seen as a 'lifeline' to Japan for its economic resources and position as a buffer-zone against the Soviet Union which, at this time, had been a cause of mounting trepidation in some Japanese circles.¹⁷⁴ More importantly, a united nationalist China would jeopardise the vision of a Japan-led East Asian regional bloc favoured in military circles.¹⁷⁵ By 1928, a distinctly anti-Japanese movement had emerged in China after officers of the Kwantung Army, acting of their own volition, orchestrated the assassination of Zhang Zuolin. At the same time, Britain and the US recognised Chiang's government and made

¹⁷³ Young, *Total Empire*, 37–9.

¹⁷⁴ See for example the following articles in *Japan Magazine*: M. Takayanagi, 'China's Unrest and Japanese Concessions' (June 1927); 'China's Unrest and Sino-Japanese Relations' (July 1928); Matsuoka Yōsuke, 'Manchurian and Mongolian Development' (August 1929).

¹⁷⁵ Rana Mitter, *China's War with Japan: The Struggle for Survival, 1937–1945* (London, 2013), 47.

concessions that would facilitate the eventual end of the treaty system in China.¹⁷⁶ By the end of the decade, Japan faced significant challenges to its perceived security needs and interests on the continent which cooperative imperialism did not appear to be resolving.

Soon exacerbating the impact of these problems was the economic crisis that gripped Japan in the aftermath of the Wall Street Crash in 1929. Coinciding with the Hamaguchi Cabinet's retrenchment policies and unfortunate decision to return to the gold standard (which Japan, like other imperial powers, had left during the First World War), global recession hit the nation hard as the spirit of international cooperation was replaced with protectionist trade policies.¹⁷⁷ Worldwide recession and the concomitant decline of trade had a profound and destabilising effect on Japanese society. Unemployment rose, wages decreased, labour disputes erupted, and social cleavages deepened. As they moved into the 1930s, the leadership had serious fears that domestic order might collapse.¹⁷⁸ The impact that this turmoil had on the political circumstances in Japan, particularly in facilitating the shift towards more authoritarian, fascist perhaps, forms of government in the late 1930s, has been well-documented in the literature. These works explain how, as the effects of global retrenchment intensified, the government's failure to lift Japan out of recession, accompanied by a series of financial scandals that exposed the corruption of party politicians who appeared to work only for the benefit of themselves and their *zaibatsu* allies, undermined democracy in Japan. They also detail the radicalisation and factionalism ongoing in the military and explain how, between 1930 and 1936, radical young army officers, typically from rural communities which suffered most in the

¹⁷⁶ Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism*, 169–74.

¹⁷⁷ For further discussion see Smethurst, *From Foot Soldier*, 238–51.

¹⁷⁸ Gordon, *Imperial Democracy*, 239.

economic crisis, secured the ascendancy of the military in Japanese politics through terrorising and assassinating their opposition.¹⁷⁹ More important to the concerns of this thesis, however, was the impact this had on Japanese perceptions of the international world and the Empire's future within it.

The nationalists and militarists who, for years, had criticised the liberal and democratic foundations of the cooperative foreign policy pursued by party politicians which, they argued, would be potentially ruinous for smaller countries should the 'have' nations decide not to share, were vindicated as the other powers put up barriers and adopted nation-first trade policies.¹⁸⁰ Earlier insecurities, albeit mutated ones, about Japan's survival in an international world that appeared to be returning to competition over cooperation were revived and exacerbated by the unfavourable circumstances on the continent. One political commentator, for instance, claimed that 'at no time in the past has Japan been so menaced by economic troubles from external sources as she is today.'¹⁸¹ As a result, there was a gradual shift in attitudes that allowed for greater acceptance of the anti-Western, pan-Asian ideas espoused vociferously by those on the periphery since the First World War. Reflecting these trends, the *Japan Magazine* published a number of articles in the early 1930s that included discussions of the grave situation in respect to nationalism and anti-Japanism in China, the menace of communism, the looming threat of the Soviet Union, the long-term discriminatory treatment of the 'Asiatics', and the unfairness of the 'have' countries in keeping the wealth of the world to themselves while

¹⁷⁹ Crowley, *Japan's Quest* offers a detailed, if older, account. For more recent literature see Janis Mimura, *Planning for Empire: Reform Bureaucrats and the Japanese Wartime State* (Ithaca, 2011), 41–69.

¹⁸⁰ Iriye, 'Ideology of Japanese Imperialism', 39–40.

¹⁸¹ M. Arikawa, 'Menaces from Russia and China', *Japan Magazine* (May 1931), 335.

simultaneously preventing the expansion of the 'have not' nations.¹⁸² In this turbulent milieu, earlier proposals for 'leading Asia' to their liberation and for constructing a self-sufficient regional bloc gained increasing influence and popularity. Thus, when staff officers of the Kwantung Army, Itagaki Seishirō and Ishiwara Kanji, staged an incident at Mukden that initiated a full-scale invasion of Manchuria in September 1931, their military adventurism met with widespread popular support or, as Young puts it, 'war fever' in Japan.¹⁸³

Since the Kwantung Army's unilateral actions, in contrast to 1928, had met with such widespread popularity, the leadership had limited scope for admonishing the officers involved and were forced to retrospectively sanction the invasion. Thereafter, the Kwantung Army continued its assault and, by May 1933, when the Tanggu Truce brought an end to the fighting, all of Manchuria (established as the 'independent' state of Manchukuo in February 1932), in addition to the province of Jehol, had come under Japanese control. The Manchurian Incident, as it has become known, was a turning point for Japanese imperialism for a number of reasons. First, as Young noted, it set a dangerous precedent. From this point, Japanese policy in China would be shaped by a series of 'incidents' staged by field officers who would use outbursts of fighting with Chinese troops as a pretext to encroach further into Chinese territory.¹⁸⁴ Second, it was a facilitating factor in the return of the military to the centre of political life. Coinciding with the nation's fast recovery from economic recession – a result of the Keynesian policies of Finance Minister Takahashi Korekiyo and a brief surge in Japanese trade in Southeast Asia – the apparent success in

¹⁸² For example: Nakamura Kaju, 'The Immigration Problem', *Japan Magazine* (February 1931) 202–5; H. Kamikawa, 'Asiatic Federation', *Japan Magazine* (September 1931); 526–8; 'Foreign Ministers' Message', *Contemporary Japan* (June 1932), 4–6.

¹⁸³ Young, *Total Empire*, 55–114; see also Peattie, *Ishiwara Kanji*, for a biography of the main architect behind this incident.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 47.

Manchuria helped to bolster support for the military and its strategists' proposals for a more regionally-based pan-Asian and autonomous foreign policy.¹⁸⁵ Finally, international condemnation of the Kwantung Army's aggression in Manchuria served as a breaking point for those in Japan who had, over the decades, grown resentful and frustrated by international responses to Japanese expansion.

Foreshadowing the rhetoric of imperialism in later years, the Japanese leadership had justified the invasion of Manchuria as an act of benevolence and as an act of self-defence. For instance, in an address to the 63rd Imperial Diet on 25 August 1932, Foreign Minister Uchida Kōsai explained that Japan had simply provided assistance to the people of Manchuria in their efforts to achieve independence from the despotic and corrupt rule of warlords like Zhang Xueliang. At the same time, the Kwantung Army had acted for the protection of Japanese civilians and, more importantly, 'had been forced to adopt necessary measures for the prevention of wanton attacks upon important rights and interests vital for her national existence.'¹⁸⁶ While the other powers had been somewhat sympathetic to the impact of anti-Japanese activities in China, after the outbreak of fighting in Shanghai in January 1932, during which Japanese forces bombed the city, attitudes began to shift against Japan.¹⁸⁷ The leadership's claims of acting in the interests of self-defence and self-determination for the people of Manchuria were less convincing to delegates at the League who, on the advice of the Lytton Commission (sent to investigate the situation towards the end of 1931), denounced Japanese activities in the region.¹⁸⁸ In Japan, with ideas about Manchukuo's importance as a 'lifeline' circulating more

¹⁸⁵ Young, *Total Empire*, 46–8; Mimura, *Planning for Empire*, 49–50; Smethurst, *From Foot Soldier*, 268–99 for economic recovery.

¹⁸⁶ Uchida's Address (25 August 1932), *Contemporary Japan* (December 1932), 546–52.

¹⁸⁷ Burkman, *Japan and the League*, 168.

¹⁸⁸ *The League and the Lytton Report: The Fifth Phase of the Chinese-Japanese Conflict (May 1-December 31, 1932)* (Geneva, 1932), 21–6.

widely through the speeches and writings of men like Shiratori and Matsuoka Yōsuke, international censure was perceived to be unfair and discriminatory especially since, as the columnist Abe Ken'ichi explained, other options for Japanese expansion, such as trade and immigration, were prohibited by the policies of the other powers.¹⁸⁹ Thus, on 24 February 1933, as the League voted to adopt the recommendations of the Lytton Commission which recommended withdrawal of Japanese troops from Manchuria, Matsuoka advised that the Japanese had 'different views on the manner to achieve peace in the Far East', had 'reached the limit of their endeavours to cooperate with the League of Nations', and subsequently walked out.¹⁹⁰ This move symbolised a rejection of the post-First World War international system and a 'return to Asia' (which Japan has 'left' to pursue imperialism in the 1890s). While Japan had not completely broken with this system, subsequent years saw pan-Asian ideas for region-building begin to gain more traction and filter more and more into government policy.¹⁹¹ At the same time, continued turmoil on the continent and the nation's self-imposed international isolation gave rise to renewed insecurities which reflected a revival of older ideas about Japan's future in a competitive and hostile world.¹⁹² As I will elaborate over subsequent chapters, these evolving insecurities and ideologies would shape the direction of Japanese imperialism and, as the leadership gradually came to embrace a strategy of region-building based on the pan-Asian, anti-Western principles that had been fermenting over these years, would provide a context conducive to the radicalisation of violence.

¹⁸⁹ Abe Ken'ichi, 'Japan Finds Herself', *Japan Magazine* (July–August 1932), 448–9; Shiratori, 'Manchuria', *Japan Magazine* (May 1932), 344–5; IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 182: 'Matsuoka, 'Changing Manchuria' (1931), 223–9.'

¹⁹⁰ Speech cited in *Japan's Case in the Sino-Japanese Dispute* (Geneva, 1933), 62–3

¹⁹¹ For detailed study of the impact of pan-Asianism on Japanese foreign policy see Hotta, *Pan-Asianism*.

¹⁹² See these ideas as expressed by the following prominent figures: Matsui Iwane, 'Asiatic League', *Japan Magazine* (April–May 1933), 156–60; Nagai Ryūtarō, 'Mission of Young Japan', *Japan Magazine* (September 1933), 10–5.

The early uncertainties and fears that had emerged among the Japanese leadership during first interactions with the imperial world of the nineteenth century were not easily forgotten and, while constantly ebbing, flowing, and mutating according to the changing domestic and international contexts of the time, they remained constant, albeit underlying, companions to Japanese imperial pursuits. By the 1930s, the nation seemed to face increased threats and challenges in the form of economic difficulties, declining relations with the other powers, more belligerent nationalism in China, and the rise of communist influence in Asia. Long-term frustrations with the other powers and the growing influence of pan-Asian ideas for building an autarkic regional bloc, led to the gradual 'return to Asia' and an embrace of a more autonomous imperialism. Ultimately, the resurgence of insecurities, the rejection of the old world order, and domestically, the return of the military to political power, would have implications for the Asian populations, long perceived to be backwards and in need of guidance, who resisted Japanese efforts to construct this regional bloc.

Analysis of responses to resistance in Taiwan and Korea indicate that the Japanese military had a propensity for an escalation of violence in reaction to guerrilla-style tactics which proved difficult to combat and distorted perceived distinctions between combatants and non-combatants, allowing for violence against civilians. Despite the potential for more extreme methods, brutal and repressive policies in Taiwan and Korea, very rarely called for wholesale destruction. In fact, when 'excesses' did occur they were often condemned leading to a de-escalation and a change in the methods of population control. Nevertheless, these early experiences had seen taboos broken, lines blurred, and indiscriminate, systematic violence become standard methods in the suppression of resistance. Indeed, reprisal

massacres, summary execution of military-aged men, and comprehensive scorched earth strategies had become permissible and normal responses to opposition. In the turbulent milieu of the late 1930s and early 1940s which, as will be elaborated in subsequent chapters, enabled the creation of a context conducive to extreme measures, these responses would radicalise as the potential for genocidal violence in the Japanese Empire was intermittently unleashed.

3

Obviously no lasting peace can be hoped for until Japan, Manchukuo and China, the three countries responsible for the stability of East Asia, are speedily united in the realization of the above mentioned common objective – the establishment of a new order to replace the old. ...I hope the above intention of Japan will be understood correctly by the Chinese so that they may cooperate with us without the slightest apprehension. Otherwise, the construction of the new order would be impossible. As for those who fail to understand to the end and persist even hereafter in their opposition to Japan, we have no other alternative than to exterminate them.

[Address of Prime Minister Hiranuma Kiichirō at the 74th Session of the Imperial Diet, 21 January 1939]

THE 'CHINA INCIDENT'

On 7 July 1937, a local skirmish between Chinese and Japanese soldiers at Lugouqiao (Marco Polo Bridge) on the outskirts of Beijing quickly escalated into an all-out, albeit undeclared, war. This conflict was striking for its incredible scale of death and destruction. Though exact figures will never be known, Diana Lary estimates that between 20 and 30 million civilians and soldiers lost their lives in China.¹ Brutalities abound on both sides as, amidst what was primarily an asymmetric total war, unconventional and often ruthless measures were employed. Chiang Kai-shek's Guomindang (GMD), fighting for its survival by 1938, utilised all available means including scorched earth defence strategies which saw the deliberate flooding of the Yellow River in June 1938.² Similarly, outnumbered, increasingly overstretched, and facing unexpectedly stubborn Chinese resistance, Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) commanders resorted to terror tactics aimed to inflict maximum civilian damage in their efforts to smash Chinese resistance and end a conflict which they had never anticipated lasting more than a few weeks.³ Aerial bombardment of undefended cities, bio-chemical experimentation and warfare, sexual violence (including institutionalised sexual slavery), forced labour, summary execution of Chinese captives, and comprehensive scorched earth strategies were some of the features of the IJA's conduct in this war.

Some scholars, such as Lloyd Eastman, have argued that atrocities concomitant with this type of terror-driven warfare were the exception rather than

¹ Diana Lary, *Chinese People at War: Human Suffering and Social Transformation, 1937–1945* (Cambridge, 2010), 1.

² Diana Lary, 'The Waters Covered the Earth: China's War-Induced Natural Disasters', in Mark Selden and Alvin Y. So (eds.), *War and State Terrorism: The United States, Japan, and the Asia-Pacific in the Long Twentieth Century* (Lanham, 2004), 143–70.

³ Mark Selden and Alvin Y. So, 'Introduction: War and State Terrorism', in *ibid*, 10; Lary, *Chinese People*, 20.

the rule, especially in the occupied areas where life went on as normal.⁴ To be sure, war in China was a not a litany of atrocities from start to finish. However, Eastman's statement is relative. While it is true that those like Gavan McCormack, who described the conflict as 'Nanjing writ large', exaggerated the realities of the war experience in China, there were areas where, at times, atrocities did become normalised practices.⁵ For example, the IJA's advance from Shanghai to Nanjing between November and December 1937 devastated the Yangtze region as soldiers moved rapidly leaving a trail of destruction in their wake. In their efforts to consolidate occupied China, Japanese forces were engaged in anti-guerrilla operations for much of the war and, in these campaigns, progressively left rural areas desolate as they burned and massacred their way through villages suspected of harbouring insurgents. Of particular interest given the aims of this thesis is that, in both of these cases, violence escalated culminating in the intentional destruction of substantial parts of the Chinese population in those areas. In December 1937, after weeks of unbridled violence from soldiers let loose on the Chinese populace residing along the route from Shanghai, commanders ordered a deliberate and organised round-up and execution of a large part of the military-aged male population in and around Nanjing. The IJA's anti-guerrilla operations in occupied China saw an even more drastic escalation of violence when, after years of unsuccessful subjugation efforts, the IJA adopted a counter-insurgency strategy in 1941 that was premised on rooting out guerrillas through intentionally making uninhabitable those areas deemed 'unpacified'. In other words, the genocidal potential of Japanese imperialism, identified in the preceding chapters, was unleashed during these campaigns.

⁴ Lloyd E. Eastman, 'Facets of an Ambivalent Relationship: Smuggling, Puppets, and Atrocities during the War, 1937-1945', in Akira Iriye (ed.), *The Chinese and the Japanese: Essays in Political and Cultural Interactions* (Princeton, 1980), 296.

⁵ Gavan McCormack, 'Reflections on Modern Japanese History in the Context of the Concept of Genocide', in Robert Gellately & Ben Kiernan (eds.), *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, 2003), 273.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine in detail the process of radicalisation in China in order to identify the factors underlying the embrace of genocidal violence in the aforementioned cases. Building on the analysis of the preceding chapters, I pay particular attention to the role of insecurity, ideology and, most importantly, resistance as the primary forces driving the escalation of violence on the battlefield. Since the embrace of intentionally group-destructive measures was exceptional and not usually sustained in China, I also concentrate on the role played by a dynamic context, shaped by variable local and geopolitical factors, to further understand how commanders came to adopt more extreme measures in their efforts to quash Chinese resistance at particular times. In doing so, I aim to provide a layered analysis of the interplay between the wider international context and the immediate situation on the ground in producing an environment conducive to genocidal violence.

The chapter is organised into three distinct sections. In the first section, I offer an overview of the origins of the conflict and the way in which war aims were defined by the Japanese government since this had a significant bearing on the conduct of the IJA in China. I then move to a broad analysis of that conduct aiming to show how the leadership gave sanction to commanders on the ground to use all available means and, in doing so, established a space of exception favourable to genocidal violence. I also examine the ways in which the characterisation of the war as having decidedly imperial overtones made it similar to earlier encounters with resistance in Taiwan and Korea and exacerbated embedded perceptions of the Chinese as inferior which facilitated the use of unconventional, ruthless measures perpetrated towards a people whose lives simply mattered less to the IJA.

Having considered the implications of the wider context of the war, I narrow my focus in the second section of this chapter by exploring the escalation of violence during the campaign in the Yangtze region and its conclusion in the organised mass killing of part of the male population of Nanjing. I begin with a brief discussion of the decision to capture the city, underscoring its significance as the GMD capital, and then focus on the experiences and encounters along the march from Shanghai aiming to show how, in the context of exception and permissibility established by the leadership, attitudes, behaviours, and acceptable methods of warfare were radicalised, laying the foundations for greater levels of violence at Nanjing in December. Next, I examine the capture of the city, paying particular attention to local conditions as the Japanese entered the capital, before considering the nature of the violence let loose in December 1937 as part of the IJA's terror driven warfare in China. In the final part of this section, I analyse the organised, deliberate massacres of a large portion of the male population in the city. Here I emphasise the important interplay between the memories and learning of the march and the realities of conditions at Nanjing in driving the intentional destruction of a considerable part of the male population.

In the final section of this chapter, I examine the longer-term process of radicalisation during the IJA's anti-guerrilla operations in occupied China from 1938. I begin by exploring the shifts in the nature of the war, detailing in particular how the burdens of a protracted conflict, in addition to the government's plans to establish a New Order in East Asia, refocused attention on the increasingly important task of consolidating territory nominally under Japanese control. Since guerrilla resistance had intensified at this time, I give an overview of the situation and challenges Japanese forces faced in these efforts and examine the ever more

systematic and indiscriminate measures employed in early anti-guerrilla strategy. Finally, I analyse the abrupt intensification of Japanese tactics which, following a massive offensive launched by the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) guerrilla forces in August 1940, resulted in the adoption of a comprehensive scorched earth strategy that involved the elimination of the populations in certain areas. I explain, however, that while circumstances on the ground acted to trigger the escalation of violence, such extreme measures were embraced by commanders who, due to changes in the geopolitical situation, were under increased pressure to quickly consolidate occupied China.

3.1

UNDECLARED AND UNRESTRAINED Establishing a Battlefield Context Conducive to Extreme Violence

War between China and Japan, as mentioned, was triggered by a minor dispute on 7 July 1937. In this respect, conflict began in the same way as a number of other ‘incidents’ that had flared at various intervals during the early 1930s – by the provocation of officers on the ground rather than at the instigation of the leadership. However, where previous disputes had been settled locally, the situation in 1937 escalated and, by the end of the year, the IJA had become entrenched in a war of attrition that would last until August 1945. Indeed, despite intentions to settle the situation locally, the leadership on both sides undermined a ceasefire agreement reached by field commanders on 11 July by sending further reinforcements to the area.⁶ As fighting intensified over the following weeks, the Japanese leadership still hoped to contain the conflict to the north. In fact, there was an expectation that events would play out in much the same way as they had over the past few years, with favourable concessions from Chiang’s government and expansion of Japanese influence in north China. Initially, the leadership had no explicit objectives for this undeclared war. As fighting progressed over subsequent days, however, Japanese aims began to crystallise and would later have implications for the way in which war would be fought.

‘CHASTISING THE CHINESE’: JAPAN’S WAR AIMS

Although not orchestrated by the leadership who professed no territorial ambitions on the continent, this ‘incident’ was to be used as a pretext for realising long-term

⁶ See the Japanese government’s declaration issued on 11 July 1937 published in *Contemporary Japan* (September 1937), 352–3.

ambitions in the region.⁷ Influenced by the uncertainties that prevailed in the turbulent 1930s, Japanese interest in north China had grown in the wake of the Manchurian Incident. Within a climate of continued economic difficulty, mounting international isolation, and increasing disillusionment with a world order perceived to be discriminatory towards Japan, prominent figures, such as General Matsui Iwane, Minister of Colonial Affairs Nagai Ryūtarō, and Viscount Kaneko Kentarō, advocated a closer relationship between China, Japan, and Manchukuo. Inspired by the pan-Asian ideas that were circulating more widely in the 1930s, this relationship was to be styled on the American Monroe Doctrine and would involve the creation of a regional bloc that would enable Japan to achieve self-sufficiency and bolster the nation's defences.⁸ North China, due to its high resource potential and strategic position as a buffer-zone against the Soviet Union, was understood among military strategists to be important, if not essential, to these plans.⁹ However, between 1933 and 1936, as James Crowley has detailed, Japan's policy in China was marked by inconsistency as groups within the Foreign, Navy, and War Ministries disagreed over the best strategy for expanding Japanese interest in the region.¹⁰ By August 1936, a consensus had been reached as the development of a closer relationship between China, Japan, and Manchukuo under the principles of 'coexistence and coprosperity' became a basic tenet of national policy. Thereafter, strategy in north China would

⁷ For a more detailed account of the origins of the war from both Chinese and Japanese perspectives see Rana Mitter, *China's War with Japan, 1937-1945: The Struggle for Survival* (London, 2013), 17-69.

⁸ See the following articles in the *Japan Magazine*: Matsui Iwane, 'Asiatic League' (April-May 1933), 156-60; Nagai Ryūtarō, 'Mission of Young Japan' (September 1933), 10-5; Kaneko Kentarō, 'Japan's Monroe Doctrine' (September 1933), 19-22.

⁹ For further discussion of Japanese interests on the continent at this time see Nakamura Takafusa, 'Japan's Economic Thrust into North China, 1933-1938', in Iriye, *Chinese and the Japanese*, 220-53 & Michael A. Barnhart, *Japan Prepares for Total War: The Search for Economic Security, 1919-1941* (Ithaca, 1987).

¹⁰ James B. Crowley, *Japan's Quest for Autonomy: National Security and Foreign Policy, 1930-8* (Princeton, 1966), 187-243 gives a detailed account of China policy over these years.

involve extending Japanese influence so as to make the area into a pro-Japanese and anti-communist autonomous region.¹¹

Expediting a consensus over policy at this time were developments on the continent, specifically the pervasiveness of an overt and increasingly belligerent anti-Japanese sentiment and the apparent spread of communism, which the leadership found alarming. Sino-Japanese relations had stabilised briefly after the signing of the Tangu Truce in 1933. However, the aggressive actions of Japanese field commanders in the summer of 1935 – actions which had effectively excluded the GMD from the provinces of Hebei and Chahar – caused a renewal of anti-Japanese demonstrations, boycotts, and attacks on civilians and property.¹² The government understood that these acts, encouraged by the GMD, were part of an attempt to oust, once and for all, Japanese interests from the Chinese mainland. This was a proposition that, given China's ostensible importance to the nation's defence, was unacceptable to the supporters of empire. Thus, the resurgence and intensification of anti-Japanese sentiment at a time of uncertainty was disconcerting both for its direct challenge to Japanese interests on the continent and for its alleged connections to communism.

Indeed, the apparent 'rampancy' of the CCP was a situation which, according to Foreign Minister Hirota Kōki, the government watched with 'grave misgivings'.¹³ In an address to the 68th Imperial Diet in January 1936, Hirota reiterated these concerns suggesting that the so-called 'Red Menace' was 'the greatest of all

¹¹ 'Fundamental Principles of National Policy' (7 August 1936), in Joyce C. Lebra (ed.), *Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in World War II: Selected Readings and Documents* (Oxford, 1975) 62-4; 'Our Policy toward China' (11 August 1936), IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 977: 'Our Policy toward China' (11 August 1936).

¹² Bureau of Information, 'Significance of the North China Problem', *Tokyo Gazette* (August 1937), 18-22.

¹³ Hirota Kōki, 'Japan as a Bulwark of Peace in the Far East', *Japan Magazine* (March 1934), 13.

difficulties confronting China'.¹⁴ Exacerbating the leadership's alarm, which was at odds with the reality of the CCP's decline following Chiang Kai-shek's encirclement campaigns and the Long March, was the apparent refocusing of communist efforts on Japan after the Comintern met in August 1935.¹⁵ According to a pamphlet entitled 'Communist Plottings in the Far East' published by the South Manchurian Railway Company, the main objective established at this meeting comprised directly challenging Japanese influence in order to realise the ultimate goals of 'sovietising' Asia. This was to be achieved, first and foremost, through spreading communist influence in China.¹⁶ By 1936, the leadership's fears over the unstable state of affairs on the continent had been heightened when, with the encouragement of the Soviet Union, the CCP suspended its opposition to the GMD and, after the Xi'an Incident in December, became allies in a united front against Japanese imperialism.¹⁷ This truce, however precarious it may have been, represented a determination to confront Japanese imperialism in China and presented a significant threat to the interests and ambitions which, by this time, were deeply embedded in Japan's defence strategy.

Thus, the outbreak of conflict in 1937 was an opportunity to both realise Japanese ambitions in north China and address emerging threats on the continent. The Bureau of Information, for example, presented the idea that Japan should demand the creation of a buffer-zone in north China 'with a view to neutralizing and averting those disastrous forces.'¹⁸ However, staff officers, like Ishiwara Kanji, warned that should conflict become prolonged, it would dangerously strain the Japanese economy. In doing so, goals of self-sufficiency and preparations for defence

¹⁴ 'Foreign Minister Hirota's Address at the Sixty-Eighth Session of the Diet', *Contemporary Japan* (March 1936), 638.

¹⁵ See ministerial addresses at the 70th Imperial Diet (21 January 1937), *Contemporary Japan* (March 1937), 704-15; Anthony James Joes, *Victorious Insurgencies: Four Rebellions that Shaped our World* (Kentucky, 2010), 5-28 for general discussion of GMD-CCP relations at this time.

¹⁶ *Communist Plottings in the Far East*, China Incident Series, No. 5 (Tokyo?, 1938), 1-3;

¹⁷ Mitter, *China's War*, 63-7.

¹⁸ Bureau of Information, 'Significance of the North China Problem', *Tokyo Gazette* (August 1937), 22.

against the Soviet Union would likely be jeopardised.¹⁹ This was particularly important since Soviet-Japanese relations had deteriorated amid frequent border rumblings and Soviet military strength had substantially increased following a massive rearmament drive after the Japanese invasion of Manchuria.²⁰ Consequently, a swift end to a contained conflict in the north was deemed absolutely essential to Japan's long-term national security goals.

These plans were soon thwarted when Chiang Kai-shek made a conscious decision to expand the fighting to central China after another 'incident' between Chinese and Japanese soldiers in Shanghai on 9 August 1937. The widening of the conflict represented Chiang's commitment to taking a firm stand against further Japanese encroachment into Chinese territory.²¹ It also signalled a shift in the nature of the war. Up to this point, the Japanese government had repeatedly stressed that their forceful response was primarily defensive. However, frustrated by the audacity of Chiang's move and recognising that a localised settlement was no longer possible, the leadership was forced to reassess war aims, or lack thereof, now that conflict had expanded. In an official statement issued on 15 August, the underlying cause of the 'incident' was depicted as a consequence of 'an atmosphere of hostility towards Japan'. Furthermore, it was argued, '[t]he Chinese, over-confident of their national strength, contemptuous of our power, and also in league with the Communists, have assumed towards Japan an increasingly arrogant and insulting attitude.' As a consequence, the Japanese government had 'lost patience'. Thus, while professing no 'ill-will toward the innocent Chinese masses', Prime Minister Kono Fumimaro nevertheless announced his intentions to employ a policy of 'chastisement' as a

¹⁹ Mark R. Peattie, *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan's Confrontation with the West* (Princeton, 1975), 197-8.

²⁰ For further detail regarding Soviet-Japanese relations at this time, see Alvin D. Coox, *Nomonhan: Japan against Russia, 1939* (Stanford, 1990).

²¹ For example, see a translation of a speech given by Chiang on 20 July 1937, in *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS): The Far East, 1937*, Vol. III, 216-8; Mitter, *China's War*, 75-8 gives further information on Chiang's decision to expand the fighting.

means of making the Nationalist government 'reflect on its policies'.²² Elaborating further on this ambiguous war aim at the 72nd Imperial Diet on 5 September, Konoe explained that the IJA had been forced to 'deal a firm and decisive blow' to the Nationalist government and the Chinese army, 'so that it may lose completely its will to fight.'²³ The aim and character of the conflict as established by the Japanese government at this time would have serious implications for the way in which the IJA conducted its campaign in China.

UNLEASHING THE 'HORRORS OF WAR': IJA CONDUCT IN CHINA

The leadership was keen to quickly and decisively end the fighting in China since there were very real fears that it would disrupt long-term defence preparations and that the Japanese public would eventually become frustrated with the strain of a protracted engagement.²⁴ As such, despite the expansion of fighting, the government avoided an official declaration of war, referring to the conflict instead as an 'incident'. This meant that International Laws of War, as stipulated in the Hague and Geneva Conventions (to which Japan was signatory but had not ratified), were not in force. On 5 August 1937, this position was clarified in a notice to the China Garrison Army's Chief of Staff which gave the following counsel: 'it is inappropriate to act strictly in accordance with various stipulations in "Treaties and Practices Governing Land Warfare and Other Laws of War"'. As Fujiwara Akira observed, such a statement was tantamount to saying that 'there is no need to obey international law'.²⁵ This in itself did not make extreme violence inevitable, but it did mean that

²² 'Statement of the Japanese Government' (15 August 1937), *Tokyo Gazette* (August 1937), 42-3.

²³ 'Address of Prime Minister Prince Konoe Fumimaro' (5 September 1937), *Tokyo Gazette* (September 1937), 35-6.

²⁴ For a study of the interplay between the domestic situation in Japan and the war in China see Yoshiaki Yoshiaki, *Grassroots Fascism: The War Experience of the Japanese People*, Ethan Mark (trans.) (1987; Eng. edn, New York, 2015).

²⁵ Document cited in Fujiwara Akira, 'The Nanking Atrocity: An Interpretive Overview', in Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi (ed.), *The Nanking Atrocity, 1937-38: Complicating the Picture* (Oxford & New York, 2007), 36.

Japanese military commanders were advising their subordinates that there were no constraints on warfare conducted in China. In effect, field commanders were given sanction to use all available means to swiftly end a potentially disastrous conflict as quickly as possible. The IJA took advantage of the absence of restraints and, as detailed by Wellington Koo, Chinese delegate to the League of Nations, employed illegal methods including indiscriminate bombardment of cities and bio-chemical warfare from the outset.²⁶ By condoning such measures, the leadership established a space of exception in China. This allowed for a context of increased potential for atrocities as commanders were given freedom to determine the most efficient means, regardless of ruthlessness or legality, for achieving what were often unrealistic demands.²⁷ In doing so, they implicitly encouraged the violent extremes of their commanders who, able to operate with impunity, could apply a 'by any means necessary' policy in their efforts to smash Chinese resistance and quickly end the war.

The (mis)treatment of POWs in China is an excellent example of the way in which this 'exceptional' context set the stage for atrocities in this undeclared total conflict. Having advised commanders that they had no obligation to follow international laws, high command also failed to develop a standardised policy regarding the handling of Chinese captives. The interrogation of Lieutenant-General Mutō Akira, Vice Chief of Staff of the Central China Area Army (CCAA), at Sugamo prison in 1946, revealed that this was not an oversight, but a conscious decision on the part of the military leadership. According to Mutō:

[t]he question of whether Chinese captives would be declared prisoners of war or not was quite a problem and it was finally decided in 1938 that because the Chinese

²⁶ 'Speech of His Excellency Dr V. K. Wellington Koo before the Fifth Meeting of the 19th Assembly on September 16th, 1938', *Japanese Aggression and the League of Nations*, Vol. 5 (Geneva, 1938), 13-5.

²⁷ NARA, RG 165, G-2, MID, Entry 79: SEATIC: Psychological Warfare, Interrogation Publication, No. 6, 13-4.

conflict was officially known as an 'incident' that Chinese captives would not be regarded as prisoners of war.²⁸

Consequently, the fate of Chinese prisoners was left up to commanders on the ground. Since no POW camps were established and no supplies for the sustenance of prisoners were provided, presenting serious practical difficulties in detaining captives, Japanese forces in China often avoided doing so. This caught the attention of foreign observers, such as Hallet Abend, who remarked on the lack of prisoners witnessed during travels in the occupied areas.²⁹ Henri Johan Diederick De Fremery, a former military adviser for the Nationalist government turned Dutch spy, held 'grim suspicions' and wrote in a report to the Dutch government that POWs were 'unheard of' in China.³⁰ Japanese sources indicate awareness among commanders that the absence of prisoners was attracting the attention of the foreign press. During the Battle of Shanghai in September 1937, the Chief of Staff of the Shanghai Expeditionary Army, Lieutenant-General Iinuma Mamoru, for instance, received a request that captives to be sent to the rear to assuage foreign concerns.³¹ Iinuma responded that matters concerning prisoners should be left to the frontline troops and his diary further revealed that those units were in fact killing Chinese captives at Shanghai because of 'hostile acts among them'.³² Not all prisoners were killed, however. Commanders could, and some did, release captives in other areas or use them for labour purposes.³³ However, as Ishikawa Tatsuzō, a correspondent for the Japanese periodical *Chūō Kōron* who had travelled with the IJA during the latter of half of 1937, related in his novelisation of soldiers' experiences in China, killing

²⁸ R. John Pritchard and Sonia Magbanua Zaide (eds.), *The Tokyo War Crimes Trial: The Complete Transcripts of the Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East in Twenty Two Volumes* (hereafter *Tokyo Trial Transcripts*) (New York, 1981), 3436-7.

²⁹ Hallet Abend, *Chaos in Asia* (New York, 1939), 259.

³⁰ Henri Johan Diederick De Fremery, Report No. 10, in Ger Tietler & Kurt W. Radtke (eds.), *A Dutch Spy in China: Reports of the First Phase of the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1939)* (Leiden, 1999), 43.

³¹ Extracts cited in Yamamoto Masahiro, *Nanjing: Anatomy of an Atrocity* (Westport, 2000), 57.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Utsumi Aiko, 'Japanese Racism, War, and the POW Experience', in Selden & So (eds.), *War and State Terrorism*, 135-9; see also ATIS: Interrogation Reports, No. 352, 3 & No. 196-B, 8.

prisoners was often the 'simplest method of disposal'.³⁴ The level of authority field commanders had was highly significant to the development of violent extremes since the onus was on these men on the ground to make decisions and embrace or defend them when necessary, setting the parameters of acceptable behaviour for their troops in doing so.

One of the consequences of this was that officers reinforced a context conducive to violence through turning a blind eye to the atrocities committed by men under their command. For example, the rising number of rapes, particularly after Nanjing, was viewed as a growing problem by the military leadership since such acts fuelled Chinese hatred and spread venereal disease among the ranks. Thus, rape was officially prohibited and, to deal with the problem, a system of institutionalised sexual slavery to provide 'comfort' for Japanese troops was established.³⁵ However, given the inherent contradictions of attempting to prevent sexual violence while at the same time sanctioning it under supervised conditions, these measures were not a success and rape of local women continued in China, and later, Southeast Asia. In a bulletin of punishments giving details of crimes committed in the Philippines in 1942, it was revealed that one reason for the persistence of rape, despite orders not to 'interfere with local women', was that soldiers were not used to being punished. This, it was argued, was because until a change in the Army Penal Code in 1942, punishment for rape had been lenient and could not be undertaken unless the 'injured party' brought charges through 'customary legal channels'.³⁶ In the absence of an 'injured party', troops could not be punished officially. Aside from encouraging soldiers to kill their victims, it meant that responsibility for punishing their

³⁴ Ishikawa Tatsuzō, *Soldiers Alive* [also translated as *Living Soldiers*] Zeljko Cipris (trans.) (Honolulu, 2003), 138.

³⁵ Yoshimi Yoshiaki, *Comfort Women: Sexual Violence in the Japanese Military during World War II*, Suzanne O'Brien (trans.) (1995; Eng. edn, New York, 2000), 49-75.

³⁶ ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 15: 'Bulletin of Punishments', 6-7.

behaviour usually fell to unit commanders. Sources suggest that in China such efforts were half-hearted at best. In Nanjing, where thousands of rapes occurred over a six-week period, foreign witnesses were appalled that officers rebuked their subordinates with no more than a slap to the face.³⁷ Reverend John Magee, having witnessed a resurgence in rapes after new troops entered the city in February 1938, was left with the impression that 'the army as a whole does not look upon this as a crime ...'³⁸ Of course, these witnesses were not privy to the behind-the-scenes workings of the IJA. However, a report by the 11th Military Medicine and Judicial Department in 1939 revealed that some commanders thought of rape as 'necessary for building up morale'.³⁹ Japanese veterans also recalled that their superiors overlooked such acts since it reflected badly on them.⁴⁰ A memorandum from the Vice-Minister to the Armed Forces regarding control of troops returning from China gave one example in which a company commander had instructed his troops that if they were to 'play' with the women, they were to give them money or kill them so that they would not have 'problems' later.⁴¹ The indifference of commanders to the sexual violence (and other crimes) perpetrated by their subordinates fostered an atmosphere of impunity which perpetuated and facilitated the embrace of atrocities towards the Chinese population.

In fact, later accounts from Japanese veterans, though likely influenced by the polemic post-war debates over history in East Asia, revealed that a climate of permissibility for brutalities towards the Chinese people was nurtured in some units

³⁷ Miner Searle Bates, in Zhang Kaiyuan (ed.), *Eyewitnesses to Massacre: American Missionaries Bear Witness to Japanese Atrocities in Nanjing* (Armonk, 2001), 17; John Rabe, *The Good German of Nanking: The Diaries of John Rabe*, Erwin Wickert (ed.), John E. Woods (trans.) (London, 1999), 80.

³⁸ John Magee, in Zhang, *Eyewitnesses*, 194.

³⁹ Document cited in Yoshimi, *Comfort Women*, 67–8.

⁴⁰ See documentary *Riben Guizi; Japanese Devils: Confessions of Imperial Army Soldiers from Japan's War against China* (2001). English Subtitles. Dir. Matsui Minoru, Riben Guizi Production Committee.

⁴¹ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 3304: 'Vice-Minister's Memorandum'.

by commanders who urged their troops to commit atrocities as training exercises. Tominaga Shōzō, for instance, recalled that as a last stage in his officer field training, he was made to behead a Chinese captive as a 'trial of courage'. On becoming a company commander, Tominaga also used human targets for bayonet practice as a 'finishing touch' to the training of raw recruits from Japan.⁴² According to Sakakura Kiyoshi, the use of live prisoners was deemed important to implanting a desire to kill among soldiers and those who volunteered first or showed enthusiasm were often rewarded with faster promotions while those who hesitated or refused risked corporal punishment.⁴³ Indeed, in their efforts to secure complete obedience, some commanders would brutalise their subordinates.⁴⁴ Sources suggest that, while emotional and physical abuse by superiors did not occur in all units, it was sufficiently widespread as to warrant attention from the leadership. According to captured documents, this so-called 'personal punishment', far from instilling discipline, appeared to be contributing to the increasing crime rates, particularly for desertion and attacks on officers, in the IJA.⁴⁵ While these documents did not include crimes against the Chinese population in their analysis, it is likely, as Daqing Yang has pointed out, that the use of such practices also facilitated atrocities as soldiers redirected their frustration and anger.⁴⁶

⁴² Tominaga Shōzō, 'Qualifying as a Leader', in Haruko Taya Cook & Theodore F. Cook (eds.), *Japan at War: An Oral History* (New York, 1992), 41-2.

⁴³ Extracts from interview with Sakakura Kiyoshi, in Jonathan Lewis and Ben Steele, *Hell in the Pacific: From Pearl Harbour to Hiroshima* (London, 2001). Oral testimony from veterans featured in the documentary *Riben Guizi: Japanese Devils* support this.

⁴⁴ See Cook & Cook, *Japan at War*; *Riben Guizi: Japanese Devils*; Youth Division of Sōka Gakkai (eds.), *Peace is Our Duty: Accounts of What War Can Do to a Man*, Richard L. Gage (trans.) (Tokyo, 1982); Frank Gibney (ed.), *Sensō: The Japanese Remember the Pacific War: Letters to the Asahi Shimbun*, Beth Clary (trans.) (Armonk, 1995) for veterans' accounts.

⁴⁵ ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 237: 'Personal Punishment and Military Discipline' & No. 336: 'Extralegal Punishment'.

⁴⁶ Daqing Yang, 'Atrocities in Nanjing: Searching for Explanations', in Diana Lary & Stephen MacKinnon (eds.), *Scars of War: The Impact of Warfare on Modern China* (Vancouver, 2001), 85-6.

Commanders ultimately made decisions to adopt violent extremes within the context of the battlefield. These decisions were also shaped by the characterisation of the war and the parameters set by a leadership which endorsed a space of exception. This represented a drastic departure from earlier conflicts where commanders had been given strict orders to abide by international law and maintain discipline among their troops.⁴⁷ In explaining the dramatic shift in the IJA's conduct in 1937, scholars have pointed to significant changes in Japanese military culture which, as mentioned, began to enforce total obedience through the brutalisation of soldiers and bred contempt for enemy captives.⁴⁸ For example, a textbook for Non-Commissioned Officers issued in January 1933 underscored the contemptuous attitude held for Chinese soldiers when it gave the following advice for dealing with captives:

There is no need to send them to the rear for confinement and wait to see how the war situation changes – as we would do with nationals of other [Western] powers. In the absence of special circumstances, it is alright to release them on the spot or transport them elsewhere for release. The Chinks' domicile registration system is full of defects, and most Chink soldiers are the scum of society, so there is little way for anyone to check whether they are alive or where they are. Thus, even if you were to kill them or release them elsewhere, no one will broach the issue.⁴⁹

Though this might account for the indifference and disdain that shaped treatment of POWs in China, the embrace of tactics that progressively targeted the civilian population is best understood through consideration of the decidedly imperial overtones of this conflict. This was not a war of equals. According to the leadership, it was not a war at all. Faced with fierce and unprecedented resistance from August 1937, the campaign in China later that year became punitive in nature which, as Callum MacDonald has pointed out, made it more akin to the military's subjugation

⁴⁷ Edward J. Drea, *Japan's Imperial Army: Its Rise and Fall, 1863–1945* (Kansas, 2009), 99.

⁴⁸ Hata Ikuhiko, 'From Consideration to Contempt: The Changing Nature of Japanese Military and Popular Perceptions of Prisoners of War through the Ages', in Bob Moore & Kent Fedorowich (eds.), *Prisoners of War and Their Captors in World War II* (Oxford, 1996), 250–76.

⁴⁹ Translation taken from Fujiwara, 'Nanking Atrocity', 41–2.

efforts in Taiwan and Korea.⁵⁰ These early encounters with resistance (described in Chapter Two) had presented opportunities for learning and provided the IJA with an arsenal of tried and tested techniques for subduing unruly populations. By framing war as a 'chastisement' and establishing a context of exception, much like that in place in both Taiwan and Korea until 1921, the leadership permitted commanders to use those established techniques – the punitive expeditions, summary executions of suspicious men, and scorched earth strategies in particular – to force the submission of the Chinese. However, this conduct could only become acceptable within the context of an imperial punitive campaign which reinforced long-term beliefs in the inherent superiority of the Japanese in comparison to other Asians.

PUNISHING PEOPLE OF A 'LOW CULTURE': ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE CHINESE

As elucidated in Chapter Two, victory in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–5) saw the emergence of an assured sense of superiority among the Japanese constituted through comparison to other Asians who, due to their inability to cast off European imperialism, were viewed as backwards, semi-civilised people. Even pan-Asianists adopted a haughty attitude towards other Asians as they began to advocate a civilising mission premised on the role of Japan as natural leader and saviour of Asia. By the time of the outbreak of war in 1937, such ideas, though of course not monolithic, were deeply embedded in Japanese society. The imperial overtones of the conflict defined as a 'chastisement' served to reinforce confidence in the relative inferiority of the Chinese people. In punishing China for its 'arrogant and insulting attitude', Japan, like other imperial powers who engaged in punitive expeditions, aimed to assert its position and authority as a superior power. Thus, reflecting back

⁵⁰ Callum MacDonald, "'Kill All, Burn All, Loot All': The Nanking Massacre of December 1937 and Japanese Policy in China', in Mark Levene & Penny Roberts (eds.), *The Massacre in History* (New York & Oxford, 1999), 237–9.

on the conflict in China, Takamura Jirō, a member of a signal unit based in Guam in June 1942, described this conflict (in comparison to war with the Allies) as a war against people of a 'low culture'. He also observed that 'in China we were proud of our culture when compared to that of the enemy'.⁵¹ As might be expected, these well-established and widely accepted beliefs in Japanese superiority over other Asians also shaped the IJA's conduct in China.

The self-importance of Japanese soldiers was often apparent in their interactions with the Chinese population. Kimikuza Kiyoshi, a pharmacologist based at Linfen army hospital in Shanxi, reflecting on the brutal treatment of civilians in the war explained that while '[i]t is true that the state of mind of those involved in a kill-or-be-killed war is abnormal. Japanese, however, were particularly prone to flaunt a sense of superiority over the Chinese.'⁵² Foreign observers, such as Theodore White and Annalee Jacoby, became convinced that the arrogance they had witnessed in Japanese soldiers would be detrimental to their long-term efforts in China.⁵³ According to Abend, Japan had fallen into the same trap as other imperial powers and would fail because, like those other powers, they did not treat the Chinese as 'self-respecting human beings.'⁵⁴ Aside from damaging relations with civilians who were frustrated and scornful when Japanese soldiers demanded that they adopt a submissive attitude, the belief in superiority added to the atmosphere of permissibility.⁵⁵ Lewis S. C. Smythe, a sociologist at Nanjing University and witness to the horrific events at Nanjing in December 1937 observed that 'the Japanese sincerely believed from the common private up through the highest men here that while it was necessary to show some regard for foreigners they could do anything to

⁵¹ ATIS: Current Translations, No. 77, Doc. 862: 'Diary' 17-8.

⁵² Kimikuza Kiyoshi, in Gibney, *Sensō*, 69

⁵³ Theodore J. White & Annalee Jacoby, *Thunder out of China* (New York, 1946), 90.

⁵⁴ Abend, *Chaos*, 302.

⁵⁵ Lary, *Chinese People*, 65.

a Chinese.⁵⁶ A Japanese sergeant, captured and interrogated in the Pacific in October 1943, supported this supposition revealing that while the military police had been 'insistent' that 'natives' in Southeast Asia not be ill-treated, '[i]n China, it was different as there was no objection to the mistreatment of Chinese'.⁵⁷ As might be expected, such a mentality contributed to violence. It was noted in the aforementioned report on rape from 1939, for instance, that troops in China raped 'because the idea that [soldiers] are free to do things to enemy women that would never be permitted at home is extremely widely held ...'.⁵⁸ Indeed, according to a pamphlet entitled 'Plan for Improving Discipline' compiled by Kawara Naoichi, adjutant of the War Ministry, on 19 September 1940, 'many of these crimes [rape and looting] are motivated by a feeling of superiority toward the people of the territories involved in this Incident.'⁵⁹ Japanese veterans who later reflected on their actions in China further attest to the importance of a sense of superiority in stimulating and rationalising the perpetration of atrocities. Uno Shintarō, an intelligence officer who utilised torture techniques in his work recalled that '[o]n the battlefield, we never really considered the Chinese humans ... We concluded that the Yamato race was superior.'⁶⁰ Similarly, Tamura Yoshio reasoned that in his work as a member of the famous human experimentation unit, Unit 731, 'if we didn't have feelings of racial superiority, we couldn't have done it.'⁶¹ In a documentary entitled *Hell in the Pacific*, Azuma Shiro, one of the most well-known veterans to openly discuss his experience during the war, revealed a prevailing mentality when he explained that 'war was about winning or losing. We didn't think about humanity at all. We believed we could do anything to win.' Consequently, for Azuma, 'killing a Chinese person was

⁵⁶ Smythe, in Zhang, *Eyewitnesses*, 307.

⁵⁷ ATIS: Interrogation Reports, No. 206, 10.

⁵⁸ Yoshimi, *Comfort Women*, 67.

⁵⁹ ATIS: Bulletin, No. 1860: 'Pamphlet', 5.

⁶⁰ Uno Shintarō, 'Spies and Bandits', in Cook & Cook, *Japan at War*, 153.

⁶¹ Tamura Yoshio, 'Unit 731', in *ibid*, 164.

just like killing a dog.’⁶² Tsuchiya Yoshio expressed similar sentiments when he remembered of his experiences as a member of the *Kempeitai* that: ‘we didn’t think of “Chinks” as human, they were subhuman. If we thought they were human, we couldn’t have been so cruel. If we thought they were living people, we thought they were scum.’⁶³ Such extreme views were by no means ubiquitous. As Yoshimi Yoshiaki and Aaron Moore’s work with soldiers’ diaries has shown, attitudes towards the Chinese were diverse, complex, and since they were largely dependent on experience, mutable.⁶⁴ However, as the above selection identifies, the long-term embedded ideas of Japanese superiority fuelled an environment of permissibility since violence towards the Chinese population *could* be rationalised and radicalised on the basis that such people were of lesser value.

From the outset, the putative security dilemmas and concomitant pan-Asian regional solutions that circulated in Japan during the 1930s influenced the Japanese leadership’s decision to establish a context in China that was highly conducive to the radicalisation of extreme violence on the battlefield. The wider context of a war in which normal constraints did not apply and commanders on the ground had the authority to use unconventional illegal measures to decisively and swiftly end conflict against an inferior people, contributed to the escalation of violence in China. However, genocidal violence was exceptional. In the following sections, beginning with analysis of the Nanjing Massacre, I explore the interplay between this overarching context and the realities of the experiences on the ground in order to further understand the process of radicalisation as it emerged in China.

⁶² Azuma Shiro interview in *Hell in the Pacific*.

⁶³ Tsuchiya Yoshio interview in *Riben Guizi: Japanese Devils*.

⁶⁴ Yoshimi, *Grassroots Fascism*; Aaron William Moore, *Writing War: Soldiers Record the Japanese Empire* (Cambridge, MA, 2013).

3.2

DELIVERING THE 'DECISIVE BLOW' The Nanjing Massacre, 1937–1938

Anticipation of a swift and conclusive victory at Shanghai in August 1937 was quickly stymied. Japanese troops, overconfident of their ability to quickly smash Chinese resistance, were shocked by the fierce opposition they faced from the GMD's best German-trained units. In contrast to their sweeping victories in north China, Japanese soldiers were soon engaged in intense combat, suffering hardships and losses unprecedented in prior encounters with the Chinese army. It was only after reinforcements arrived in early November that the IJA was finally able to overwhelm Chinese forces.⁶⁵ Though the capture of Shanghai was a strategic victory, the three-month long battle had hardly been the 'decisive blow' it was intended to be. As Chinese troops began their withdrawal, it became clear that resistance was far from at an end.

FROM SHANGHAI TO NANJING: AN 'ARMY OF LOCUSTS' IN THE YANGTZE DELTA

Frustrated by the failure to quickly crush a supposedly inferior enemy, army commanders turned their attention to the city of Nanjing. Originally, there had been no plans to commit more troops in central China since long-term interest remained in the north. However, under mounting pressure to rapidly end the war, the GMD's capital appealed to field commanders as the site where they could deliver the 'decisive blow'. As Rana Mitter has observed, though Nanjing had no tactical advantage, it held symbolic significance and its capture would denote a definitive victory over the nationalism that had long been viewed as a root cause of anti-

⁶⁵ See Mitter, *China's War*, 92–102 for description of this battle.

Japanese sentiment in China.⁶⁶ Acting initially on his own initiative, General Matsui Iwane, commander of the newly formed CCAA, led his forces on a hurried march to the capital determined to finally smash Chinese resistance. The advance through the heartland of GMD China in November 1937, as the work of Honda Katsuichi and Yoshimi Yoshiaki has shown, laid the foundations for the extreme violence that would occur at Nanjing.⁶⁷

As they advanced on the capital, Japanese forces ravaged towns and villages bringing terror to the Chinese populace residing in their path.⁶⁸ Parts of the once fertile Yangtze Delta were transformed into barren wasteland. An article featured in the *China Weekly Review* in spring 1938 gave the following description of the region in the aftermath of the campaign: '[t]oday the traveller will see only cities bombed and pillaged; towns and villages reduced to shambles; farms desolated and only an old man or woman here and there digging in the once "good earth."⁶⁹ Atrocities were normalised by an army command which rarely restrained, often permitted, sometimes incited, and, at other times, directly ordered violence perpetrated against the Chinese population. In addition to the atmosphere of impunity this fostered, the conditions, experiences, and encounters along this march further facilitated the gradual embrace of more extreme, systematic violence.

The unpreparedness for an expanded conflict caused serious logistical difficulties for a rapidly advancing army that frequently outran its supply lines.⁷⁰ Aside from adding to the hardships of soldiers pushed to their physical limits by

⁶⁶ Mitter, *China's War*, 120–1; see also Ishikawa, *Soldiers Alive*, 127.

⁶⁷ Honda Katsuichi, *The Nanjing Massacre: A Japanese Journalist Confronts Japan's National Shame*, Frank Gibney (ed.), Karen Sandness (trans.) (Armonk, 1999); Yoshimi, *Grassroots Fascism*.

⁶⁸ Honda, *Nanjing Massacre*, offers a detailed overview of this campaign based on interviews with Chinese survivors and supplemented by Japanese documents.

⁶⁹ 'Soochow Nightmare' (19 March 1938), *China Weekly Review (CWR)*, Vol. 84, 24.

⁷⁰ Fujiwara, 'Nanking Atrocity', 36.

commanders determined to reach Nanjing first, this had important consequences for the Chinese population in the region. As revealed in a report from the 16th Division on 24 December, the problem was dealt with by 'mak[ing] it a rule for men and horses to live off the land'.⁷¹ Thus, described as an 'army of locusts' by the Chinese population, Japanese forces devastated local communities as they moved throughout the region taking livestock, farming implements, and crops and, in some cases, even burning furniture for firewood.⁷² As they did so, they came into closer contact with Chinese civilians which created opportunities for violent outbursts. Some soldiers believed that 'requisition duty' was an open invitation to plunder while others used it as an excuse to go out searching for women.⁷³ Azuma Shiro recalled that '[w]hen we went searching for food, we found women hiding. We thought "Oh, they look tasty." So we raped them. But every single time a woman was raped, the soldiers would kill her.'⁷⁴ As detailed earlier, such acts were tacitly encouraged by an atmosphere of permissibility cultivated by the leadership and by commanders on the ground who rarely held their troops to account.

Small groups of soldiers that went out in search of supplies were more vulnerable to attacks from remnant GMD forces and angry Chinese civilians. On the occasions when they failed to return, infuriated and vengeful troops, often led by their commanders, responded with astonishing violence typically massacring civilians and obliterating nearby villages. A member of an artillery unit from the 6th Division heard of the following incident after two Japanese soldiers had been attacked and one killed by villagers while out 'requisitioning':

⁷¹ Translation in Kasahara Tokushi, 'Massacres outside Nanjing City', in Wakabayashi, *Nanking Atrocity*, 64.

⁷² *Ibid*; for Japanese soldiers' oral testimony see *Riben Guizi: Japanese Devils*.

⁷³ Yang, 'Atrocities in Nanjing', 84; Ishikawa, *Soldiers Alive*, 86.

⁷⁴ Azuma interview in *Hell in the Pacific*.

The Japanese soldiers who dug him up were so enraged that they immediately shot ten leading villagers as examples. But that did not suffice. Screaming, "Death to them all," other soldiers set fire to a farmhouse. Soon the whole village was aflame. Virtually all the villagers were killed.⁷⁵

The vengeful and unforgiving attitudes expressed in these encounters were rooted in the experience of fierce Chinese resistance at Shanghai where hardships, suffering, and loss of friends had a radicalising effect on Japanese troops.⁷⁶ For example, Imai Ryūichi, having participated in just two days of fighting, related in his diary on 25 August that: '[i]n the space of a breath, the conscript Hotta was killed in action! Since we landed there has not been one day without casualties. In the end a man has been killed today too ... My whole body is filled with loathing for Chinese soldiers.'⁷⁷ Feelings of anger, contempt, even hatred for the Chinese army were sustained and inflamed by the many unplanned encounters with straggling GMD units along the route. In a novelisation of his war experiences, Corporal Hino Ashihei recounted how these forces arranged ambushes, harassed troops in the rear, and engaged in guerrilla tactics.⁷⁸ As a by-product of these encounters, commanders also had to tackle the problem of what to do with those they captured.

The practicalities of taking prisoners when the leadership had not established POW camps soon became apparent as the CCAA continued its hasty march to Nanjing. As Ishikawa observed, '[s]oldiers about to take part in heavy fighting could hardly afford to guard and shepherd them long.'⁷⁹ The fact that Japanese forces were 'living off the land' added an extra dimension to the problem. Private First Class Taniguchi Masaru recalled in memoirs published in 1940 that, 'at first taking prisoners was great sport, then it lost its novelty because we could not feed them. We

⁷⁵ Nakagawa Seiichirō, 'Flattery?' in *Peace*, 62-3.

⁷⁶ For an account of the bitter fighting in Shanghai based on the perspectives of both Chinese and Japanese servicemen see Moore, *Writing War*, 96-113.

⁷⁷ Translation in Yoshimi, *Grassroots Fascism*, 67.

⁷⁸ Hino Ashihei, *Wheat and Soldiers*, Ishimoto Shizue (trans.) (New York, 1939).

⁷⁹ Ishikawa, *Soldiers Alive*, 138.

were on short rations ourselves, so our officers decided not to take them prisoner and left them in their trenches to be responsible for their own keep.’⁸⁰ This, however, often proved to be a dangerous option. A Japanese spokesman cited in an article in *The Times* on 10 December, for instance, reported that small groups of Chinese soldiers having been left behind by Japanese troops on their march had begun staging guerrilla attacks on units in the rear.⁸¹ Therefore, commanders tended towards killing their captives as a security measure. As an anonymous Japanese veteran rationalised, ‘[i]f we let them remain behind alive when we departed, they would only turn on us again later. Consequently, they were always killed on the spot.’⁸² Thus, practical issues, security considerations, and attitudes of anger and hatred for Chinese soldiers who had thwarted Japanese efforts to decisively end conflict in Shanghai, contributed to the decisions of commanders to employ summary execution as a standard, though by no means universal, practice. This, of course, had been tacitly sanctioned, encouraged even, by a leadership who had shown indifference to the fate of Chinese soldiers.

The propensity of GMD troops to discard their uniforms and mingle with the population further exacerbated the sense of insecurity among Japanese forces on this march. These so-called ‘plainclothes soldiers’ became a persistent menace, especially to units in the rear, soldiers who fell behind, and small groups out searching for supplies. The aforementioned member of the 6th Division, for example, remembered that the main threat to his artillery unit was posed by straggler Chinese soldiers who,

⁸⁰ Masaru Taniguchi, *The Soldier's Log: 10,000 Miles of Battle*, R. Toombs Fincher & Yoshi Okada (trans.) (Tokyo, 1940), 99.

⁸¹ ‘The Fight for Nanking’, *The Times* (10 December 1937), 16.

⁸² Shito Muneo (pseudonym), ‘No Time for Dying’, in *Peace*, 53.

disguised as civilians, 'might attack at any moment'.⁸³ Another member of the 6th Division further elaborated on this peril, revealing its radicalising impact:

One of our greatest dangers came from Chinese soldiers disguised as civilians who mingled with ordinary citizens until they got an opportunity to approach and attack us ... I made up my mind that all Chinese were my hated enemies and that if I was to stay alive myself I had to kill them. Chinese prisoners taken at this time were executed.⁸⁴

As soldiers began to fear for their safety against a concealed and seemingly omnipresent enemy, violence towards civilians escalated. Troops were advised to be cautious when dealing with the populace, adding to growing distrust of the Chinese they encountered. Commanders directed their soldiers to 'mop-up' the areas they occupied by executing all who resisted, including women and children, and permitted the killing of any who aroused suspicion. As a consequence, Ishikawa related, 'it became impossible to estimate the number of Chinese that were killed for arousing the most trivial suspicions or committing the vaguest offences.'⁸⁵ Such practices became progressively more indiscriminate and more systematic. A field diary kept by a member of the Japanese medical corps contained the following account of 'mopping-up operations' at work in Changzhou on 29 November 1937:

An order was received to kill the residents and eighty of them, men and women of all ages, were shot to death ... The people were all gathered in one place. They were all praying, crying, and begging for help ... Soon the heavy machine guns opened fire and the sight of those people screaming and falling to the ground is one I could not face even if I had had the heart of a monster.⁸⁶

Employing scorched earth tactics, villages and towns were routinely burned to deprive 'plainclothes soldiers' of supplies and hiding spots.⁸⁷ As a consequence, the boundary between combatant and non-combatant became more and more distorted

⁸³ Nakagawa Seiichirō (pseudonym), 'Flattery?' in *ibid*, 62.

⁸⁴ Sanada Kazusuke (pseudonym), 'Killing became Natural', in *Peace*, 116

⁸⁵ Ishikawa, *Soldiers Alive*, 136-7.

⁸⁶ NARA, RG 153, JAG, WCB, Entry 179: 'Field Diary'.

⁸⁷ Hino, *Wheat and Soldiers*, 53; Ishikawa, *Soldiers Alive*, 126.

contributing to the escalation of violence visited on a population whose lives had less value.

Driving the growing inclination to target civilians was an abiding sense of hostility emanating from the Chinese communities of this region. In contrast to north China where GMD influence was limited, central China was the primary political and social base of the party.⁸⁸ It was the nucleus of Chinese nationalism and, by association, anti-Japanese sentiment in China. Accordingly, as they neared Nanjing, soldiers became more aware of the enmity of the people. Hino, for instance, recalled anti-Japanese slogans written on walls and, after stumbling across a school, realised 'how assiduously [Chinese children] were being trained in nationalism and hatred for Japan.'⁸⁹ Reinforced by occasional attacks from incensed civilians (including, on rare occasions, those by women and children), this created a tense atmosphere in which soldiers' suspicions, fears, and disdain for the local populace intensified. More importantly, as Moore has observed, the campaign began to take an exterminatory tone as Japanese commanders became determined to end Chinese resistance by completely obliterating the GMD and the foundations of its support base.⁹⁰ The bombing of universities, libraries, and schools, in addition to the burning of textbooks – all emblems of an education system thought to be peddling the GMD's anti-Japanese agenda – was representative of such intentions.⁹¹ The perception of the people of the Yangtze Region as vehemently anti-Japanese facilitated the embrace of violent extremes towards them. As Kurosu Tadanobu of the 13th Division observed, 'we were under orders to kill everyone, because this region had shown such fierce

⁸⁸ McDonald, 'Kill All', 240.

⁸⁹ Hino, *Wheat and Soldiers*, 74–8.

⁹⁰ Moore, *Writing War*, 116.

⁹¹ T. A. Bisson, *Japan in China* (New York, 1938), 294; *Japanese Aggression and the League of Nations: 1937* (Geneva, 1937), 8–9.

resistance to us.’⁹² As they neared the city, Japanese soldiers assured themselves that the capture of the capital would see a final decisive end to this ever more brutal war.⁹³ At Nanjing, the CCAA planned to encircle and ‘annihilate’ GMD troops and, in doing so, would force Chiang back to the negotiating table.⁹⁴ The increasingly systematic, indiscriminate destruction perpetrated by Japanese forces as they neared Nanjing primed soldiers for this final ‘war of annihilation’ against the GMD and its forces. Of more significance for the people of Nanjing, the encounters and experiences along the route had begun a dangerous process of radicalisation as boundaries were blurred and taboos broken in respect to acceptable methods of conduct.

‘THE TERRIBLE RESULTS OF RESISTING JAPAN’: JAPANESE FORCES CAPTURE NANJING

As the CCAA approached the city on 9 December, General Matsui issued an ultimatum warning that ‘unless the Chinese troops in Nanking surrender by noon on December 10 the horrors of war will be let loose’. He also advised that, ‘[t]hough harsh and relentless to those who resist, the troops of Japan are kind and generous to non-combatants, and Chinese troops who have no enmity for Japan.’⁹⁵ Unwilling to abandon his capital without at least some semblance of opposition, however, Chiang ordered Nanjing defended to the last.⁹⁶ From the perspective of the small foreign community who had remained behind in the city and were working to establish an International Safety Zone (ISZ) for the protection of non-combatants, such efforts would be futile. As early as 2 December, Minnie Vautrin, an American missionary based at Ginling Women’s College, observed in her diary that ‘Nanking is a deserted

⁹² Cited in Honda, *Nanjing Massacre*, 351.

⁹³ Moore, *Writing War*, 120; Ishikawa, *Soldiers Alive*, 135.

⁹⁴ Kasahara, ‘Massacres’, 63–4.

⁹⁵ Cited in ‘The Fight for Nanking’, *The Times* (10 December 1937), 16.

⁹⁶ Mitter, *China’s War*, 120–3.

and defeated city already.⁹⁷ Although recognising that the city's geography made it difficult to defend, Chinese forces under the command of General Tang Shengzhi continued their defence preparations showing, much to the frustration of the International Committee (IC), disregard for the safety of civilians as they employed scorched earth tactics that uprooted residents in areas of close proximity to the city walls.⁹⁸ As the deadline passed with no capitulation and Chinese forces continued to give an outward impression of offering their staunch resistance, the IJA began their attack with aerial bombardment on 10 December.

Despite the appearance of a stiff resolve to defend the city, however, Chinese resistance broke after two days of intensive fighting. Although there was no official surrender, large numbers of soldiers, leaderless as Tang and other commanders fled the city on 12 December, lost the will to fight and gave up on the battlefield. A report in the *Asahi Shimbun* on 16 December, for instance, detailed the 'splendid military achievement' of the 65th Regiment when 'a virtual avalanche of 14,777 retreating enemy troops' near Mufu Mountain simply raised white flags and surrendered themselves.⁹⁹ Inside the city, chaos ensued as abandoned troops were left to affect their own escape. Frank Tillman Durdin, a correspondent for the *New York Times*, reported the subsequent 'debacle' of the Chinese retreat:

[t]he flight of the many Chinese soldiers was possible by only a few exits. Instead of sticking by their men to hold the invaders at bay with a few strategically placed units while the others withdrew, many army leaders deserted, causing panic among the rank and file...¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Minnie Vautrin, in Suping Lu (ed.), *Terror in Minnie Vautrin's Nanjing: Diaries and Correspondence, 1937-38* (Urbana & Chicago, 2008), 62.

⁹⁸ Rabe, *Good German*, 54-5.

⁹⁹ Cited in Ono Kenji, 'Massacres near Mufushan', in Wakabayashi, *Nanking Atrocity*, 71-2.

¹⁰⁰ Frank Tillman Durdin, 'All Captives Slain', *New York Times* (17 December 1937).

In their attempts to escape the city, which the Japanese had almost completely encircled, Chinese soldiers rushed towards available exit points, looting food and supplies along the way. Many fell to their deaths climbing the city walls and a number drowned as they overcrowded small boats and poorly crafted rafts in attempts to cross the Yangtze River.¹⁰¹ Robert Wilson, an American surgeon at the Nanjing Hospital, described such scenes in his letters, noting that once the Chinese soldiers' morale had broken, '[t]here was no discipline and they threw away all their guns and equipment which lay scattered all over the road.'¹⁰² Vautrin also observed retreating soldiers who passed by Ginling College 'some begging for civilian clothes, others casting off their uniforms and firearms into our campus.'¹⁰³ In their desperation, Chinese soldiers looted shops and, on some occasions, even killed civilians for their clothing. In the commotion, a number of Chinese troops trapped in the city became indistinguishable from civilians.¹⁰⁴ In spite of this confusion, members of the IC recorded in their diaries and correspondence that they had successfully persuaded those stuck in the city to give up any plans for resistance.¹⁰⁵ Confident that the IJA would treat these men in accordance with international law, a large number were disarmed and detained in the Supreme Court and Foreign Ministry buildings to await the arrival of Japanese forces.¹⁰⁶ At this time, the foreign community was optimistic of a swift return to normality. American missionary, James McCallum, reflecting back in his diary on 19 December wrote that, '[w]e all breathed a sigh of relief thinking now order would be restored after the panic and

¹⁰¹ George A. Fitch, in Zhang, *Eyewitnesses*, 85.

¹⁰² Robert O. Wilson, in Timothy Brook (ed.), *Documents on the Rape of Nanking* (Ann Arbor, 2007), 209.

¹⁰³ Minnie Vautrin, in Zhang, *Eyewitnesses*, 334.

¹⁰⁴ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 328: James Espy, 'The Conditions at Nanking' (January 1938), 10.

¹⁰⁵ See Fitch & Smyth in Zhang, *Eyewitnesses*, 87 & 256-59.

¹⁰⁶ Rabe, *Good German*, 66, 70.

stampede caused by the retreating Chinese army.¹⁰⁷ Miner Searle Bates, a history professor at Nanjing University, similarly observed an air of anticipation in the city:

Many local people expressed their relief when the entry of the Japanese troops apparently brought an end to the strains of war conditions and the immediate perils of bombardment. At least they were rid of their fears of disorderly Chinese troops who indeed passed out without doing severe damage to most parts of the city.¹⁰⁸

According to Tsen Shuifang, Vautrin's assistant at Ginling College, the idea implicit in these extracts – that Japanese soldiers would be better disciplined than the Chinese army – was common among the foreign community. As she sardonically commented on 15 December, '[n]ow, they feel differently.'¹⁰⁹

Indeed, on the morning of 13 December, Japanese soldiers began their triumphant entry into the city. What followed is now well-known.¹¹⁰ For a period of around six weeks, the Chinese inhabitants of Nanjing were victims of unprecedented levels of violence as Japanese soldiers looted, raped, killed, and destroyed property unimpeded, if not directly encouraged, by their superiors. John Rabe, a German businessman and Chairman of the ISZ, gave the following summary of the situation in the city on 16 December:

All the shelling and bombing we have thus far experienced are nothing in comparison to the terror that we are going through now. There is not a single shop outside the Zone that has not been looted, and now pillaging, rape, murder, and mayhem are occurring inside the Zone as well.¹¹¹

He and other members of the IC meticulously documented incidents of 'disorder' which were then relayed periodically to the Japanese Embassy. Reporting only those

¹⁰⁷ James H. McCallum, in Zhang, *Eyewitnesses*, 229.

¹⁰⁸ Bates, in *ibid*, 4.

¹⁰⁹ Tsen Shuifang diary, in Hua-ling Hu & Zhang Lian-hong (eds.), *The Undaunted Women of Nanking: The Wartime Diaries of Minnie Vautrin and Tsen Shui-fang* (Carbondale & Edwardsville, 2010), 39.

¹¹⁰ For more detailed analyses, including references to the voluminous literature on the subject, see Wakabayashi (ed.), *The Nanking Atrocity, 1937–38*.

¹¹¹ Rabe, *Good German*, 73–4.

instances that they had personally verified, between 16 December and 10 February 1938, the IC logged over 400 incidents of violence that had taken place in the ISZ alone.¹¹²

These foreign witnesses also provided detailed accounts of the events in Nanjing in their diaries and correspondence. The idea that soldiers were, as Reverend Ernest Forster put it, 'completely out-of-hand', was a common trope in these documents.¹¹³ Having had many dealings with Japanese embassy officials, IC members observed how powerless they were in respect to the IJA who, Rabe had been advised, were intending to make things 'very bad' for the people of Nanjing.¹¹⁴ Despite receiving a chastisement by Matsui on his entry into the city on 17 December, Japanese forces continued to 'run amok' for several weeks leaving Smythe with the impression that 'either the Army did not want to stop it or could not – or some of both!'¹¹⁵ As Australian correspondent, Rhodes Farmer explained later, the fact that the 'frenzy' was not halted by the presence of officers 'lent colour' to the idea that the Massacre had been 'engineered'.¹¹⁶

It is an exaggeration to suggest that events in Nanjing were premeditated especially as there were aspects of the violence which were suggestive of a breakdown of military discipline. Certainly, lax discipline was an element played up by the Japanese leadership as they attempted to mitigate the damage to their international relations caused by the sinking of the USS Panay on the 12th and the subsequent looting of foreign residences.¹¹⁷ However, the idea that violence in Nanjing was entirely the result of a tragic breakdown of military discipline, as taken

¹¹² Hsü Shuhsi, *Documents of the Nanking Safety Zone* (Shanghai, 1939) includes details of these cases.

¹¹³ Ernest H. Forster, in Zhang, *Eyewitnesses*, 117–20.

¹¹⁴ Fitch, in *ibid*, 84; Rabe, *Good German*, 102.

¹¹⁵ Smythe, in Zhang, *Eyewitnesses*, 301.

¹¹⁶ Rhodes Farmer, *Shanghai Harvest: A Diary of Three Years in the China War* (London, 1945), 98–9.

¹¹⁷ See Hirota's Note to American Ambassador to Japan, Joseph Grew (12 February 1938), *Tokyo Gazette* (March–April 1938), 24–6.

up by revisionist historians, like Yamamoto Masahiro, is less compelling when taking into consideration the wider context of the war detailed thus far in this chapter. The violence in Nanjing, though unique in scale and intensity, was not an isolated incident. Aside from the destruction of numerous villages and towns along the route from Shanghai, the populations of other regions in China had experiences similar to that in the capital. In the north, for example, foreign correspondents reported that, whereas Beijing and Tientsin had escaped relatively unscathed, Baoding had seen an unprecedented (until Nanjing) level of violence from Japanese troops that killed, raped, and looted over several days in September 1937.¹¹⁸ Events in Nanjing were also replicated, though on a much reduced scale, at Taierzhuang after the capture of the city in May 1938.¹¹⁹ According to a US military intelligence report from 1944 describing conditions in Guangdong province from 1938, there was an identifiable pattern to the violence perpetrated by Japanese invasion forces: 'if there were any signs of military personnel, or any trace of anti-Japanese sentiments, or if the invader expected to stay in a place any length of time, he used arson, rape, plunder and loot as a means of cowing the people.'¹²⁰ Indeed, according to Haldore Hanson, who had witnessed the events in Baoding, the Japanese police chief explained to him that 'the looting and killing which you have seen here is irregular but the Japanese have regarded [Baoding] as the centre of anti-Japanism in North China and their hatred is completely out of control.'¹²¹ Similarly, massacres at Taierzhuang occurred following an unexpected and humiliating defeat of Japanese forces in the Xuzhou campaign

¹¹⁸ Bisson, *Japan in China*, 293–4; Haldore E. Hanson, "*Humane Endeavour*": *The Story of the China War* (New York, 1939), 94–7; TNA, WO 106/5574, Sino-Japanese War – Japanese Operations and Activities in Certain Chinese Towns and Cities: 'Report on Beijing and Tientsin', 3.

¹¹⁹ Diana Lary, 'A Ravaged Place: The Devastation of the Xuzhou Region, 1938', in Lary & MacKinnon, *Scars of War*, 98–116.

¹²⁰ NARA, RG 226, OSS, Entry 16: File No. 102477: 'Intelligence Report for Guangdong Province', 2.

¹²¹ Hanson, "*Humane Endeavour*", 97.

earlier in the year.¹²² This suggests that the greater intensity of atrocities and violence was a direct response to the level of resistance encountered on the battlefield. Moreover, it adds credence to the arguments of those foreign correspondents who, not being present in the capital, had contextualised the events at Nanjing within the wider context of Japanese conduct in the war. For example, Hanson gave the following perceptive assessment:

... the deterioration of army morale might very well be traceable to the official policy of terrorism adopted by the Japanese, a technique known as "totalitarian warfare" ... Such unlimited destruction would almost certainly lead to a breakdown of discipline because the individual soldier can always argue – and with some logic – that killing, looting, and raping will aid this deliberate campaign of terrorism.¹²³

This insight is particularly useful in reconciling the appearance of a breakdown of discipline at Nanjing with the more organised elements of the Massacre. For, against the backdrop of indiscriminate looting, raping, and destruction in the city, Japanese forces carried out a systematic mopping-up operation which meant certain death for surrendered Chinese soldiers and a large portion of the adult male population in the city, further undermining the argument that violence at Nanjing was simply an unintentional wartime tragedy.

'MOPPING-UP': MASS EXECUTIONS OF THE ADULT MALE POPULATION

The lack of an official surrender of the city exacerbated the confusion of the Chinese defeat on the battlefield which, in turn, intensified violence towards surrendering soldiers. While a majority of Chinese units gave up their resistance, some continued to engage with Japanese forces as they fled the area. Since soldiers could not be sure whether the units they encountered would surrender or attack, sources indicate that

¹²² Lary, 'Ravaged Place', 99–100, 107.

¹²³ Hanson, "Humane Endeavour", 146.

a number of Chinese soldiers were 'taken care of' on the battlefield.¹²⁴ Taniguchi, for instance, remarked in his memoirs that the impending prisoner 'food problem' was soon settled at Nanjing since '[t]he tens of thousands ... that got in our way, had been wiped out ... The moat around Nanking was so full of corpses that we could hardly find water enough to wash our dirty hands.'¹²⁵ As Yamamoto pointed out, periodic encounters with retreating Chinese troops often turned into one-sided slaughters as Japanese soldiers vented their frustrations, even as their victims were laying down their arms.¹²⁶ According to an extract from the diary of Major General Sasaki Tōichi on 13 December:

Frenzied troops – rebuffing efforts by superiors to restrain them – finished off these POWs one after another. Even if they aren't soldiers, men would yell, 'Kill the whole damn lot!' after recalling the past ten days of bloody fighting in which so many buddies had shed so much blood.¹²⁷

While there was an element of post-battle excitement in these early killings, Japanese sources reveal that, for the most part, mass executions of Chinese soldiers proceeded in an organised, systematic fashion over the course of several days. For example, in the vicinity of Mufu Mountain, upwards of fifteen thousand Chinese soldiers were captured and detained in the local barracks as soldiers pondered the practicalities of their 'disposal'. Kondō Eishirō, a member of the 19th Regiment's 8th Company, explained in his diary that after a fire in the barracks on 16 December:

Finally, it was decided today that we would shoot to death 7,000, or one-third of them, on the banks of the Yangtze. We went to provide an armed escort and finished taking care of them. Any who managed to survive, we stabbed or slashed to death with bayonet and sword.¹²⁸

After this 'trial execution', on 17 December Japanese troops proceeded to 'dispose of' the remaining POWs in a similar fashion. As Ono Kenji argued, '[t]his was no

¹²⁴ Yamamoto, *Anatomy*, 85–90.

¹²⁵ Taniguchi, *Soldier's Log*, 99.

¹²⁶ Yamamoto, *Anatomy*, 90.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, 91; Fujiwara, 'Nanking Atrocity', 38.

¹²⁸ Extract from Kondō Eishirō's battlefield diary cited in Ono, 'Massacres near Mufushan', 77.

impulsive or accidental act by a small number of troops suffering from battle fatigue or wartime hysteria.¹²⁹ In fact, it was judged at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE) that massacres such as these had been undertaken with the apparent sanction of commanders on the ground.¹³⁰ Though this judgement was almost certainly clouded by a sense of 'victor's justice', it has since been borne out in Japanese sources. An entry on 13 December from the diary of Division Commander Nakajima Kesago revealed that those under his command were indeed operating under a 'general policy' of not accepting prisoners and identified the challenges this policy presented in view of the extremely large numbers of POWs they encountered:

[w]e see prisoners everywhere, so that there is no way we can deal with them...The general policy is "Accept no prisoners!" So we ended up having to take care of them lot, stock and barrel. But, they came in hordes, in units of thousands or five thousands; so we couldn't even disarm them...Later I heard that the Sasaki unit [the thirteenth brigade] alone disposed of about 1,500. A company commander guarding T'ai'ing Gate took care of another 1,300. Another 7,000 to 8,000 clustered at Hsienho Gate are still surrendering. We need a really huge ditch to handle those 7,000 to 8,000, but we can't find one, so someone suggested this plan: "Divide them up into groups of 100 or 200, and then lure them to some suitable spot to finish them off."¹³¹

A battle report from the 68th Regiment, 3rd Battalion, documenting the following order from the Regimental Commander: '[k]ill all POWs in accordance with [One Hundred Twenty-seventh] Brigade orders. As a method, we suggest tying them up in groups of less than twenty and shooting them one by one ...' confirmed that massacres were being authorised at command level.¹³² As these examples reveal, while some early killings on the battlefield may have been the acts of 'frenzied troops' operating on their own volition, the execution of Chinese captives had become a sanctioned practice as part of the IJA's mopping-up operations progressing in and around the city.

¹²⁹ Ono, 'Massacres near Mufushan', 84.

¹³⁰ *Tokyo Trial Transcripts*, 49,604.

¹³¹ Fujiwara, 'Nanking Atrocity', 38; Yamamoto, *Anatomy*, 93.

¹³² Fujiwara, 'Nanking Atrocity', 42; Honda, *Nanjing Massacre*, 192.

Such extreme measures were driven by the realities and practical considerations of the situation on the battlefield. Japanese forces confronted the serious problem of what to do with the 'droves' of Chinese soldiers that surrendered to them in the absence of an official POW policy. While they no longer faced the logistical pressures of the rapid march, supplies remained low. Reserve Officer Amano Saburō, in a letter dated 12 December, told of twenty thousand Chinese captives having gone without food or water for over a week in the vicinity of Nanjing because 'provisions [were] inadequate.'¹³³ The exceptionally large numbers of surrendering Chinese soldiers made the prospect of detaining captives for any long period of time impractical. It also presented real security concerns as Japanese units, often outnumbered by their prisoners, began the onerous process of disarming, restraining, and guarding them. Memories of guerrilla attacks and ambushes along the march to Nanjing, in addition to a determination for resistance and discovery of concealed weapons among some captives, militated against releasing a sizeable force that might later re-join the fight or become guerrilla units. These practical issues, as Yang has argued, made easier, though by no means justifiable, the decision to execute Chinese POWs.¹³⁴ However, the embrace of such extreme (and logistically challenging) measures was only possible against the backdrop of 'exception' and the radicalisation of attitudes that had occurred on the advance to the city. This context was crucial since it facilitated the intensification of 'mopping-up' efforts which included the indiscriminate massacre of a considerable part of the male population of Nanjing.

As mopping-up operations began inside the city, the foreign community were 'frozen in horror' when the soldiers they had encouraged to disarm were led away

¹³³ Amano Saburō, 'Letters from a Reserve Officer Conscripted to Nanking', in Wakabayashi, *Nanking Atrocity*, 187.

¹³⁴ Yang, 'Searching', 85.

and, since this was often followed by the ominous sound of gunfire, presumably executed.¹³⁵ George Fitch, head of the YMCA, lamented that these men would likely have preferred to die fighting than to have been slaughtered as they were.¹³⁶ Such acts were reprehensible to IC members for, aside from one or two rogue soldiers, they had seen no outward signs of resistance inside the city as of 13 December.¹³⁷ Indeed, Archibald Steele, correspondent for the *Chicago Daily News*, claimed that:

The Japanese could have completed the occupation of the remainder of the city almost without firing a shot, by offering mercy to the trapped Chinese soldiers, most of whom had discarded their arms and would surrender. However, they *chose* the course of systematic extermination.¹³⁸

From the perspective of the IJA, however, they faced an undetermined security problem in Nanjing. Discarded uniforms and arms strewn about the streets confirmed the presence of ‘plainclothes soldiers’ and the turmoil that followed as Chinese commanders abandoned their troops, added to the uncertainty of the conditions in the city. An anonymous private first class noted in his diary on 14 December that:

... the only escape route for the enemy was the Yangtze River. Some of the enemy tried to escape down the Yangtze in boats, but all of them were killed by the 10th Division, which was waiting for them, so the frontline soldiers lost their escape route and were in the city as stragglers. There are said to be a hundred thousand stragglers in the city ...¹³⁹

The existence of an unknown and, as the above example indicates, exaggerated number of unidentifiable remnant troops brought the fears and insecurities which had developed through encounters with ‘plainclothes soldiers’ along the march to the fore. Thus, in their efforts to secure the city in anticipation of the victory

¹³⁵ Rabe, *Good German*, 68; Smythe, in Zhang, *Eyewitnesses*, 259.

¹³⁶ Fitch, in Zhang, *Eyewitnesses*, 87.

¹³⁷ See Bates’ testimony, in *Tokyo Trial Transcripts*, 2628.

¹³⁸ Archibald T. Steele, ‘Japanese Troops Kill Thousands’, *Chicago Daily News* (15 December 1937), cited in Suping Lu, *They were in Nanjing: The Nanjing Massacre as Witnessed by American and British Nationals* (Hong Kong, 2004), 20. Emphasis added.

¹³⁹ Extract in Honda, *Nanjing Massacre*, 191.

celebrations planned for 17 December, Japanese commanders ordered their troops to carry out comprehensive search-and-destroy style operations. Private First Class Mizutani Sō gave the following account of the strategies employed by troops engaged in these actions in his diary on the 16th:

In the afternoon we went to the Safety Zone for mop up. We placed sentries with bayonets at the intersections, blocked these off, and went about our work rounding up virtually all young men we came across. We roped them off, surrounded them with armed guards, tied them up in rows, and led them away so that they looked like kids playing choo-choo train. Our First Company clearly took less than other units but we still got a hundred and several dozen...Even if some unfortunate innocent victims were mixed in (we couldn't tell for sure), it just couldn't be helped. Killing some innocent victims was unavoidable. Commander Matsui ordered us to clean out each and every anti-Japanese element and defeated straggler, so we did that in the harshest possible manner.¹⁴⁰

As this example insinuates, the difficulties of identifying 'plainclothes soldiers' combined with an embedded disregard for Chinese life contributed to the indiscriminate nature of these 'mopping-up' operations. Adachi Kazuo, a Japanese correspondent for *Asahi Shimbun*, observed that 'almost all the Chinese men who stayed in Nanjing have been rounded up and branded "plainclothes" soldiers.'¹⁴¹ Japanese troops had been advised to detain anyone suspected of having been a soldier which, based on documentation from the Shanghai Expeditionary Army's 9th Division, 7th Regiment, was to include all youths and adult males.¹⁴² This sanctioned an arbitrary and indiscriminate targeting of the military-aged male population in the city on the basis that they might be, rather than conclusively were, 'plainclothes soldiers'.

As a consequence of this indiscriminate approach, Magee observed that men were being 'shot down like hunting of rabbits in the streets'.¹⁴³ Indeed, men who

¹⁴⁰ Cited in Fujiwara, 'Nanking Atrocity', 45.

¹⁴¹ Cited in Honda, *Nanjing Massacre*, 186.

¹⁴² Yamamoto, *Anatomy*, 97.

¹⁴³ Magee, in Zhang, *Eyewitnesses*, 171-2.

appeared to be acting suspiciously, who showed fear, or who ran from Japanese troops were shot on sight.¹⁴⁴ As they moved through the city, rounding-up and ‘inspecting’ the male population, Japanese troops searched for specific physical characteristics that apparently denoted former soldier status. Assumed to have previously carried rifles or worn military helmets, men were marched off for having callouses on their hands or pale foreheads.¹⁴⁵ According to Tillman Durdin, the city was also ‘combed in a systematic house-to-house search for men having knapsack marks on their shoulders or other signs of having been soldiers.’¹⁴⁶ Zhao Shifa, a member of the Chinese 88th Army, recalled that he and others had been picked out by Japanese soldiers who targeted those in their twenties as well as those who had short military-style haircuts.¹⁴⁷ The men that were selected were taken to designated points and, without receiving a trial or any further investigation as to their former soldier status, were ‘disposed of’ in a variety of ways.¹⁴⁸

The ISZ became a particular source of anxiety for Japanese forces in the city, especially once suspicions of its use as a haven for soldiers were confirmed in a letter from the IC to the Japanese Embassy. In this letter, written on 15 December, Rabe explained how Chinese soldiers had arrived seeking refuge. They had been disarmed, but despite their best efforts IC members had been unable to keep them separate from civilians due to their changing out of military uniform.¹⁴⁹ Despite visiting the ISZ on a number of occasions and leading men away on each visit, Japanese soldiers maintained that at least twenty thousand ‘plainclothes soldiers’ remained in the

¹⁴⁴ Wilson, in Brook, *Documents*, 210–1.

¹⁴⁵ McCallum, in Zhang, *Eyewitnesses*, 71; Vautrin, *Terror*, 98; Honda, *Nanjing Massacre*, 183.

¹⁴⁶ Tillman Durdin, ‘All Captives’.

¹⁴⁷ Zhao Shifa, in Honda, *Nanjing Massacre*, 191.

¹⁴⁸ For survivors accounts, see Honda, *Nanjing Massacre*.

¹⁴⁹ ‘Letter to Mr. Fukuda’, Doc. No. 4 (15 December 1937) in Hsü, *Documents*, 4–5.

Zone.¹⁵⁰ Accordingly, from 26 December, they began the process of registering the entire Chinese population. Both Bates and Vautrin witnessed two separate registrations at work, relating in their diaries how hundreds of former Chinese soldiers were tricked into revealing themselves through promises of impunity and work, only to be taken away and, according to those few who managed to survive and return to recount their ordeals, executed.¹⁵¹ This registration process marked the end of the main mopping-up operations in the city, though they would continue for longer in the surrounding areas.¹⁵² The damage wrought by these operations continues to be a source of contention among scholars. Since exact figures can never be known and estimates depend on the way in which the events at Nanjing are delimited, suffice it to say that the magnitude of the Massacre was extreme and exceptional at this time.¹⁵³ Furthermore, far from a tragic breakdown of discipline, the massacres of men in and around Nanjing were part of an organised military operation during which all able-bodied men were to be viewed as potential soldiers and could be selected for execution, without trial, on the basis of often arbitrary, subjective reasons. At odds with the realities of the situation inside the city, the mass killings of Chinese men at Nanjing were, like the execution of surrendering soldiers, rooted in the memories of the march from Shanghai where the earlier experiences of surprise attacks and ambushes from 'plainclothes soldiers' exacerbated the perception of threat.

¹⁵⁰ See Fitch, in Zhang, *Eyewitnesses*, 87–9, 94–5 for an account of four instances; '20,000 plain-clothes soldiers active in Nanking, Japan allege', *CWR*, Vol. 83 (25 December 1937).

¹⁵¹ Bates, (26 December 1937), in *ibid*, 12; Minnie Vautrin, in Lu, *Terror*, 97–8.

¹⁵² See Kasahara, 'Massacres', 57–69.

¹⁵³ See David Askew, 'Part of the Numbers Issue: Demography and Civilian Victims', in Wakabayashi, *Nanking Atrocity*, 86–114 for further discussion.

In November 1937, Japanese commanders came under increased pressure to swiftly end a war that, should it become protracted, could spell disaster for the nation's defence preparations at a time of international uncertainty. In responding to stubborn resistance from a presumed inferior enemy, the IJA launched a punitive terror-based campaign, tacitly sanctioned by the leadership's framing of the war, with the ultimate goal of delivering a symbolic 'decisive blow' to the GMD's capital. The encounters, experiences, and radicalisation of attitudes during the advance through the 'anti-Japanese' Yangtze Delta contributed to the breaking of taboos in terms of permitting increasingly systematic violence against the Chinese population which made the decision to employ genocidal measures in Nanjing easier. While the process of learning on this march made Japanese troops more open to the use of violence against civilians, commanders made decisions at Nanjing based on conditions in and around the city. The confusion and turmoil of the Chinese defeat, in addition to the practicalities and security considerations attendant to the extremely large numbers of Chinese captives and the undetermined number of 'plainclothes soldiers' hiding in the city, fuelled the embrace of measures that involved the intentional destruction of a substantial part of the male population of Nanjing. As I will now show in the final section of this chapter, the beginnings of this breakdown in efforts to distinguish between combatants and non-combatants and the growing inclination to allow the targeting of the civilian population to root out 'plainclothes soldiers' during this campaign laid the foundations for a more drastic escalation of violence in later years as the IJA dealt with the intensification of the CCP's guerrilla efforts in the occupied areas with further genocidal violence.

3.3

'KILL ALL, BURN ALL, LOOT ALL' Anti-Guerrilla Warfare in Occupied China, c1938-1942

Nanjing represented a turning point in the war. Far from forcing Chiang to submit to Japanese demands, the capture of the capital had stiffened his resolve. In a broadcast to the nation on 17 December, Chiang revealed the following plans for a defence strategy that involved mobilising the masses for protracted grassroots resistance:

The time must come when Japan's military strength will be exhausted, thus giving China the ultimate victory ... The basis of China's future success in prolonged resistance is not found in Nanking or big cities but in villages all over China in the fixed determination of the people.¹⁵⁴

In the face of such efforts, the Japanese leadership abandoned any remaining hope that inflicting a 'decisive blow' would end the war. For example, in an address published in the *Tokyo Gazette*, Konoe explained that 'the fall of Nanking is but a prelude to the solution of the China problem, and we must accordingly be prepared for a real war of endurance which is beginning from the present moment.'¹⁵⁵ On 16 January, he also announced that the Japanese government would no longer negotiate with Chiang, formalising the eliminationist sentiment that had evolved in respect to the GMD between November and December 1937.¹⁵⁶ Intending to establish a new pro-Japanese regime, the leadership issued statements that now downplayed the punitive overtones of late 1937 and promoted more emphatically ideas of friendship and cooperation with Chinese collaborators.¹⁵⁷ However, while political strategy had changed, the IJA continued to seek a military solution to the conflict by launching

¹⁵⁴ Cited in Bisson, *Japan in China*, 289.

¹⁵⁵ Konoe Fumimaro, 'On the fall of Nanking', *Tokyo Gazette* (January 1938), 45.

¹⁵⁶ See text of statement printed in the *Osaka Mainichi and the Tokyo Nichi Nichi* (17 January 1938).

¹⁵⁷ For examples see ministerial addresses given at the 73rd Imperial Diet (22 January 1938), *Contemporary Japan*, 783-9.

large-scale ad hoc offensives in its 'war of annihilation' against the GMD.¹⁵⁸

SHIFTING STRATEGIES AND THE NEW ORDER IN EAST ASIA

When the fall of Wuhan in October 1938 simply forced Chiang to withdraw further into China's interior, the Japanese leadership once again re-evaluated their strategy. The successive but hard-won victories in the offensives of 1938 had left the IJA in control of major strategic points and yet, Chinese resistance endured. Thus, Imperial General Headquarters directed Japanese forces to modify their tactics and focus on consolidating their position in the occupied territories in order to 'create conditions favourable to the sound development of the new central regime in China.'¹⁵⁹ This shift in military strategy followed the government's more tangible definition of Japan's war aims around this time. Taking inspiration from pan-Asianists who had long espoused the need for a greater role for Japan as leader and saviour of Asia, Konoe emphasised the Empire's responsibility as a stabilising force in the region and elucidated plans to create a New Order in East Asia in a speech given on 3 November 1938. According to this speech, the principal objectives were 'to secure international justice, to perfect the joint defence against Communism, and to create a new culture and realize a close economic cohesion throughout East Asia.'¹⁶⁰ In essence, this was a reiteration of earlier plans for a regional economic bloc. Though not new, having been advocated in varying forms for many years, these paternalistic aspirations added a more overt ideological component to the war. The IJA now had two primary objectives: first, to end the conflict, ideally through the complete destruction of the GMD and CCP, and second, to reconstruct occupied China in accordance with the lofty and abstract ideals of establishing a New Order for the

¹⁵⁸ Japanese Monograph (JM), No. 70, 'China Area Operations Record, July 1937–November 1941', gives an overview of these campaigns.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 27.

¹⁶⁰ Konoe Fumimaro, 'Statement' (3 November 1938), *Tokyo Gazette* (December 1938), 16.

benefit of East Asian peoples. This second goal effectively committed Japan to a long-term occupation of China and, given the professed benevolence of the New Order, made it extremely difficult to withdraw without having achieved these aims.

This was important since also driving the shift in political and military strategy at this time were mounting concerns over the extraordinary strain that protracted conflict continued to place on the Japanese economy. In fact, some, such as Suma Yakichirō, Director of the Information Bureau, began to describe the situation in China in terms of 'life and death'. According to Suma, conflict must quickly be settled else 'the destructive consequences will continue indefinitely, causing the maintenance of expensive armies, the persistent impairment of trade and commerce, and the permanent feeling of insecurity.'¹⁶¹ By the end of 1937, Japan had come to rely heavily on imports of essential war materials, a situation at odds with long-term aspirations of self-sufficiency. The expensive campaigns of 1938 had made the situation worse and there were fears among military strategists over the viability of continuing the war effort. Deteriorating relations with trade partners, namely the United States and Britain, and the ominous rumblings along the Soviet border further exacerbated the problem of the 'China Quagmire'.¹⁶² Since abandoning vested interests in China was not an option, the exploitation of the resources and markets of the occupied areas became an attractive solution to some of these difficulties. Editorial writer for the *Asahi Shimbun*, Ryū Shintarō, for instance, summarised the benefits of development on the continent in an article for *Contemporary Japan*: '[Japan] is dependent upon imports of raw materials for her manufacturing industries. North China can supply her economic wants: cotton for her textile industry; iron and coal

¹⁶¹ Suma Yakichirō, *Where Japan Stands: Addresses delivered in America on the Sino-Japanese Conflict* (Tokyo, 1940), 21.

¹⁶² For further discussion of the economic impact of the war see Barnhart, *Japan Prepares*, 91-114.

for her heavy industries.¹⁶³ In addition to the economic benefits, military strategists pointed out that the restoration of peace and order would enable a reduction in the number of Japanese troops stationed in China, alleviating the economic burden of the war effort somewhat.¹⁶⁴ Intensive plans to integrate and exploit the north were already underway by January 1938 when the North China Development Company embarked on a nine-year plan of development.¹⁶⁵ However, as Lieutenant Colonel Suzuki Kaichi argued in his lecture on methods for maintaining peace and order in the region, delivered to troops in Tokyo as part of their training, the elimination of unrest was a necessary precondition for the realisation of Japanese objectives in north China.¹⁶⁶ From late 1938, therefore, Japanese forces were to concentrate their efforts more fully on stabilising the occupied areas in order to expedite the establishment of the New Order. This was to prove challenging since 1938 had seen the rise of stubborn and pervasive guerrilla resistance in occupied China.

THE RISE OF GUERRILLA RESISTANCE AND ANTI-GUERRILLA STRATEGY

In contrast to the fierce resistance of GMD forces in central China, Chinese opposition in the north was much less effective and the IJA's campaigns in 1937 had progressed swiftly and favourably. By the end of the year, Japanese forces held most strategic points and controlled vital communication and supply lines across five provinces.¹⁶⁷ Despite these successes, their hold beyond these 'points and lines' was tenuous. According to an anonymous American missionary who had passed through the region in February 1938, there was 'unprecedented lawlessness and anarchy'

¹⁶³ Ryū Shintarō, 'Problems of North China Development', *Contemporary Japan* (September 1938), 260.

¹⁶⁴ Drea, *Japan's Imperial Army*, 203.

¹⁶⁵ Ramon H. Myers, 'Creating a Modern Enclave Economy: The Economic Integration of Japan, Manchuria, and North China, 1932-1945', in Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, & Mark R. Peattie (eds.), *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945* (Princeton, 1996), 159-70.

¹⁶⁶ NARA, RG 226, OSS, Entry 16: File No. 51986: 'Japanese Techniques of Occupation in China'.

¹⁶⁷ Edward J. Drea & Hans van de Ven, 'Overview of Major Military Campaigns during the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945', in Mark Peattie, Edward J. Drea, & Hans van de Ven (eds.), *The Battle for China: Essays on the Military History of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937-1945* (Stanford, 2011), 30-2.

throughout the rural areas since the 'power vacuum' left after the destruction of the former government had caused a proliferation in militia, bandit, and partisan groups.¹⁶⁸ CCP troops and, to a lesser extent, remnant GMD soldiers also continued to harry Japanese forces in the occupied areas by launching hit-and-run guerrilla attacks.¹⁶⁹ Initially this activity was perceived as little more than a nuisance.¹⁷⁰ In a statement published in the English-language *Japan Chronicle*, General Hata Shunroku, commander of the CCAA from February 1938, advised that irregulars were to be regarded as local bandits and were underserving of attention.¹⁷¹ It is true that guerrillas were primarily engaged in disrupting supply lines and harassing Japanese troops in rear areas, not re-capturing cities or launching major offensives. However, that was not the primary objective. As Mao Zedong explained in his book *On Guerrilla Warfare* published in 1937, mobile attacks on Japanese forces in the rear areas were more effective as a supplement to traditional positional warfare. The aim was to add to the burdens of the IJA by forcing a wide dispersal of troops and by drawing them more deeply into a protracted conflict.¹⁷² In essence, these were tactics fundamental to victory in an asymmetric war of attrition.

Over the course of 1938, the irregulars proved more and more successful in this endeavour and, as guerrilla activity intensified, foreign observers began to doubt that the IJA could secure its hold in occupied China. Tillman Durdin, for example, suggested that CCP forces had made life so difficult for the Japanese as to make the

¹⁶⁸ Document in H. J. Timperley, *What War Means: The Japanese Terror in China, A Documentary Record* (London, 1938), 80-1.

¹⁶⁹ See Yang Kuisong, 'Nationalist and Communist Guerrilla Warfare in North China', in Peattie et al., *Battle for China*, 308-27 for an overview of these activities.

¹⁷⁰ JM 70, 19.

¹⁷¹ 'An Army Statement on China', *Japan Chronicle* (17 March 1938), 334.

¹⁷² Mao Zedong, *On Guerrilla Warfare* (1937), Ch. 7, 'The Strategy of Guerrilla Resistance against Japan', available at <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/works/1937/guerrilla-warfare/ch07.htm> (Accessed February 2015).

conquest of the province of Shanxi a 'questionable venture'.¹⁷³ In his reports to the Dutch government, DeFremery estimated that the Japanese controlled less than ten percent of the occupied areas and claimed that it was 'so unsafe' soldiers would not venture far from their garrisons unless in groups.¹⁷⁴ Others offered more reserved assessments. For T. A. Bisson, an American who worked for the Institute of Pacific Affairs, the irregulars had not made Japanese occupation untenable; after all, the IJA had won 'striking victories'. The guerrilla presence was, nevertheless, a hindrance that would require 'a costly army of occupation for many years to come.'¹⁷⁵ Based on Marine Corps Captain Evans Carlson's observations during a tour of the north in 1938, the American Ambassador to China, Nelson Johnson, advised the US government in September that 'the possibility of large scale Japanese exploitation of North China seems remote so long as the Communists are able to carry on their activities in that area.'¹⁷⁶ No doubt these appraisals were overstated by a foreign community that had turned decidedly against Japan following Nanjing. All the same, they provide some useful, if inflated, insights into the problems faced by the IJA in the occupied areas. Though not decisive in a military sense, guerrilla activity was becoming more than a simple nuisance as disturbances began to seriously thwart efforts to develop occupied China. More importantly, as they continued to advance further into the interior in large-scale offensives against Chiang's main forces, the upsurge in small scale conflicts with CCP troops, remnant GMD soldiers, and irregulars in the rear forced the Japanese, as DeFremery observed, to begin fighting a war on multiple fronts.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Frank Tillman Durdin, 'Red Hornets of China Sting the Japanese', *CWR*, Vol. 84 (28 May 1938), 380.

¹⁷⁴ DeFremery, *Dutch Spy*, 248

¹⁷⁵ Bisson, *Japan in China*, 315.

¹⁷⁶ *FRUS*, 1938: The Far East, Vol. III, 275.

¹⁷⁷ DeFremery, *Dutch Spy*, 245.

The multi-front nature of the war from 1938 presented serious logistical difficulties to an army of limited manpower in the vast expanse of China. While the majority of Japanese forces engaged in frontline offensives, the rapidly expanding occupied areas were left sparsely garrisoned outside of major cities and supply lines and, thus, were vulnerable to guerrilla attacks. Irregulars had taken advantage of the concentration of Japanese forces at Xuzhou in spring 1938 to increase their activities. After the fall of the city in May, soldiers remaining in the area were able to refocus their attention on 'clean up' campaigns and the situation was thought to be coming under control.¹⁷⁸ In effect, Japanese forces faced a choice in either scaling back on positional warfare or leaving occupied areas only lightly defended which would be optimal to guerrilla strategy.

Until large-scale operations came to an end after the capture of Wuhan in October 1938, mopping-up operations by small garrison units continued to be largely ineffective.¹⁷⁹ According to an intelligence report compiled by the US Military Attaché in Tokyo in August, for all the IJA's claims that guerrillas had been 'annihilated' in certain areas, more were ready to spring to action and numbers never seemed to diminish.¹⁸⁰ Indeed, over the course of 1938, the guerrillas thrived in the inadequately defended rural areas contributing to their hydra-like nature. Thus, by the time the North China Area Army (NCAA) was tasked with 'annihilating' them as part of more vigorous efforts to restore peace and order to the occupied areas in late 1938, the guerrillas - the CCP in particular - had become a more serious problem.¹⁸¹ Poorly equipped and lacking in numbers to begin with, the communist Eighth Route Army had enhanced its position through engaging in guerrilla tactics from the outset.

¹⁷⁸ 'Situation in China', *Tokyo Gazette* (February 1939), 15.

¹⁷⁹ JM 70, 47.

¹⁸⁰ NARA, RG 165, G-2 MID, Entry 77: Japan: 6910: 'Military Attaché Reports, 1922-1944'.

¹⁸¹ JM 178: 'North China Area Operations Record, July 1937-May 1941', 207.

This primarily involved disrupting communications and supplies through destroying rail tracks, roads, and telegraph lines. Still, irregulars also attacked Japanese supply units in the rear. Since the aim was to remain as mobile as possible, when they did encounter larger Japanese forces they would scatter, expanding the field of battle to make conventional encirclement tactics useless.¹⁸² In an article published in the *Tokyo Gazette*, the Information Bureau begrudgingly acknowledged that through careful avoidance of direct battles with Japanese combat units, 'the fighting strength of the main force of the Communist Army, though not originally formidable, has largely been preserved.'¹⁸³ This was a somewhat tempered appraisal for, while still not in a position to re-take cities, the Eighth Route Army had become more adept at guerrilla warfare, more impressive in manpower, and had established a strong support base in the north.¹⁸⁴

The ability to win the support of the local populations was, according to Carlson, the greatest achievement of the Eighth Route Army.¹⁸⁵ While the aggressive and arrogant behaviour of GMD forces and other irregulars won little favour with the rural populations, Eighth Route Army commanders gave their troops strict guidelines for considerate treatment of the Chinese people.¹⁸⁶ In addition to the skilful dissemination of anti-Japanese propaganda, the CCP implemented economic policies in the areas that came under their control to alleviate the hardships of the locals. They also trained militias and partisans to act as village defence units. These groups were responsible for gathering information that was vital to ensuring that villagers were evacuated and useful items moved or hidden to prevent destruction

¹⁸² JM 178, 220-1; Mao, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, Ch. 7, for details of tactics employed.

¹⁸³ Bureau of Information, 'Chinese Communists and the China Affair', *Tokyo Gazette* (October 1938), 6.

¹⁸⁴ Yang, 'Guerrilla Warfare', 310.

¹⁸⁵ *FRUS*, 1938: The Far East, Vol. III, 274.

¹⁸⁶ Evans F. Carlson, *The Chinese Army: Its Organization and Military Efficiency* (New York, 1940), 36-7.

by Japanese units out on punitive expeditions.¹⁸⁷ Through these measures the Eighth Route Army cultivated a good reputation and won considerable local support. This was essential since mobile guerrilla tactics required a close relationship with communities who could provide supplies, shelter, and intelligence. As Mao summarised, the guerrillas were the fish and the people their water.¹⁸⁸

Aside from their own policies, fundamental to the Eighth Route Army's success in securing cooperation from rural communities were the atrocities perpetrated by Japanese forces in their anti-guerrilla efforts. For instance, though sympathetic to the CCP's cause in 1939, war correspondent Freda Uitley questioned how successful their efforts would be '[i]f it were not for the atrocities committed by the Japanese'.¹⁸⁹ General Nishio Toshizō, Commander-in-Chief of Japanese forces in China, showed awareness of this problem and warned in a pamphlet distributed in October 1940 that atrocities perpetrated against 'peaceable citizens' meant that 'no pacification in the world, no matter how well executed, will gain anything but the hatred of the Chinese.'¹⁹⁰ Takahashi Tokubei experienced this first-hand, writing in a letter home that '[s]ince the garrison before us went out to subjugate the area and burned people's houses down, these people make contact with the Chinese army and every night they come around to attack us.'¹⁹¹ This, even though they often enacted violent reprisals against those who collaborated with the Japanese, the Eighth Route Army endeared themselves more to the Chinese people than did the IJA who engaged in punitive expeditions that frequently involved massacres of military-aged men and destruction of villages. Such acts engendered animosity among the rural

¹⁸⁷ Carlson, *Chinese Army*, 36–8; Yang, 'Guerrilla Warfare', 311–3; NARA, RG 226, OSS, Entry 16: File No. 61976: 'Interview with Cecil Troxel'.

¹⁸⁸ Mao, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, Ch. 7.

¹⁸⁹ Freda Uitley, *China at War* (London, 1939), 269–70.

¹⁹⁰ NARA, RG 165, G-2, MID, Entry 77: Japan: 6000: 'Translation of Pamphlet', 13.

¹⁹¹ Extract from letter in Yoshimi, *Grassroots Fascism*, 75.

populace who, actively armed by the CCP, sometimes participated in fifth-column activities or attacked enemy stragglers.¹⁹² This in turn fuelled further violence from Japanese forces.

Like the advance to Nanjing in late 1937, encounters with irregulars roused frustrations, hatreds, and fears among Japanese troops who faced immense difficulties in combatting an enemy that would not engage and could easily disappear among a population usually willing to shelter them. Commenting on the security issues in occupied China, a Japanese POW captured and interrogated in 1944, recalled of his experience conducting weekly patrols against guerrillas around Qingdao that daytime was usually safe, but at night guerrillas would stage attacks on Japanese garrisons.¹⁹³ Abe Katsuo expressed irritation at this noting that 'we're unable to rest at night with any sense of security. When you chase after them they run away. When you come back they do some more mischief'. Underscoring the difficulties in identifying guerrillas and the radicalisation of attitudes this could inspire, Abe further wrote, 'since we can't tell which guys are making the mischief, it's getting so we can't be safe unless we take all the natives and tie them up or kill them (although we can't actually do that)'.¹⁹⁴ The uncertainty associated with fighting an enemy that could be anywhere and attack at any time added to Japanese soldiers' fears, especially as stories of Chinese reprisals circulated. For instance, a POW captured in the Pacific in 1944 told his interrogator that Chinese guerrillas killed 'by degrees' through cutting off the ears and nose, then removing the tongue and gouging out the eyes of their victims.¹⁹⁵ One soldier, having heard tales of Japanese stragglers 'being literally ripped limb from limb', recalled briefly

¹⁹² Tillman Durdin, 'Red Hornets', 380; Edgar Snow, *Scorched Earth* (New York, 1941), 324-5; Hanson, "Human Endeavour", 227-8; Yang, 'Guerrilla Warfare', 312.

¹⁹³ ATIS: Interrogation Reports, No. 454, 9.

¹⁹⁴ Extract from diary in Yoshimi, *Grassroots Fascism*, 76.

¹⁹⁵ ATIS: Interrogation Reports, No. 308, 6

contemplating suicide when he appeared to be falling behind his company.¹⁹⁶ As in the Yangtze region, Japanese soldiers reacted with astonishing violence in retaliation for such acts. Reserve Officer Yasuda Toshio recounted how ‘wrath and hatred for those who could do such a thing made us tremble as we wordlessly prayed for the repose of the dead.’ He further described how, on discovering the mutilated corpses of three soldiers who had left the unit to go out plundering, his ‘enraged commander’ had ordered a nearby village burned and all inhabitants killed. As Yasuda observed, though inspired by ‘spontaneous fury’, such acts were in line with Japanese anti-guerrilla strategy at this time.¹⁹⁷

Indeed, despite calls for cooperation with the Chinese under the rubric of the New Order, the leadership did not retract their tacit approval for unconventional and illegal methods established at the start of the war. In the face of the arduous, frustrating, and at times, dangerous task of rooting out guerrillas, commanders could, and often did, employ ruthless measures. For example, Yamamoto Takeshi, participating in mopping-up operations around Xuzhou in May 1938, recorded receiving the following order in his diary: ‘since it is difficult to distinguish ordinary residents, local rebels, and Chinese soldiers, kill them as you encounter them.’¹⁹⁸ While the NCAA employed a diverse range of ‘pacification works’ their principal method of suppressing resistance was to launch regular punitive expeditions.¹⁹⁹ Intelligence gathered from Japanese soldiers who had deserted to the Eighth Route Army in 1944 (and later became members of the Japanese People’s Emancipation League in Yan’an), revealed that these operations varied according to the situation.

¹⁹⁶ Kawabata Yoshirō (Pseudonym), ‘Their Screaming Did No Good’, in *Peace*, 47.

¹⁹⁷ Yasuda Toshio, ‘Sorcery of Being a Soldier’, *ibid*, 40-1.

¹⁹⁸ Cited in Yoshimi, *Grassroots Fascism*, 71.

¹⁹⁹ Timothy Brook, ‘Occupation State Building’ in Stephen MacKinnon, Diana Lary, & Ezra Vogel (eds.), *China at War: Regions of China, 1937-1945* (Stanford, 2007), 22-43 for overview of other efforts; JM 70 & 178 give details of these expeditions.

Some might take the form of a routine patrol, others might be used to impress villagers with the might of the IJA, while more intense operations involved a combat element. Recognising that the guerrillas' success lay in the support from local communities, punitive expeditions often brought the IJA to villages and towns where treatment of the Chinese population depended on the personality of the commander and the circumstances on the ground.²⁰⁰ They routinely searched private houses targeting 'enemies pretending to be local people' and particularly 'all males between fifteen and sixty'.²⁰¹ Sakakura Kiyoshi remembered that 'regardless of whether they were the communist army or farmers, anyone who tried to escape or showed the slightest signs of defiance was killed ...'²⁰² According to those aforementioned reports, if villagers proved stubborn or uncooperative, the commander was likely to order the village looted and burned and all its men killed.²⁰³ Foreign observers confirmed the widespread nature of such practices.²⁰⁴ A survey of the situation in north China from June 1939 by the American Information Committee reported that around Xuzhou:

every town and village is liable to bombing, burning, and machine gunning, not alone because guerrillas are there, but because they were there, or their presence was suspected there, or a bridge burned or Japanese soldier killed in the vicinity. And it has happened not once, but scores of times.

The survey concluded that in the north, 'the Japanese control less of the country around the cities than they did six months ago and are burning and shooting up defenceless towns and villages with such regularity as to point conclusively to a

²⁰⁰ NARA, RG 226, OSS, Entry 16: File No. 128153, 'Appendix: Punitive Operations' (22 December 1944), 18–20.

²⁰¹ Cited in Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* (New York, 2000), 365; JM 178, 218.

²⁰² Cited in *Hell in the Pacific*, 56.

²⁰³ File No. 128153, 18–20.

²⁰⁴ See for example Timperley, *What War Means*, 72–83; Hanson, "Humane Endeavour", 265–76; White & Jacoby, *Thunder*, 62–6, 205–6; Lindsay Hsiao Li, *Bold Plum: With the Guerrillas in China's War against Japan* (Morrisville, 2007), 115, 123.

policy of reprisal and terrorism against the civilian population.²⁰⁵ Edgar Snow, an American correspondent famous for his writings on the communists in China, also viewed Japanese strategy as a policy akin to terrorism.²⁰⁶ Given the context of the war and the conduct of the IJA as they came up against resistance on the march to Nanjing, examined earlier in this chapter, this seems to be a reasonable conclusion. Much like in the Yangtze region in late 1937, atrocities became normalised practices in Japanese anti-guerrilla warfare. The previously mentioned commander, Tominaga Shōzō, for example, recalled that:

[M]assacres of civilians became routine. They cooperated with the enemy, sheltered them in their houses, gave them information. We viewed them as the enemy. During combat, all villagers went into hiding. We pilfered anything useful from their houses or, in winter, burned them for firewood. If anyone was found wandering about, we captured and killed them. Spies! This was war.²⁰⁷

As this example reveals, the experience of guerrilla warfare added to the perception that the Chinese in areas rife with insurgency were wholly ‘anti-Japanese’ and accelerated the process of obliterating distinctions between combatants and non-combatants which had begun after encounters with ‘plainclothes soldiers’ earlier in the war.

The growing tendency of the leadership to call for the elimination of ‘anti-Japanese’ elements or those who resisted Japan at this time (as opposed to earlier statements which singled out the GMD, CCP, and the Chinese army), represented a further obliteration of these distinctions. Prime Minister Hiranuma Kiichirō made this explicit in a speech delivered at the 74th Imperial Diet in January 1939. Though he spoke of friendship and mutual prosperity between China and Japan, he also

²⁰⁵ Document in Hsü Shuhsi, *A New Digest of Japanese War Conduct* (Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore, 1941), 145–83.

²⁰⁶ Snow, *Scorched Earth*, 331.

²⁰⁷ Cook & Cook, *Japan at War*, 44.

warned that '[a]s for those [Chinese] who fail to understand to the end and persist even hereafter in their opposition to Japan, we have no other alternative than to exterminate them.'²⁰⁸ While not directly inciting violence, this more radical rhetoric represented a shift in ways of viewing the Chinese population which had implications for civilians who came to be regarded as either 'pro-Japanese' or 'anti-Japanese'. The following summary from the diary of Murata Washirō in Yoshimi's book reveals how being perceived as the latter could facilitate the hardening of attitudes and commensurate violence:

To those members of the population loyal to the Japanese army, he was kind. To Chinese he judged to be anti-Japanese, however, he gave no quarter. He scolded a soldier stealing eggs in a pro-Japanese village, but in villages he judged as anti-Japanese he was completely different, adopting measures that were "tough in a bad sense," methods of "smashing the opponent to bits."²⁰⁹

As this example suggests, it was up to men on the ground to decide who was 'anti-Japanese'. The difficulty with this was that 'anti-Japanism' was not clearly defined. In a biting commentary on terms used by the IJA in China, Hanson wrote of 'anti-Japanism' as meaning:

1. Criticizing justly or unjustly the Japanese nation, the Japanese people, the Japanese Emperor, or the Japanese Army. (The Japanese Embassy at Peip'ing called me "anti-Japanese" because I cabled to the United States a personal eyewitness account of Japanese troops looting a Chinese city.) 2. Obstructing the crusade of the Japanese Army to create the "Peace of East Asia." (As China has done by defending her territory, or as American trade unions have done by boycotting Japanese goods.)²¹⁰

Though exaggerated, Hanson's final note - that definitions are subject to change without notification - captures the essence of the nebulous character of 'anti-Japanism'.²¹¹ The consequence was that commanders had ultimate authority to determine the fate of the civilian population in China and could legitimise extremely

²⁰⁸ 'The 74th Session of the Imperial Diet: Address of Baron Kiichirō Hiranuma, Prime Minister' (21 January 1939), *Tokyo Gazette* (March 1939), 28

²⁰⁹ Yoshimi, *Grassroots Fascism*, 84.

²¹⁰ Hanson, "Humane Endeavour", 182.

²¹¹ *Ibid*, 183.

violent acts by using the label 'anti-Japanese'. As Diana Lary succinctly put it, 'the process was horribly simple. Labelling someone a guerrilla or "irregular" was an immediate death sentence.'²¹² Indeed, a translation of a Japanese propaganda sheet circulated around occupied China, explained that 'whoever cooperates with the Imperial troops are friends of the latter and whoever obstructs the actions of the Imperial troops are enemies of the latter.' These enemies would be 'wiped out', while 'good people' would not be killed.²¹³ This approach was implicitly formalised in the Field Service Code adopted by the War Department on 8 January 1941. According to this code, lapses in virtue caused by 'striking those who do not resist' should be deplored but, troops were to deal 'crushing blows' to those who 'dared oppose the Imperial Army'.²¹⁴ As the necessity of consolidating occupied China grew more urgent towards the end of 1940, this mentality would have grave ramifications for the Chinese residing in the most unruly provinces.

'UNINHABITABLE ZONES': A GENOCIDAL ANTI-GUERRILLA STRATEGY

By 1940, the IJA had made limited progress in their efforts to completely 'wipe out' the guerrillas. Even in areas where peace and order had been restored, there was a risk that the enemy might re-infiltrate and so Japanese troops continued to be dispersed throughout the occupied territory seriously diminishing the effectiveness of mopping-up operations.²¹⁵ Towards the end of the year, however, commanders were startled into a drastic re-evaluation of anti-guerrilla strategy.²¹⁶ In August 1940, the CCP initiated a massive assault on Japanese forces. A first in positional warfare, the aptly named Hundred Regiment's Offensive saw thousands of troops across occupied China, particularly in the CCP's well-established base areas of Shanxi and

²¹² Lary, 'Ravaged Place', 110.

²¹³ NARA, RG 226, OSS, Entry 16: File No. 61978, 'Translated Propaganda Poster', 2.

²¹⁴ 'Field Service Code', *Tokyo Gazette* (March 1941), 344.

²¹⁵ JM 70, 38-9.

²¹⁶ Drea, *Japan's Imperial Army*, 214.

Hebei provinces, launch simultaneous attacks on Japanese garrisons, installations, communications, supply lines, and transport links. The operation caught the IJA completely by surprise resulting in heavy losses in resources and manpower.²¹⁷ The campaign was all the more alarming since it revealed the extent of the communist presence in occupied territory. The expansion of CCP influence in the north, an area in which Japan had vested interests and which portentously bordered the Soviet Union, ran counter to the government's long-term plans of eradicating the communist threat in China.²¹⁸ Thus, having recovered from their initial losses by October, the NCAA embarked on a determined campaign to completely destroy this threat, beginning with the 'murderous pursuit' of retreating CCP forces.²¹⁹ According to the aforementioned report compiled by Japanese soldiers who had deserted in 1944, the IJA adopted an 'extermination policy' which openly called for troops to kill civilians, to plunder, and to burn buildings.²²⁰

The next few months saw a drastic radicalisation of previous anti-guerrilla strategy. Until that point, Japanese forces had maintained a defensive posture, launching intermittent, though no less violent, punitive expeditions only when they encountered or suspected the presence of guerrillas. Now they adopted a counter-insurgency strategy that was a more comprehensive and resolved effort to obliterate the guerrilla presence in occupied China.²²¹ Although there was a lull in the CCP's activity during the first half of 1941 (a source of consternation in its already

²¹⁷ Lincoln Li, *The Japanese Army in North China, 1937-1941: Problems of Political and Economic Control* (Oxford, 1975), 13.

²¹⁸ See for example Cabinet Information Bureau, 'North China: Its Position and Internal Conditions', *Tokyo Gazette* (October 1940), 157-62.

²¹⁹ *Ibid*, 158; Frank Dorn, *The Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945: From Marco Polo Bridge to Pearl Harbor* (New York, 1974), 342; Drea & Van De Ven, 'Overview', 39.

²²⁰ File No. 128153, 5.

²²¹ Drea, *Japan's Imperial Army*, 214.

deteriorating relations with the GMD),²²² this strategy was instituted as a formal military policy after Lieutenant-General Okamura Yasuji, a veteran of punitive expeditions and architect of the strategy, took command of the NCAA in July 1941.²²³ This policy represented efforts to ‘annihilate’ the irregulars once and for all by advancing sector by sector and creating ‘uninhabitable zones’ in areas that were deemed to be ‘unpacified’.²²⁴ Having always struggled to distinguish between irregulars and the populace, Japanese commanders understood that mass guerrilla resistance could only be destroyed through a policy of ‘wholesale depopulation’.²²⁵ Essentially, if the guerrillas were the fish and the people their water, the IJA would simply drain the water.

The strategy was nicknamed the Three Alls Policy by the Chinese who, not without good reason, viewed the campaign as an effort to kill, burn, and loot everything in these areas.²²⁶ Japanese veterans, recalling their involvement in this campaign, add weight to this supposition. In an interview given for the joint PBS/BBC documentary, *The People's Century*, Nagatomi Hakudo described the fundamentals of the strategy as he was ordered to carry it out: ‘if there were people kill them, if there was a house burn it, if there were cows or sheep slaughter them.’²²⁷ In the 2001 Japanese documentary *Riben Guizi: Japanese Devils* featuring interviews with fourteen veterans, Second Lieutenant Shikada Masao recalled that since villagers were friendly with the enemy, he had been advised by his commander that they ‘should kill everyone, including all women and children, remove as many

²²² See documents referring to this in *FRUS*, 1941: The Far East, Vol. V, 495–513.

²²³ ‘Japanese Launch Attacks on Red Forces in North’ (30 August 1941), *CWR*, Vol. 97, 401.

²²⁴ Bix, *Hirohito*, 366; JM 178, 221; Dagfinn Gatu, *Village China at War: The Impact of Resistance to Japan, 1937–1945* (Copenhagen, 2008), 26–7.

²²⁵ Snow, *Scorched Earth*, 331.

²²⁶ Barak Kushner, *Men to Devils, Devils to Men: Japanese War Crimes and Chinese Justice* (Cambridge, MA, 2015), 70.

²²⁷ Nagatomi Hakudo interview in *People's Century, 1939: Total War* (1995). Dir. John Bridcut, BBC/WGBH.

material goods as possible, and burn all houses to the ground when [they] left.’²²⁸ Corporal Kaneko Yasuji also explained that following ‘orders from the top’, ‘[i]n the Eighth Route Army territory, we burned everything in sight, burned everything, killed the villagers, the women because they’d have kids and those kids would grow up to oppose the Japanese army. The old people hadn’t got long anyway, so them, too.’²²⁹ The rudiments of the strategy as employed by Japanese units engaged in these operations was to surround an area, first setting fire to the village, and then killing any who tried to escape before mopping up any last remnants.²³⁰ Sergeant Major Suzuki Yoshio gave the following account of these tactics at work:

Around dawn we circled the entire village and a platoon of men attacked but there was no sign of any enemy. That was when Colonel Yamaochi ordered us to set it on fire. In a flash, fire consumed the once quiet village ... In under an hour, just about the whole village had burned down and we trained machine guns and gunned down every last one of the villagers who tried to escape to the mountains. As for those in the village, the soldiers either bayoneted them or shot them. Anyone who couldn’t move just burned to death, with their home.²³¹

The complete obliteration of these ‘unpacified’ areas was paramount to this counterinsurgency strategy. Army veteran, Yomisu Omae, recounted:

We were ordered to burn all private dwellings; in other words, we were told to kill indiscriminately. Usually, by the time we entered the village, it was empty. Everyone had already fled. After we took domestic animals and anything else useful, we made huge piles of straw, set them afire, and burned the village to the ground. At our departure only a few bricks among the charred ruins retained their original forms. Villagers would have no place to live, even if they came home. This was one of our goals.²³²

In short, this was an anti-guerrilla campaign that deliberately targeted the civilian population as a means of depriving the enemy of their principle source of support.

Unable to hide, establish bases, or obtain supplies from the people, guerrillas would

²²⁸ Shikada Masao interview in *Riben Guizi: Japanese Devils*.

²²⁹ Kaneko Yasuji interview in *ibid*.

²³⁰ Chalmers A. Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power: the Emergence of Revolutionary China, 1937-1945* (Stanford, 1962), 55-6.

²³¹ Suzuki Toshio interview in *Riben Guizi: Japanese Devils*.

²³² Yomisu Omae, in *Peace*, 128.

be left increasingly vulnerable to attacks from superior Japanese forces. As might be expected, this strategy had a devastating effect on the rural communities in occupied China. Although there has been comparatively less scholarly attention paid to this policy, Herbert Bix asserted (and is probably correct) that the Three Alls Policy was substantially more destructive than the more famous Nanjing Massacre. Japanese scholars have estimated that it cost the lives of over 2.7 million civilians although exact figures would be impossible to determine since the guerrillas themselves engaged in scorched earth strategies and targeted for death any who collaborated with the Japanese.²³³

Ultimately, the policy achieved its goal. Japanese intelligence sources estimated that the populations in the base areas had been reduced by half and the CCP's capacity for resistance was greatly diminished at this time.²³⁴ In view of its apparent success, the Three Alls Policy came to an end as an official operation sometime between late 1942 and early 1943 when, according to US intelligence, the IJA adopted a 'softer' approach in China.²³⁵ However, the context of impunity and permissibility long-established in this war meant that commanders could and, some sources suggest, sometimes did, continue to use such measures.²³⁶ A reiteration of orders not to kill, burn, and loot was issued by the Commander-in-Chief of the IJA on 20 June 1944 exposing the endurance of this strategy in spite of direct instructions to the contrary.²³⁷ Indeed, an 'Order of the Day' issued by Regimental Commander Kodama on 23 July 1944 explicitly instructed troops that: 'in carrying out your

²³³ Bix, *Hirohito*, 367.

²³⁴ Mark Selden, *China in Revolution: The Yen'an Way Revisited* (Armonk, 1995), 145; Gatu, *Village China*, 28-30.

²³⁵ For example, NARA, RG 226, OSS, Entry 16: File Nos. 38482, 64811, 116645, & 128153 for discussion of changes in Japanese policy in China.

²³⁶ See NARA, RG 153, JAG, WCB, Entry 143: Case File Nos. 58-1 to 64-0 and sworn statements from IMTFE: Exhibits, Nos, 342, 344, 345 and 349, for examples.

²³⁷ NARA, RG 165, G-2, MID, Entry 79: SINTIC: Item No. 312, Doc. No. 121, 13.

mission you must, if necessary, kill all the Chinese, burn their homes, and confiscate all their property.' Operating in central China in 1944, and so presumably involved in the Changsha campaign, Kodama rationalised this order on the basis that victory or defeat for Japan would be decided by the upcoming battle and, reminding his troops of the misery that befell a conquered people, stressed that they 'must be victorious by all means.'²³⁸ The Three Alls Policy was not sustained for the duration of the war but, as this example indicates, was utilised when deemed necessary by commanders who had long been able to operate with impunity. This confirms the impact of the long-term experiences and attitudes of a war 'by any means' in shaping the process of radicalisation, but also suggests that the drastic escalation of violence at this particular time was largely contextual.

While the Hundred Regiment's Offensive initially shocked the IJA into a more active effort to exterminate the communist presence in occupied China, the roots of this drastic escalation in strategy as an official policy in mid-1941 lay in an uncertain and potentially threatening geopolitical context. By 1941, the leadership had committed to the IJN's plans for expansion into Southeast Asia as a means of securing access to the rich resources and vast markets of the region. The willingness to risk war by advancing south at this time was precipitated by a sharp decline in favourable relations with the US, the nation's primary trade partner, following the outbreak of war in 1937. In addition to providing financial support for Chiang's government - believed by many to be the primary factor responsible for the continuance of a costly and demoralising conflict - the US had enacted a number of trade sanctions against Japan.²³⁹ Since conflict in China had forced the nation to rely more heavily on imports to sustain the war effort, these measures added to the strain

²³⁸ NARA, RG 165, G-2, MID, Entry 79: SINTIC: Item No. 329, Doc. No. 143, 3.

²³⁹ See *FRUS*, 1931-1941: Japan, Vol. II, 201-73 for details of sanctions.

and made the economic situation even more precarious. In fact, over the course of 1941, many in Japan, such as the renowned journalist Tokutomi Sohō and Foreign Minister Togo Shigenori, came to see the economic encirclement by the so-called 'ABCD Powers' (America, Britain, China, and the Netherlands) as a direct threat to the existence of the Empire.²⁴⁰ Since Japan's long-term vested interests in north China and the ambitious plans for constructing a New Order in East Asia precluded an unfavourable withdrawal from the continent, the Japanese government came to perceive an advance into Southeast Asia as the only viable solution to a pending existential crisis.

At the same time, the government was deliberating over whether to join Germany in its invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. Engagements with Soviet forces at Nomonhan on the Mongolian border in summer 1939 had exposed a drastic material disparity between the Japanese and Soviet armies. The subsequent crushing defeat, in addition to embarrassing and discrediting the IJA, intensified the sense of threat posed by the Soviet Union and highlighted the Empire's continued state of unpreparedness for the anticipated conflict.²⁴¹ While the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact in September 1939 persuaded the Japanese government to seek an accord with the Soviet Union, Germany's change of heart in 1941 presented an opportunity. As Foreign Minister Matsuoka Yōsuke, the most vocal proponent of a northern strike consistently emphasised, in this joint enterprise Japan could subdue a long-time threat.²⁴² Furthermore, there was some concern that if Germany should

²⁴⁰ See for example 'Encirclement of Japan', *Japan Chronicle* (7 August 1941), 184; Foreign Minister, Shigenobu Togo's Statement, cited in Ike Nobutaka, *Japan's Decision for War: Records of the 1941 Policy Conferences* (Stanford, 1967), 212–5.

²⁴¹ For more information see Coox, *Nomonhan*.

²⁴² Ike, *Japan's Decision*, 64.

prove victorious in the East without the assistance of Japan, the Empire's expansionist ally might soon become a rival influence in Asia.²⁴³

In the summer of 1941 then, the Japanese leadership was seriously considering embarking on another war. Compounding the problem was the fact that Japanese forces were still heavily embroiled in a stalemate in China. As War Minister Tojo Hideki stated, 'the difficulty [in deciding whether to strike north or south first] comes from doing this while we are still engaged in the China Incident; if it weren't for the China Incident, it would be easy.'²⁴⁴ When the US froze Japanese assets and imposed a full trade embargo cutting off access to Japan's primary source of oil and steel in July, the decision was made.²⁴⁵ The need to free up troops in China for operations in Southeast Asia became acute.²⁴⁶ However, the continued state of unrest in the occupied territories, accentuated by the Hundred Regiment's Offensive, prevented immediate withdrawal. Despite over two years of anti-guerrilla operations, the IJA had been unable to reduce the size of its force in China which still had to be dispersed throughout the occupied territory. Still only able to maintain a tenuous hold in certain areas, there was a risk that, should Japanese forces in China be reduced, they could lose certain areas to the CCP, an intolerable situation given long-term communist anxieties among the leadership.²⁴⁷ In this period of international insecurity, the IJA were under increased pressure to subjugate certain areas in China in anticipation of entering a conflict with a materially superior enemy. Thus, having learned from past failures and recognising that the insurgents relied heavily on the people to sustain them, commanders came to embrace a genocidal anti-guerrilla strategy as an acceptable means of destroying resistance through eliminating the

²⁴³ For discussions on this matter see Ike, *Japan's Decision*, 64-72.

²⁴⁴ Ike, *Japan's Decision*, 74.

²⁴⁵ *FRUS*, 1931-1941: Japan, Vol. II, 262-71.

²⁴⁶ Drea, *Japan's Imperial Army*, 207-9.

²⁴⁷ JM 70, 47.

populations of the most unruly areas. The experience of guerrilla warfare which had accelerated a shift in terms of viewing the Chinese population as either 'pro-Japanese' or 'anti-Japanese' begun during the Yangtze campaign, made the embrace of such measures possible.

The escalation of violence to more extreme measures in China was intimately bound-up with the continued opposition of the Chinese population in an asymmetric and total conflict which had proved difficult to end and was conducive to terror-based, unconventional warfare. Though stimulated by resistance, there were a number of factors behind the embrace of these more extreme measures, however. For the most part, commanders made decisions to employ increasingly violent strategies in their efforts to force the Chinese to submit in certain areas based on their interpretations of the requirements of the local situation. These interpretations were shaped by the demands and pressures of a wider geopolitical situation that seemed to Japanese actors on the ground to necessitate more drastic measures at particular times. They were also shaped by perceptions and attitudes derived from earlier experiences with soldiers, guerrillas, and civilians. These prior encounters reinforced existing prejudices, hatreds, and fears, contributing to a cumulative distrust of the Chinese population. The fact that genocidal violence could become a component of military strategy, however, was rooted in the way in which the leadership had framed war in China. The Japanese sought a swift solution to the conflict because it was understood to be jeopardising efforts to alleviate Japan's vulnerabilities as a 'have not' nation in an international atmosphere of protectionism and competition. As such, commanders were given sanction to use all available means, including unconventional and objectionable practices, to crush resistance. The result was that Japanese soldiers

could operate within a context of impunity and permissibility, which was continually reinforced by commanders on the ground.

As Japanese forces experienced setbacks and difficulties in campaigns where they were under pressure to quickly quash Chinese resistance, parameters for acceptable conduct were progressively expanded, facilitating the radicalisation of violence to more extreme measures. This proved to have a cumulative effect as war progressed. For instance, while commanders had embraced an indiscriminate policy of mass killing directed at the male population of Nanjing, the implementation of the Three Alls Policy in occupied China from 1941 represented a more drastic culmination of the increasingly more systematic and indiscriminate violence that Japanese forces had employed as they embraced the goal of completely eliminating whole populations in 'unpacified areas'. In other words, Japanese commanders had moved from ensuring control through partial destruction of a group earlier in the war to the eradication of the whole population in specific areas later. This was significant. Indeed, the progressive distortion of perceived boundaries between combatants and non-combatants and the taboos continually broken with impunity in respect to the acceptability of targeting civilians, having progressively obliterated any remaining compunctions for the use of genocidal measures in dealing with resistance, would have ramifications for the peoples of Southeast Asia when Japanese forces encountered opposition in their advance south in December 1941.

4

We have no intention of conquering any Asiatic people, nor do we have any territorial desire on any Oriental nation...All of you Asiatic peoples, must therefore realize that here is your best opportunity to achieve the freedom and independence which you have so long desired...As long as you reciprocate accordingly, the Japanese forces will help you in establishing an Asia for the Asiatics in your part of the Orient. But if you fail to understand the true and lofty purpose of Japan, and instead obstruct the successful prosecution of the military activities and tactics of the Imperial Japanese Forces, whoever you are, we shall come and crush you with our might and power, and thus compel you to realize by means of force the true significance and meaning of our mission in the Far East.

[Speech by General Honma Masaharu, Commander-in-Chief of the Philippines, 16 February 1942]

'LIBERATING' SOUTHEAST ASIA

In December 1941, having temporarily incapacitated the US Navy following a surprise attack at Pearl Harbor, Japanese forces swept through Southeast Asia in a series of lightning attacks which saw a drastic increase in the size of the Empire. In contrast to war in China, conflict in the Pacific was characterised from the outset as a 'benevolent mission'. According to the Japanese leadership, while forced to occupy Southeast Asia by the discriminatory and threatening policies of the United States and its allies, Japanese forces additionally sought to 'liberate' other Asian populations from the tyranny of Western imperialism. In an address to the 78th Imperial Diet on 16 December 1941, for instance, Prime Minister Tojo Hideki claimed that Japan had acted 'for no other purpose than to bring to an end the tyrannical policies of the United States and the British Empire and enable all regions of Greater East Asia to restore and develop their inherent character'.¹

In spite of such pan-Asian overtones, however, war in the Pacific proved to be detrimental to the welfare of local inhabitants who suffered hardships under increasingly oppressive, exploitative, and at times, destructive, occupation policies. In fact, scholars give estimates in the millions for the total number of Southeast Asians who lost their lives in this supposedly magnanimous conflict.² While many of these deaths were the unintended consequence of deteriorating wartime conditions, many others were a more direct result of Japanese violence. Southeast Asians were used as forced labour throughout the region and women were coerced into service in Japanese 'comfort stations' as the leadership extended these practices from China. Furthermore, in addition to the quotidian violence associated with foreign domination, Japanese forces, as in earlier colonies, used terror tactics to establish

¹ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 879A: 'Tojo's Address', 4.

² Tim Harper, 'A Long View of the Great Asian War', in David Koh Wee Hock (ed.), *Legacies of World War II in South and East Asia* (Singapore, 2007), 8.

ultimate authority and pre-empt potential resistance. Much like in China, such measures occasionally escalated as commanders on the ground, encountering resistance and/or anti-Japanese sentiments among some groups in Southeast Asia, made decisions to employ strategies that allowed for the destruction of those groups in order to eliminate opposition in particular areas and at specific times. For example, echoing the events at Nanjing in December 1937, after the fall of Singapore in February 1942, Japanese forces began an indiscriminate, though more organised, mopping-up operation that deliberately targeted for execution the adult male Chinese population of British Malaya as an anti-Japanese threat. Furthermore, after years of unsuccessful efforts to maintain peace and order in the face of growing guerrilla resistance in the Philippines, the 14th Army in 1945 adopted an indiscriminate scorched earth anti-guerrilla strategy that, though on a smaller and more selective scale than the Three Alls Policy implemented in occupied China, aimed to 'wipe out' the guerrilla problem through eliminating the Filipino populations and destroying towns and villages in areas of importance as a putatively reasonable defence strategy.

It is surprising that such practices became an option in Southeast Asia since, more so than in China, genocidal violence was incongruous with the overall framing of this conflict as a supposedly benign, liberating mission. The purpose of this chapter is to address the question of how commanders came to embrace intentionally-group destructive methods within, what appeared to be, a context that was adverse to extreme violence perpetrated against those who were to be liberated. Using the aforementioned cases, I further develop the analysis of the preceding chapter by looking more closely at two key elements: first, the role of resistance in triggering extreme violence in Southeast Asia; and second, the complex interplay between the security concerns and ideological imperatives that shaped Japanese

objectives and the framing of the war, the realities of the situation on the ground, and the wider, highly mutable geopolitical context. Like the previous chapter, I divide this analysis into three distinct sections. In the first section, I aim to locate the genocidal potential of the liberating mission by exploring the origins, objectives, and characterisation of the war in addition to long-term strategies of region-building in Southeast Asia. I detail the impact that such factors had on military conduct in the area and show how, despite limited constraints on soldiers' behaviour, the framing of the war contributed to the creation of categories of exception whereby, commanders, as in China, had freedom to use all available means to stamp out resistance.

In the second section, I move to a consideration of the massacres of the male Chinese population in Malaya and Singapore in February 1942. I begin the analysis in this section by detailing the importance of decisively establishing Japanese control in the peninsula due to the intended place of British Malaya as the core of the Japanese Empire in the south. After discussing local conditions at the outset of occupation, I then examine mopping-up operations in February 1942 showing that they were part of a planned purge of part of the male Chinese population. In seeking to understand why extreme measures towards the Chinese were employed in this instance and not elsewhere in Southeast Asia at the outset of occupation, I evaluate the radicalisation of violence in this case within the specific context of policy towards the Chinese population in the region, drawing contrasts and comparisons with other areas, in addition to considering the impact of past experiences and prejudices from the war in China. I also analyse the individual circumstances in British Malaya, showing how pre-war anti-Japanese activities in the peninsula, in addition to the large size and substantial economic power of the Chinese population in Singapore, fuelled perceptions of this group as manifestly hostile to the occupation. Finally, I

examine how the interplay between all of these factors transformed perceptions of the limited and relatively negligible resistance offered by the small Chinese volunteer force in February 1942 causing it to be viewed as a potentially dangerous threat in need of elimination.

In the third section, I analyse the more gradual escalation of violence towards a different population group by examining Japanese anti-guerrilla efforts in the Philippines. I begin with an overview of pre-war interactions, plans, intentions, and attitudes towards the Filipino people drawing out contrasts with perceptions of the overseas Chinese that made the Japanese more amenable to cooperation and conciliation as they began the occupation of the Islands in 1942. I then analyse the development of resistance and explain how, in addressing guerrilla activity in the Philippines, Japanese commanders, like in China, used progressively more methodical violence. Following this, I examine the beginnings of a more drastic radicalisation of violence in 1944 as Japanese troops and guerrillas both began preparations for an impending American invasion of the Islands and aim, in particular, to show how this context laid the foundations for the embrace of genocidal violence in early 1945. Accordingly, in the final part of this section, I analyse the adoption of extreme violence as a defence strategy in Luzon as Japanese commanders sought to pre-empt a Filipino uprising at the same time as combatting American troops in a last-ditch effort to turn the tide of war prior to the Allied advance on Japan itself.

4.1

FROM LIBERATION TO ELIMINATION

Locating the Genocidal Potential of the 'Benevolent Mission'

In contrast to a long history of continental policies, there had been only modest engagement with Southeast Asia prior to the 1940s.³ Of course, circumstances were very different in this region. As Mark Peattie described it, the wealth of the area was 'already spoken for' since it had come under foreign domination in the 1880s.⁴ Since Japanese imperialism, as noted in Chapter Two, had evolved with an eye to the reactions of the other imperial powers, policies of expansion into Southeast Asia had been primarily opportunistic. Thus, aside from some notable pre-war exceptions, including the prominent historian and politician, Takekoshi Yosaburō, staunch supporters of a 'southern advance' experienced limited influence before the 1940s.⁵ As detailed in the preceding chapter, the increased interest in Southeast Asia was rooted in the turmoil and uncertainty that prevailed in the 1930s.

'NO OTHER RECOURSE': THE ADVANCE INTO SOUTHEAST ASIA

At a time when trade was declining and the major imperial powers, including the Soviet Union, were emphasising autarky, a growing number of politicians, military strategists, and economists looked to the south as a solution to Japan's economic vulnerabilities and population demands. Even the pacifist and long-time critic of Japan's expansionist policies, Yanaihara Tadao, wrote of the advantage of a peaceful 'southward advance' as an outlet for 'her overflowing population and accumulating

³ See Mark R. Peattie, 'Nanshin: The "Southward Advance," 1931-1941, as a Prelude to the Japanese Occupation of Southeast Asia,' in Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, & Mark R. Peattie (eds.), *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1937-1945* (Princeton, 1996), 189-242 for more detail regarding early Japanese engagement with Southeast Asia.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 241.

⁵ Takekoshi Yosaburō, 'Expanded Boundaries', *Japan Magazine* (March 1917), 687-90.

capital.⁶ The most vocal proponents came from within the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN), however. As part of a long-running inter-service rivalry which saw each branch of the military push national defence strategy in a direction that would give it the dominant role, the IJN had been a steadfast advocate of southern expansion as a check to the continental ambitions of the IJA.⁷ A surge in Japanese activity in the region during the early 1930s saw a brief recovery for the economy as Southeast Asian markets were flooded with cheap, yet quality, Japanese products. Although quickly stifled by trade restrictions implemented by the other imperial powers, the success of this activity had confirmed the potential benefits of expanding Japanese interest in the region.⁸ As such, in the wake of an unsuccessful military coup by young army officers on 26 February 1936, the government became more receptive to proposals from navy strategists who advocated a southern policy as a means of strengthening the nation's defences through gaining access to key resources.⁹ In August that year, peaceful expansion south became a 'fundamental principle' of national policy which, as Ken'ichi Goto pointed out, marked the first serious consideration of Japanese expansion into the region.¹⁰

The outbreak of war with China in 1937 placed further discussion of a southern policy on the backburner for a time as both services dedicated their efforts to the conflict. However, as detailed in the previous chapter, Japanese forces soon became embroiled in a protracted total war which the economy was not robust enough to withstand. Under mounting domestic pressure, the Japanese government

⁶ Yanaihara Tadao, 'Japan's Advance Southward: A Necessity', *Contemporary Japan* (September 1936), 278.

⁷ For an overview of this rivalry see James B. Crowley, *Japan's Quest for Autonomy: National Security and Foreign Policy, 1930-1938* (Princeton, 1966).

⁸ Peattie, 'Nanshin', 200-5; W. G. Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism, 1894-1945* (Oxford, 1987), 220-4.

⁹ See policy documents in Joyce C. Lebra (ed.), *Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in World War II: Selected Readings and Documents* (Oxford, 1975), 58-60; IMTFE: Exhibits, No 977: 'Collection of National Policy Documents (1936)'.

¹⁰ 'Fundamental Principles of National Policy' (1936), in David J. Lu (ed.), *Japan: A Documentary History, Volume II: The Late Tokugawa Period to the Present* (Armonk, 1997), 418-9; Ken'ichi Goto, *Tensions of Empire: Japan and Southeast Asia in the Colonial and Postcolonial World* (Singapore, 2003), 77.

increasingly came to see the solution to the quagmire in China as resting in the rich resources, vast markets, and strategic location of Southeast Asia. The outbreak of war in Europe in September 1939 and the resultant disruption of trade with European partners who now had greater demands on their own economies added to trepidations over Japan's economic stability.¹¹ Moreover, while the sudden distraction of European powers from their colonies presented an opportunity for expansion of Japanese interest, it was also seen as a potential threat should that opportunity be seized upon by rival influences.¹² Thus, the importance of asserting Japanese dominance in an area of growing significance to national defence was increasingly stressed.¹³ These shifts in the international context, in addition to the Kwantung Army's chastening defeat by Soviet forces at Nomonhan in the summer of 1939, made Army planners more amenable to the idea of southern expansion as a means of settling the 'China Incident' and getting back on track in regards to long-term defence preparations.¹⁴

By the 1940s, the idea of greater southern involvement had gained traction, becoming widely accepted as a necessity within government, military, and business circles as reflected in a range of speeches, official statements, and planning documents.¹⁵ The precise nature of this involvement remained undetermined, however, as both branches of the military had different priorities. Expansion into the region was seen by the IJN to provide an opportunity to gain control of essential resources, in particular the sizeable oil reserves of the Netherlands East Indies. For

¹¹ Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism*, 225.

¹² Ken'ichi Goto, 'Cooperation, Submission, and Resistance of Indigenous Elites of Southeast Asia in the Wartime Empire', in Duus et al., *Japanese Wartime Empire*, 274–5.

¹³ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 1029: 'Measures to be Taken towards the Peoples of East Asia (Burma) (20 September 1940)'; Ike Nobutaka, *Japan's Decision for War: Records of the 1941 Policy Conferences* (Stanford, 1965), 3, 30.

¹⁴ See Alvin Coox, *Nomonhan: Japan against Russia, 1939* (Stanford, 1990), for detailed study of Nomonhan.

¹⁵ For example, 'Address of Hachiro Arita, Minister for Foreign Affairs' (February 1940), *Tokyo Gazette* (March 1940), 348; Matsue Haruji, 'The South Seas and Japan', *Contemporary Japan* (May 1940), 625–7; for planning documents see IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 628: 'Collection of Foreign Policy Documents, 1940'.

the IJA, occupation of strategic border areas had the advantage of cutting off Chiang Kai-shek's main supply routes and was seen to be an excellent position from which to launch offensives in south China.¹⁶ Both goals were pursued in 1940; but a determination to avoid war with the US and a commitment to the nation's largely continental interests, meant that any expansion was to be limited and opportunistic.¹⁷ Designs on British colonies in the region, for example, were contingent on the success of an expected German invasion and occupation of Britain.¹⁸ Further and rather alarming shifts in the international context between 1940 and 1941, described in Chapter Three, drastically altered this position. Faced with relentless economic pressure from the US and its allies who imposed sanctions on Japan, the leadership abandoned its ambitions for a northern strike at the Soviet Union in concert with Germany and committed to a full-scale military invasion of Southeast Asia as the only viable solution to the problems that appeared to imperil the nation.¹⁹ Accordingly, the government declared war on Britain and the US on the basis that 'the situation being such as it is, our Empire for its existence and self-defense has no other recourse but to appeal to arms and to crush every obstacle in its path.'²⁰ Japanese interest in Southeast Asia then, was born primarily out of attempts to mitigate insecurities and fears related to an international climate perceived to be hostile, if not directly threatening, to Japan. As a consequence, this area, having abundant resources and vast markets, had come to be of the utmost importance for Japan's continued survival as an independent nation, adding to the exigence of successfully occupying and mobilising the region.

¹⁶ Michael A. Barnhart, *Japan Prepares for Total War: The Search for Economic Security, 1919-1941* (Ithaca, 1987), 162-75.

¹⁷ See IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 865: 'Collection of Planning Documents, 1940-1941'.

¹⁸ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 628: 'Tentative Plan for Policy in the Southern Regions' (4 October 1940).

¹⁹ For decision making process see Ike, *Japan's Decision for War*.

²⁰ 'Imperial Rescript' (8 December 1941), *Contemporary Japan* (January 1942), 158-9.

THE PRIMACY OF JAPANESE INTERESTS: WARTIME OCCUPATION

Since military interest in Southeast Asia derived from its perceived value to resolving the quagmire in China, as well as the supposedly perilous economic situation, immediate objectives were naturally oriented towards fulfilling crucial strategic imperatives. Consequently, the welfare and interests of Southeast Asian peoples were not a priority and occupation policies tended to be exploitative and oppressive. Such is reflected in one of the only detailed pre-war plans for the occupation of the region. In this document, dated 20 November 1941, troops were directed to concentrate their efforts on quickly restoring peace and order to facilitate the immediate acquisition and development of resources vital for national defence and the self-sufficiency of Japanese forces.²¹ Military administrations were to be established to take control over all aspects of life pertinent to these goals, at least for the duration of the war. This often involved redirecting or, in some cases, drastically restructuring the economies and industries of the occupied territories in order to mobilise their resources for the war effort and to ensure self-sufficiency throughout the region.²² Hardships were anticipated. However, pre-war strategists insisted that they would have to be accepted as a necessary burden for the occupied peoples stating that '[n]atives will have to reconcile themselves to such pressure as is unavoidably involved for them in acquisition of resources vital for our national defences and the local self-sufficiency of our occupation forces.'²³ It was further clarified in a document from March 1942 that any pacification efforts must not interfere with wartime goals and that 'no measures shall be taken for the sole

²¹ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 877: 'Details of the Execution of Administration in the Southern Occupied Territories' (20 November 1941).

²² See Doc. 5: 'General Plan of Economic Policies in the Southern Areas' (12 December 1941), in Frank N. Trager (ed.), *Burma: Japanese Military Administration, Selected Documents 1941-1945* (Philadelphia, 1971), 38-45.

²³ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 877.

purpose of placating the natives.’²⁴ Promises of independence for Burma and the Philippines, for instance, were originally to be finalised only after war had been won. In the meantime, despite the rhetoric of liberation, nationalist movements were to be considered dangerous to the war effort and should not to be encouraged.²⁵ In effect, the wartime context, and particularly, the prominence of insecurities and existential fears in driving the southward advance meant that Japanese interests were supreme, wartime necessities were a priority, and Southeast Asians would be required to completely submit to the demands of occupation, regardless of how exploitative or oppressive they might be.²⁶

However, military planners recognised that the compliance, if not the support, of the local populations would be indispensable to the successful prosecution of the war.²⁷ The abrupt expansion of the Empire in early 1942 presented serious practical problems. The absence of substantive long-term engagement in Southeast Asia meant that there were no firm plans in place for occupation, especially since pre-war strategists had concentrated more on invasion tactics.²⁸ Accordingly, Japanese forces faced a daunting task in controlling vast territories populated with peoples of diverse cultures and customs, of which they had only limited first-hand knowledge or prior experience, while at the same time preoccupied with continued efforts to end conflict in China and with war in the Pacific. Aside from the challenges that would arise should they face local resistance, the military had limited resources to spare in the

²⁴ Doc. 6: ‘Outline on the Conduct of Military Administration in Occupied Areas’ (14 March 1942), in Harry J. Benda, James K. Irikura, & Kōichi Kishi (eds.), *Japanese Military Administration in Indonesia: Selected Documents* (New Haven, 1965), 29–30.

²⁵ TNA, WO 203/6310: SEATIC Bulletin: Japanese Plans and Operations in Southeast Asia, Doc. 11: ‘Summary of the Government of each Occupied Territories in the Southern Area’ (12 October 1942), 22–4.

²⁶ Gregory Clancey, ‘The Japanese Imperium and Southeast Asia: An Overview’, in Paul H. Kratoska (ed.), *Southeast Asian Minorities in the Japanese Wartime Empire* (London, 2002), 10.

²⁷ Doc. 7: ‘Telegram on the Administration of the Southern Areas’, in Benda et al., *Administration in Indonesia*, 47.

²⁸ Harry J. Benda, ‘The Japanese Interregnum in Southeast Asia’, in Grant K. Goodman (ed.), *Imperial Japan and Asia: A reassessment* (New York, 1967), 68–9.

administration of the occupied territories. As such, practicalities necessitated efforts to co-opt local leadership and, where possible, make use of the pre-existing colonial apparatus.²⁹ Furthermore, military planners pointed out the advantages of securing docility among the local populations through 'winning the hearts of the people'.³⁰ Since pacification works were to be limited in scope, such efforts primarily involved the dissemination of propaganda that aimed to win support through framing the war as a mission for the benefit of all Asians.

WINNING THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE: 'ASIA FOR THE ASIATICS'

The Japanese government's rhetoric from 1941 placed a considerable emphasis on the insecurities and existential fears that had shaped the decision to advance into Southeast Asia as a means of justifying the occupation of territories in the region. However, the threat to Japan alone was not adequate as a tool for mobilising the support, or at the very least, ensuring the compliance of the populations of the area. As such, the leadership began to stress the shared 'subaltern' affinities between Japan and other Asian nations. Reflecting the revival of the Social Darwinian world view of the Meiji Period, politicians and diplomats characterised the Pacific War as an 'historical inevitability'; an inescapable clash between the oppressed and their oppressors.³¹ The notion of Japan as a fellow victim of Western discrimination now fighting for the liberation of the Asian race, deeply rooted within the pan-Asian *qua* imperial ideology of the interwar years, was accentuated.³² As a consequence, Japanese leaders increasingly depicted conflict as a racial struggle for survival. In his inaugural address to the Greater East Asia Conference, a meeting of prominent Asian

²⁹ Benda, 'Japanese Interregnum', 68–9; see also Goto, 'Cooperation, Submission and Resistance', 275.

³⁰ Doc. 7, in Benda et al., *Administration in Indonesia*, 47.

³¹ See for instance, IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 177: Hashimoto Kingōrō, 'The Road to the Reconstruction of the World' (1941); Kurusu Saburō, *Kurusu Speaks: Addresses November 26, 1942–December 3, 1943* (Tokyo, 1944).

³² See for example, Mitsuaki Kakehi, *Three Centuries of Aggression and Conquest* (Tokyo, 1942).

leaders held in November 1943, Tojo captured the essence of this rhetoric when he declared that 'for all the peoples of greater East Asia, the present war is a decisive struggle upon whose outcome depends their rise or fall.'³³ War, then, was framed in grandiose, existential terms which placed Japanese prestige at stake as they claimed to fight, not only for the independence of Asia, but for its continued racial existence. While such rhetoric became a mantra featured heavily in propaganda directed towards peoples of the occupied territories, this was not just self-serving hyperbole.³⁴

The notion of an inevitable east-west clash, as explained in Chapter Two, was rooted in a long-term dissatisfaction with the ostensive discriminatory treatment of Japan by the US and its allies. By the 1940s, a growing number of government officials, economists, and diplomats, such as Arita Hachirō, Takahashi Kamekichi, Shigetomo Sayegusa, and Kawashima Nobutarō, had become resentful of an international system which, as they saw it, threatened 'have not' nations like Japan. According to their argument, a change in the nature of warfare meant that economic strength was now vital to the defence and survival of nations. As a result, those that did not have access to abundant resources or markets were vulnerable so long as those that did prevented the even distribution of the wealth of the world.³⁵ To that end, international condemnation of Japanese aggression was perceived to be unfair because, for those such as right-wing military man Hashimoto Kingōrō, a more belligerent imperialism was believed to have been the only option left to Japan in

³³ Tojo Hideki, 'Inaugural address to the Greater East Asia Conference' (November 1943), *Contemporary Japan* (November 1943), 1343-5.

³⁴ 'Japan's Foreign Policy in 1940', *Tokyo Gazette* (February 1941), 306-9; for a detailed study of the influence of pan-Asianism on policy see Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War, 1931-1945* (2007; pbk edn, Basingstoke, 2013).

³⁵ See the following articles published in *Contemporary Japan*: Arita Hachirō, 'The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere' (January 1941), 10-5; Takahashi Kamekichi, 'Economic Significance of the East Asiatic Co-Prosperity Sphere' (January 1941), 39-49; Shigetomo Sayegusa 'Economic self-defense' (March 1941), 281-90; Kawashima Nobutarō, 'Our Past Foreign Trade Policy and the New Order' (February 1941), 161-70.

view of the anti-immigration and protectionist trade policies of the US and its allies.³⁶

In mitigating the nation's perceived vulnerabilities, the leadership began to develop further earlier pan-Asian strategies for overhauling and restructuring the region as an 'Asia for the Asiatics'. The primary mechanism through which this would be achieved was the creation of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. An expansion on earlier ideas for an Asian Monroe Doctrine and a New Order in East Asia, the Sphere was initially proposed by Foreign Minister Matsuoka Yōsuke, one of the main architects of Japan's wartime political system, in August 1940.³⁷ For Matsuoka, the primary aim of the Sphere was reminiscent of the 'mission' advocated by prominent figures, such as Ōkuma Shigenobu, who had called for a greater role for Japan as a leader and disseminator of Japanese-based 'civilisation' in Asia.³⁸ The Sphere would also be part of a strategy for economic self-defence since, according to Arita (a strong proponent of this ideology), if countries like Germany, Italy, and Japan did not take 'definite measures of protection', they 'would certainly be doomed to extinction'.³⁹ This won favour with both branches of the military since it would enable the realisation of long-term goals for a self-sufficient regional bloc which, according to a joint Army-Navy draft policy from April 1941, had become essential for the 'rapid strengthening of Japan's defense posture.'⁴⁰

Thus, now an integral part of this strategy, Southeast Asia was to be reshaped in line with the grand vision of the Co-prosperity Sphere. According to an outline provided by the Total War Research Institute in January 1942, this involved reorganising Southeast Asia, in addition to East Asia and the Pacific (including India

³⁶ See for example, IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 1290: Hashimoto Kingōrō, 'Address to Young Men' (1939).

³⁷ For documents related to the conceptual development of the Sphere, as well as Matsuoka's proposal, see Lebra, *Japan's Greater East Asia*.

³⁸ 'Addresses at the Japan-America Luncheon' (19 December 1940), *Contemporary Japan* (February 1941), 259; see also 'Address by Foreign Minister Yōsuke Matsuoka at the 76th Imperial Diet', *ibid*, 266.

³⁹ Arita, 'Greater Asia', 10.

⁴⁰ 'Outline of Policy Toward the South' (17 April 1941), in Wolf Mendl (ed.), *Japan and Southeast Asia, Volume I: From the Meiji Restoration to 1945* (London & New York, 2001), 246-7.

and Australia), into a tiered hierarchy with each country taking its 'proper place' according to its apparent economic and strategic value to the Empire, as well as its perceived level of development. Though ostensibly founded on historical, geographic, and racial similarities between projected Sphere nations, it was chiefly paternalistic in design.⁴¹ As the leader and epicentre of the Sphere, 'Japanese values' were to be disseminated and all traces of American and European influence were to be erased.⁴² Other Asian countries would have an ascribed role and, on account of their perceived inferior status, would be 'advanced' or 'civilised' through policies of 'Japanization'. This was justified in order to, first, fulfil the economic and defensive requirements underpinning the main function of the Sphere, and second, create a unifying Asian identity to ensure docility among the occupied peoples. Through cultural policies that were often intrusive and heavy-handed, Southeast Asians were to be compelled to embrace the new roles thrust upon them as members of the Sphere and were expected to accept the reshaping of their societies in accordance with Japanese perceptions of a suitably Asian culture.⁴³ In short, the pan-Asian framing of the war as a 'liberating mission' was much more than a convenient rhetoric designed to win over other Asians. It represented a strategy for mitigating long-standing uncertainties about Japan's security in an international world viewed as a competition between the 'strong' who naturally and rightfully dominated the 'weak'. Essentially, Japan's national security would finally be assured through eliminating the menace of Western imperialism in Asia and replacing it with an economically prosperous and autarkic regional bloc based both politically and culturally on Japanese values. Ultimately, the security concerns and the arrogant

⁴¹ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 1336: 'Draft of Basic Plan for Establishment of Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere' (27 January 1942), 10.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 4-15.

⁴³ See Grant K. Goodman (ed.), *Japanese Cultural Policies in Southeast Asia during World War 2* (Basingstoke, 1991) for a collection of essays on this aspect.

pan-Asian ideas that underpinned Japan's expansion into, and strategies for, Southeast Asia and the way in which war was subsequently framed would shape military conduct towards local populations on whom part of the success of Japan's plans for the region were placed.

THE SHAME OF HARMING 'NON-RESISTANT NATIVES': MILITARY CONDUCT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

The way in which this conflict was characterised meant that the populations of this area, as the subjects of the professed liberating mission, were not viewed as enemies. In a statement explaining the declaration of war, the Japanese government, for example, averred that southern expansion 'does not in the least mean that hostility is being entertained toward the inhabitants of those areas'.⁴⁴ As a consequence, the space of exception established in China which had allowed for terror-driven warfare and the escalation to more extreme practices in particular areas, was not extended to Southeast Asia. In fact, more determined to secure cooperation from local populations, the military leadership placed some constraints on conduct in this region.

In order to limit opportunities for violence, access to local inhabitants was restricted through close monitoring of troop movements, especially in densely populated areas where soldiers were required to get special passes to enter certain zones.⁴⁵ In fact, troops were completely prohibited from visiting some areas where outbursts were more likely. For instance, Sato Chitoshi, a member of the IJA's 55th Division, remarked in his diary in early February that Chinese villages in the Pacific Islands were completely 'out of bounds' to Japanese soldiers.⁴⁶ In order to avoid 'misunderstandings', commanding officers relayed the general principles of pre-war

⁴⁴ Statement cited in *New order in Greater East Asia* (Shanghai, 1942), 1.

⁴⁵ ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 9: 'Records of the Southern Expeditionary Force in Malaya and the Philippines', 3-4.

⁴⁶ ATIS: Current Translations, No. 74, Doc. 841: 'Diary of Sato Chitoshi', 35.

occupation policies to their subordinates stressing that 'natives' be treated kindly and their religion and customs be respected.⁴⁷ Soldiers were also 'strictly forbidden' from looting or 'disgracing' local women and, in efforts to stamp out these crimes, harsher punishments were implemented.⁴⁸ Iwasa Koji, a private captured and interrogated by the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section (ATIS) in March 1943, recalled that severe penalties were imposed for looting or striking a 'native', while rape could be punishable by death.⁴⁹ Since it was recognised that many of these acts were opportunistic and usually committed by soldiers whose behaviour became 'lax' when out from under the 'watchful eye of authority' when 'foraging', commanders were advised to reduce 'unnecessary foraging' expeditions and to send a responsible leader with troops when they were unavoidable.⁵⁰ While the enforcement of such orders remained largely dependent on the commanding officer, sources indicate that the *Kempeitai* were more rigorous in their efforts to keep troops in line in Southeast Asia.⁵¹ A Japanese sergeant captured in October 1943, when asked about the treatment of local populations during an interrogation, remarked that 'there was no possibility of ill-treating natives ... as Military Police were insistent that they should not be antagonised.'⁵² Finally, in sharp contrast to POW policy, or lack thereof, employed in China, commanders were instructed that Asian prisoners were to be treated 'benevolently and humanely under the idea of the foundation of a Greater East Asia' and that '[v]iolence, insult and bad treatment must not be inflicted without good reason.' Furthermore, after being 're-educated', Asian POWs were to be

⁴⁷ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 877; Doc. 6, in Benda et al., *Administration in Indonesia*, 35-46; ATIS: Current Translations, No. 52, Doc. 573: 'Orders of the South Seas Detachment', 17.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*; see also changes to the Army Penal Code in ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 15: 'Bulletin of Punishments', 14.

⁴⁹ ATIS: Interrogation Reports, No. 157, 11.

⁵⁰ ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 15, 3.

⁵¹ See for example ATIS: Interrogation Reports, Nos. 77, 157, 160; NARA, RG 226, OSS, RAB, Entry 16: File No. 20519, 'Conditions in the Philippines', 10-1.

⁵² ATIS: Interrogation Reports, No. 206, 10.

released back into society unless needed for labour purposes for which they should be paid.⁵³ In theory, there was to be much less tolerance of atrocities on account of the very different framing and demands of this war, then.

In practice, the atmosphere of permissibility established in China proved difficult to completely stamp out. Based on the extensive evidence collected for the IMTFE, it is clear that atrocities, though diverse in scale and extent, occurred throughout Southeast Asia.⁵⁴ One of the reasons for this was that while the leadership had taken steps to tackle the widespread sense of acceptability for certain behaviours, the characterisation of the war, despite its pan-Asian overtones, further reinforced the sense of Japanese superiority which had facilitated violence in China. In framing conflict in the Pacific as a 'benevolent mission' to overthrow exploitative Western imperialism in Asia, the leadership confirmed Japan's right and responsibility to lead their neighbours who, even more so than the Chinese, were understood to be relatively backwards. Whereas China was seen as a once great civilisation in decline, Southeast Asian countries were typically viewed through their colonial status and it was widely believed that without Japanese guidance, these peoples could never achieve independence or prosperity.⁵⁵ There were exceptions among those men, like Fujiwara Iwaichi and Takeda Rintarō, who worked with local populations as part of dedicated pacification units; however, as Ethan Mark has pointed out, Japanese soldiers in general tended to look down upon Southeast Asians as backwards, lazy, uncivilised, and inherently inferior.⁵⁶ For example, Yokoda Shigeki, a third class seaman captured in 1943, explained to his interrogator

⁵³ NARA, RG 165, G-2, MID, Entry 77: Japan: 6960, 'Regulations for Treatment of Prisoners'.

⁵⁴ *Tokyo Trial Transcripts*, Phases XIII & XIV details Class B and C crimes.

⁵⁵ Takahashi Kamekichi, in Lebra, *Japan's Greater East Asia*, 50; IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 177.

⁵⁶ Ethan Mark, 'The Perils of Co-Prosperity: Takeda Rintarō, Occupied Southeast Asia, and the Seductions of Postcolonial Empire', *American Historical Review*, 119(4) (2014), 1192-3; Fujiwara Iwaichi, *F. Kikan: Japanese Army Intelligence Operations in Southeast Asia during World War II*, Akashi Yoji (trans.) (Hong Kong, 1983).

that, since the 'natives' were to be pitied and should be taught civilisation and culture, the IJN had treated them kindly but, in the words of the interrogator, 'could not, however, be treated in the same manner as the Japanese.'⁵⁷ An unnamed sergeant, also captured in 1943, similarly believed that the 'natives' were not to be viewed as equals given the far lower state of their civilisation.⁵⁸ Commanders sometimes advised troops to treat local inhabitants kindly on account of their being 'simple-minded' or of a 'lower standard'.⁵⁹ Still, as in China, such attitudes often had a detrimental impact on relations between the Japanese and those that came under their control. Troops expected their so-called 'Asian brothers' to address them as 'masters' and they were often forced to bow, threatened with slaps to the face, humiliation or worse if they did not show enough deference or respect.⁶⁰ Thus, declarations of 'Asia for the Asiatics' were belied by day-to-day interactions between the populace and Japanese soldiers who carried themselves with the arrogance of conquerors. As Grant Goodman has observed, this reinforced the very colonial relationship they claimed to be overturning.⁶¹ While the Japanese were initially welcomed as the 'liberators' they claimed to be in some areas, Burma and Indonesia for example, frustration with the exploitative wartime self-interest and the superior attitudes of the occupiers strained relations, giving rise to discontent and, in some cases, forms of resistance from Asian peoples across Southeast Asia. It is in addressing outbreaks of unrest and opposition among local inhabitants that the genocidal potential of the so-called 'liberating mission' can be located.

⁵⁷ ATIS: Interrogation Reports, No. 172, 22.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, No. 192, 10.

⁵⁹ ATIS: Current Translations, No. 71, Doc. 813: 'Loose Sheets Describing "Natives"', 30-1; No. 84, Doc. 911: 'Regulations for Guard Booklet', 51-2.

⁶⁰ Sybil Kathigasu, *No Dram of Mercy* (1954; reprint, Oxford, 2006), 38; Chin Kee Onn, *Malaya Upside Down* (Singapore, 1946), 152; see also letter from Claro M. Recto cited in Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *The Fateful Years: Japan's Adventure in the Philippines, 1941-45* (Quezon City, 1965), 1033-45; Ba Maw, *Breakthrough in Burma: Memoirs of a Revolution, 1939-1946* (New Haven, 1968), 180-5;

⁶¹ Grant K. Goodman, 'Introduction', in Goodman, *Japanese Cultural Policies*, 3-4.

There was a crucial dichotomy at work in the Japanese treatment of Southeast Asian populations. This was centred on resistance as occupation forces vacillated between conciliation and violent subjugation, depending on the reception and behaviour of the local inhabitants. While troops had been instructed that, as exemplified by the following operation orders from the South Seas Detachment, '[t]o harm non-resistant natives is to shame the banner of the Imperial Army and bring about misunderstandings', constraints on behaviour did not apply to those who offered opposition.⁶² Indeed, driven by deeply rooted insecurities and long-term ideological imperatives, the grandiose existential framing of the war meant that there was to be no tolerance of resistance in Southeast Asia. As mentioned, Japanese objectives required the complete submission of local populations. Thus, where limited pacification efforts failed, the leadership sanctioned violence as a means of subjugating unruly peoples who had limited rights under international law and whose lives mattered less in this apparent struggle for survival. For example, Lieutenant-General Honma Masaharu had threatened in a speech marking the fall of Singapore on 16 February that:

... if you fail to understand the true and lofty purpose of Japan, and instead obstruct the successful prosecution of the military activities and tactics of the Imperial Japanese Forces, whoever you are, we shall come and crush you with our might and power, and thus compel you to realize by means of force the true significance and meaning of our mission in the Far East.⁶³

Japanese forces 'impelled to take extreme measures with those who did not understand [their] real motive and prevented the peace ...' utilised those practices honed through numerous encounters with resisting Asian populations since 1895.⁶⁴ Throughout the occupied areas, populations were warned of the perils of opposing Japanese rule and terror tactics including; on-the-spot executions, public displays of

⁶² ATIS: Current Translations, No. 52, Doc. 573, 17.

⁶³ Cited in *Official Journal of the Japanese Military Administration (hereafter Official Journal)*, Vol. 1, 8.

⁶⁴ Japanese Monograph (JM) 103: 'Outline of Administration in Occupied Areas (1942-1945)', 13.

violence, reprisal killings, destruction of property, and collective punishments were used to reinforce these warnings. The *Kempeitai* as the primary agents responsible for the maintenance of peace and order were given considerable discretionary powers to raid, arrest, and execute on the slightest suspicion and used torture as a primary means of 'investigation'.⁶⁵ In essence, though the leadership had framed the war as a predominantly benevolent endeavour during which Japanese troops were to be more restrained in their conduct towards other Asians who, ideally, would be encouraged to cooperate, there were exceptions. Commanders on the ground had discretion to use violent measures in response to resistance or, more significantly, groups of people who were deemed to be 'anti-Japanese'. As in China, these terms were not clearly demarcated and men on the ground had ultimate authority to define 'resistance' and 'anti-Japanism'. Thus, while the space of exception established in China had not been fully extended into Southeast Asia, the absolute necessity of ensuring compliance in this perceived struggle for survival, caused the leadership to employ, as they had in occupied China, a fluid, ambiguous, and subjective rhetoric of exception that allowed for, warranted even, extreme violence towards those that stood in the way of their grand plans for reconstructing Asia. This made resistance even more concomitant to the radicalisation process in Southeast Asia.

Despite the outward, and not necessarily disingenuous, impression of a benevolent war of liberation, the context and framing of this conflict was not completely adverse to extreme violence. Indeed, the insecurities that had driven Japanese interest and fuelled an ambitious strategy of region-building in Southeast Asia, allowed for the destruction of people who were considered to be 'anti-Japanese' or 'resisting'.

⁶⁵ ATIS: *Enemy Publications*, No. 348: 'Military Police Manual'.

Though resistance was central to unleashing the potential for genocidal violence in this region, the adoption of more extreme measures was part of a radicalisation process similar to that in China whereby commanders made decisions to escalate their methods under particular conditions. In subsequent sections, beginning with an examination of the purge of the male Chinese population in British Malaya, I analyse this radicalisation process in Southeast Asia in greater depth to further identify the dynamics involved in driving the embrace of genocidal violence in the Japanese Empire.

4.2

'SWEEP[ING] AWAY THESE TREACHEROUS CHINESE' Purging 'Anti-Japanese Elements' in British Malaya, 1942

The invasion of British Malaya coincided with the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. Having landed in the south of Thailand, Japanese troops advanced swiftly through the peninsula. Just over two months later, British forces, which in the view of one contemporary observer had been 'hopelessly unprepared', capitulated.⁶⁶ Celebrated as an 'epoch-making event', the fall of Singapore, Britain's so-called 'impregnable fortress', on 15 February 1942, was viewed as a definitive victory over Western imperialism in Asia.⁶⁷ This triumph was all the more important because British Malaya was deemed essential to achieving Japanese objectives in Southeast Asia. The peninsula was strategically placed making it indispensable to securing, and later defending, access to the oil fields of the Dutch East Indies, one of the military's foremost wartime objectives.⁶⁸ Furthermore, Malaya had a highly developed economy that could provide abundant supplies of rubber and tin and Singapore was one of the main storage and distribution centres in the region.⁶⁹ In short, the peninsula was both strategically and economically advantageous and, as such, was to become the core of Japan's empire in the south.⁷⁰ This meant that, while other areas, such as Burma and the Philippines, were only important in the wartime context and were to one day become nominally independent, British Malaya was

⁶⁶ Onn, *Malaya*, 10.

⁶⁷ *Official Journal*, Vol. I, 9-10.

⁶⁸ IMTFE: *Exhibits*, No. 628, 6.

⁶⁹ JM 103, 42; Paul H. Kratoska, *The Japanese Occupation of Malaya: A Social and Economic History* (London, 1998), 20-5.

⁷⁰ Doc. 44: 'Instructions on the Administration of Malaya and Sumatra' (April 1942), in Benda et al., *Administration in Indonesia*, 168.

always to be fully absorbed into the Empire.⁷¹ In order to facilitate this, Japanese dominance over the peninsula was to be firmly established.

However, local conditions were less than desirable. There had been considerable destruction throughout the peninsula as a combined result of intensive fighting and the haphazard scorched earth policy employed to a limited extent by British commanders.⁷² More importantly, chaos reigned as the collapse of the British administration led to widespread rioting and looting.⁷³ Since the 25th Army, under the command of Lieutenant-General Yamashita Tomoyuki, was shortly to advance on Sumatra leaving just a small defence force behind, the highest priority was the swift restoration of peace and order.⁷⁴ Thus, on his arrival into Singapore, Yamashita issued the following warning:

[The] Nippon Army will drastically expel and punish those who still pursue bended delusions as heretofore, those who indulge themselves in private interests and wants, those who act against humanity and disturb the public order and peace and those who are against the orders and disturb the military action of Nippon Army.⁷⁵

While most of the 25th Army remained outside Singapore, so as to avoid 'outbreaks of disorder and inauspicious events', the *Kempeitai* were tasked with promptly re-establishing stability inside the city.⁷⁶ True to Yamashita's warnings, those who threatened public peace were 'drastically' punished and further disturbances were suppressed through the use of terror tactics, including public beatings and on-the-spot executions. Perpetrators caught looting a military store, for example, were immediately beheaded without trial, their heads then publicly displayed on spikes at

⁷¹ WO 203/6310: Doc. 11, 23.

⁷² Kratoska, *Japanese Occupation*, 46–8.

⁷³ Onn, *Malaya*, 18–25; H. Sidhu, *The Bamboo Fortress: True Singapore War Stories* (Singapore, 1991), 78; Shinozaki Mamoru, *My Wartime Experiences in Singapore* (Singapore, 1973), 18–9.

⁷⁴ TNA, WO 235/1004: 'Transcript of "Chinese Massacres Trial" and related documents' (March–April 1947) (hereafter *CMT Transcripts*), 10–2.

⁷⁵ 'Declaration', *Syonan Times* (21 February 1942).

⁷⁶ JM 54: 'Records on the Malayan Operations of the 25th Army', 101; Masanobu Tsuji, *Singapore, 1941–1942: The Japanese Version of the Malayan Campaign of World War II*, Margaret E. Lake (trans.) (1960; later edn, Oxford & New York, 1988), 174–8.

well-traversed areas across Singapore.⁷⁷ The Chinese population typically bore the brunt of such acts. While Japanese troops proved more forgiving of members of the Malay and Indian populations, who were often let-off with warnings for minor misdemeanours, Chinese offenders were treated to the severest of punishments and it was usually their heads that adorned spikes throughout the city.⁷⁸ The threat of violence loomed large as details of such incidents, accompanied by explicit warnings, appeared frequently in the *Syonan Times*, the primary Japanese-controlled newspaper in the peninsula.⁷⁹ Such measures, though shocking, were ultimately successful. The looting stopped and Lee Tian Soo remembered of the occupation that 'one could live freely with doors wide open, with no fears of burglary'.⁸⁰ From the outset then, local conditions, strategic considerations, and long-term plans for the peninsula led to a greater urgency in the restoration of peace and order. In achieving this, the 25th Army showed a predilection for terror and a menacing prejudice towards the Chinese population. The most extreme, genocidal measures, however, emerged three days later after the original bouts of unrest had, for the most part, been quelled.

'THE GREAT INSPECTION': MASSACRES OF THE CHINESE MALE POPULATION

On 18 February 1942, Army Headquarters issued a startling and ominous decree. All male Chinese in Singapore between the ages of eighteen and fifty were required to report to one of five designated 'screening centres' by noon on 21 February. This began what the Japanese were to call the 'great inspection' (*daikenshō*) and what has since become known as the *sook ching*, a Hokkien term meaning 'purge through

⁷⁷ Shinozaki Mamoru, *Syonan – My Story: The Japanese Occupation of Singapore* (Singapore, 1975), 18; NAS, OHD, Interview with Charlie Fook Ying Cheah, Accession No. 000385 (1984), Transcript, 19.

⁷⁸ Sidhu, *Bamboo Fortress*, 78; He Wen-Lit, *Syonan Interlude* (Singapore, 1991), 65–6.

⁷⁹ See *The Good Citizen's Guide* (Singapore, 1943) for examples.

⁸⁰ NAS, OHD, Interview with Lee Tian Soo, Accession No. 000265 (1983), Transcript, 22.

cleansing'.⁸¹ Japanese notices were displayed throughout the city warning of severe punishment for non-attendance and advising men to bring three days' worth of food and water with them.⁸² Naturally, given that the majority in Singapore did not speak Japanese, there was considerable panic and confusion as to the intentions behind the operation. Speculation was rife. Some had heard that they were to listen to a chastising speech over past misdemeanours, others believed they were to be registered for identity cards or for labour purposes yet, while some were more apprehensive, having heard the terrible stories of Nanjing, none predicted the true nature of the operation.⁸³ As such, the Japanese rarely had to force or coerce Chinese residents to attend, although some *Kempeitai* did go door-to-door, terrorising the population by roughly forcing them from their homes at gun-point. The lack of coordination meant that often women, children, and elderly men also arrived at the centres.⁸⁴ Once there, thousands waited, crowded together in confined spaces that rarely offered shelter from the elements, for a screening process that could take anywhere between six hours and six days, with only the provisions they may have brought with them.⁸⁵ Many suffered from dehydration, hunger, and exhaustion as they awaited their fate.⁸⁶

At the centres, the *Kempeitai*, assisted by the Imperial Guard Division, had just three days to screen the entire male Chinese population in Singapore and 'dispose of' any 'anti-Japanese' or 'bad' elements.⁸⁷ The operation had been planned prior to

⁸¹ Hayashi Hirofumi, 'Massacre of Chinese in Singapore and Its Coverage in Postwar Japan', in Akashi Yoji & Yoshimura Mako (eds.), *New Perspectives on the Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Singapore, 1941–1945* (Singapore, 2007), 234.

⁸² Shinozaki, *Wartime Experiences*, 22.

⁸³ N. I. Low & H. M. Cheng, *This Singapore: Our City of Dreadful Night* (Singapore, 1947), 15–6; Tan Thoon Lip, *Kempeitai Kindness* (Singapore, 1946), 84–5.

⁸⁴ Wai Keng Kwok 'Justice Done? Criminal and Moral Responsibility Issues In the Chinese Massacres Trial Singapore, 1947', *Genocide Studies Program, Working Paper No. 18* (New Haven, 2001), 9–13.

⁸⁵ He, *Syonan Interlude*, 89; Sidhu, *Bamboo Fortress*, 81–4.

⁸⁶ Kathigasu, *No Dram*, 35; Onn, *Malaya*, 103–4.

⁸⁷ TNA, WO 325/30: 'Killing of Chinese of Straits Settlements Volunteer Force in Singapore', 2–3.

entry into the city and so was assisted by suspect lists prepared in advance.⁸⁸ These lists targeted men who had been involved in the China Relief Fund, volunteers who had fought with the British, those who had come to Singapore after the outbreak of the 'China Incident', suspected communists, and those with professions that ostensibly made them more likely to be anti-Japanese, such as government officials, journalists, teachers, and students.⁸⁹ The term 'anti-Japanese' became so sweeping and subjective that men would also be singled out on the basis of completely arbitrary reasons such as being rich, educated, or able to speak English, as well as on the basis of their physical appearance. Tattoos, spectacles, close-cropped hair styles, and soft hands all apparently denoted 'anti-Japanism'.⁹⁰ As Lee Geok Boi observed, 'life for thousands in those few days essentially hung on the whims and fancies of the men doing the screening.'⁹¹

Like in China, commanders had authority to decide what constituted 'anti-Japanism' and so the rigour with which men were investigated varied according to the character of those in charge. For instance, while women had been sent home fairly early in the process at most other centres, at the Victoria School in Jalan Besar they were screened and some taken away in trucks to be used, it was suspected, in military brothels.⁹² Shinozaki Mamoru, a Japanese civilian diplomat notable for saving the lives of a large number of Chinese men by issuing 'good citizen' passes, visited several of these centres and was concerned that the investigations were not very fair or methodical. He described with incredulity how, in some centres,

⁸⁸ Kwok, 'Justice Done', 8; Henry P. Frei, *Guns of February: Ordinary Japanese Soldiers' View of the Malayan Campaign and the Fall of Singapore, 1941-42* (Singapore, 2004), 147-8.

⁸⁹ Low & Cheng, *This Singapore*, 18-9; CMT Transcripts, 155.

⁹⁰ Sidhu, *Bamboo Fortress*, 87; Lee Geok Boi, *The Syonan Years: Singapore under Japanese Rule, 1942-1945* (Singapore, 2005), 108.

⁹¹ Lee, *Syonan Years*, 107.

⁹² He, *Syonan Interlude*, 88.

interviews were conducted entirely in Japanese.⁹³ In some locations, hooded informers were used to identify 'anti-Japanese' elements simply through a nod of the head or a point of the finger.⁹⁴ According to the memoirs of Fusayama Takao, a member of the Imperial Guard Division who had conducted operations in Malaya, other commanders offered no pretence of investigation at all and simply divided men at random until the line of 'anti-Japanese' reached one hundred. Fusayama's unit had effectively been asked by the Division Commander to 'kill enough to satisfy the Army Headquarters' after a chastisement for low execution rates.⁹⁵ This suggests that these units had been given a target, the achievement of which would be ascertained quantitatively rather than qualitatively encouraging further an arbitrary selection process. Indeed, according to a statement given by Hishikari Takafumi, a newspaper correspondent attached to 25th Army Headquarters, at the 'Chinese Massacres Trial' conducted by the British in 1947, he had been advised by staff officers that the hard-liners' objective was to kill fifty thousand Chinese, although the operation was later halted before that figure had been reached.⁹⁶ Though this is hearsay evidence, the fact that Army Headquarters had given an impossible deadline which, according to Lieutenant-General Nishimura Takuma, commander of the Imperial Guard Division, precluded thorough investigation, further supports the conclusion that the operation was meant to be a planned purge of part of the male Chinese population as opposed to a thorough investigation, arrest, and punishment of genuine 'anti-Japanese' elements.⁹⁷

Those who made it through the arbitrary screening process were stamped with the word 'examined' or given a certificate and were free to leave; those who did

⁹³ Shinozaki, *Wartime Experiences*, 23–5.

⁹⁴ He, *Syonan Interlude*, 90.

⁹⁵ Fusayama Takao, *Memoir of Takao Fusayama: A Japanese Soldier in Malaya and Sumatra* (Malaysia, 1997), 100–1; see also Onishi Satoru's recollections in Frei, *Guns of February*, 150–1.

⁹⁶ *CMT Transcripts*, Exhibit S, 2.

⁹⁷ *CMT Transcripts*, 141.

not were loaded into trucks and taken away. Their fate remained a mystery for days and family members continued to believe that they had been taken for labour purposes until bodies were discovered washed up on Changi Beach and a handful of survivors eventually returned to relate their experiences at the various execution sites.⁹⁸ Their accounts were later corroborated by the diaries and testimony of British POWs, a number of whom had been forced to bury the bodies of those executed.⁹⁹ The screening centres began to disappear after several days in Singapore, however, the operation was not considered to be enough and further round-ups were ordered, though they were carried out on a smaller-scale and were much less indiscriminate.¹⁰⁰ In Malaya, the 5th and 18th Divisions, having begun operations there on 21 February, staged a series of round-ups over the course of several weeks.¹⁰¹ In the urban centres, procedure followed that of Singapore and was similarly capricious in the targeting of Chinese men. In a Japanese document captured by ATIS, statistics given for an operation in the vicinity of Kuala Lumpur on 6 March 1942, indicate that of the 237 'anti-Japanese' people executed, 229 had been Chinese. Of these, few strictly met the criteria on the suspect lists. For instance, forty-six were executed for possession of Chinese flags, pro-British items, and anti-Japanese photos, thirty for plotting to escape the round-up, and eighty-four as 'other suspects' while only fourteen had directly opposed the IJA, only three had been 'known enemy sympathisers', and just twelve were members of the Malayan

⁹⁸ He, *Syonan Interlude*, 137; Low & Cheng, *This Singapore*, 26–32; NAS, OHD, Interview with Yap Yan Hong, Accession No. 001041 (1989), Transcript, 23–31; IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 1498: 'Statement of Wong Sin Joon' & No. 1530A: 'Statement of Chew Sway Leok'.

⁹⁹ See testimony of Colonel Cyril Hew Dalrymple Wild the primary British war crimes investigator for this area in *Tokyo Trial Transcripts*, 5365–70; IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 1499A: 'Statement of Albert Frank Ball', No. 1500A: Statement of Campbell Weston Perry, No. 1501A: 'Statement of George Polamin'; T. P. M. Lewis, *Changi: The Lost Years: A Malayan Diary 1941–1945* (Kuala Lumpur, 1984).

¹⁰⁰ Shinozaki, *War-time Experiences*, 26; CMT *Transcripts*, 9, 159–60.

¹⁰¹ Onn, *Malaya*, 99–107.

Communist Party.¹⁰² Conditions in the rural areas made the process of concentrating and screening the populace impractical and, as they began to encounter sporadic guerrilla activity in remote provinces, Japanese soldiers came to regard all Chinese in those areas as enemies leading to more indiscriminate massacres that included women and children among the victims.¹⁰³ Like Nanjing, the death toll in this instance continues to be debated and it is unlikely that a consensus will be reached. For Singapore, figures range between five and fifty thousand and for Malaya between four and twenty thousand killed.¹⁰⁴ What is clear is that the massacres represent an instance, similar to that in Nanjing, where mopping-up operations intentionally and indiscriminately targeted the Chinese male population regardless of their actual involvement in anti-Japanese activities. Where the massacres at Nanjing were part of a cumulative radicalisation that had occurred during the brutal punitive campaign in the Yangtze Delta, such extremes in British Malaya were shocking for their abrupt, pre-emptive character and for having emerged within the wider context of the 'liberating mission'.

A declaration addressing the massacres by Yamashita on 25 February gives some insight into where the origins of the decision to employ extreme measures lie. According to this declaration, published in the *Syonan Times*, 'the recent arrests of hostile and rebellious Chinese have drastically been carried [out] in order to establish the prompt restoration of the peace of "Syonan-Ko" (port of Syonan) and also to establish the bright Malaya.' He further detailed the various anti-Japanese activities of the Chinese, observed that they had fought alongside the British as 'traitors' of

¹⁰² ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 28: 'Intelligence Reports', 7.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, 1–4; Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star over Malaya: Resistance and Social Conflict During and After the Japanese Occupation of Malaya, 1941–46* (1983; 4th edn, Singapore, 2012), 23; Lewis, *Changi*, 130 & footnote 119.

¹⁰⁴ Kwok, 'Justice Done', 14; Henry P. Frei, 'Japan Remembers the Malaya Campaign', in Paul H. Kratoska (ed.), *Malaya and Singapore during the Japanese Occupation* (Singapore, 1995), 161; Cheah Boon Kheng, 'Japanese Army Policy toward the Chinese and Malay-Chinese Relations in Wartime Malaya', in Kratoska, *Southeast Asian Minorities*, 102.

East Asia, and advised that they had disguised themselves as 'good citizens' with the intention of carrying on guerrilla activities which threatened the future prosperity of the area. Ultimately, he argued, it had been 'the most important thing to sweep away these treacherous Chinese elements'.¹⁰⁵ As implied in this declaration, to understand the roots of the decision to adopt more radical measures in British Malaya, it is necessary to look more broadly at general policy towards the Chinese in Southeast Asia, the unique pre-war circumstances in the peninsula, and the limited support offered to the British during the Malayan Campaign.

THE 'CHINESE PROBLEM' IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Pre-war planners had identified the overseas Chinese as a potential problem from the outset.¹⁰⁶ Since the outbreak of war with China in 1937, they had provided financial and some limited military support for Chiang Kai-shek's government. Furthermore, they had organised boycotts, engaged in various anti-Japanese activities and, in the Philippines, had even clashed with Japanese civilians.¹⁰⁷ The presence of anti-Japanese sentiment was prevalent throughout the region and consequently the overseas Chinese were considered to be hostile and potentially dangerous to Japanese efforts. As noted, the military, having learned hard lessons in China, favoured a zero-tolerance policy towards potential resistance. Echoing the intentions of the IJA in their campaign in the Yangtze region during late 1937, a number of 'hardliners' recommended a pre-emptive show of force in Southeast Asia to cow the Chinese into submission.¹⁰⁸ However, strategists also recognised their importance to the economic life and prosperity of the region. Local Chinese

¹⁰⁵ 'Declaration', *Syonan Times* (23 February 1942).

¹⁰⁶ Akashi Yoji, 'Japanese Policy towards the Malayan Chinese 1941-1945', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies (JSEAS)*, 1(2) (1970), 61.

¹⁰⁷ Antonio S. Tan, 'The Philippine Chinese Response to the Sino-Japanese Conflict, 1931-1941', *JSEAS*, 12(1) (1981), 207-23; Stephen Leong, 'The Malayan Overseas Chinese and the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1941', *JSEAS*, 10(2) (September 1979), 293-320.

¹⁰⁸ See Akashi, 'Japanese Policy', 61-2 for description of this document.

communities typically dominated the commerce, industry, and business of many areas and, since Japanese interest in Southeast Asia was principally economic, they were understood to be vital to the realisation of key military objectives which inclined more moderate elements to a policy of cooperation.¹⁰⁹ Thus, the Chinese populations of Southeast Asia presented a paradox: on the one hand, they could be potentially valuable collaborators; on the other, they were inherently anti-Japanese and might become a threat to the successful mobilisation of resources. Ultimately, pre-war planners decided that, while they would be forced to sever ties with Chiang Kai-shek's government, the military should aim at fostering a cooperative relationship and outlined guidelines for treatment of the overseas Chinese that were commensurate with this outlook.¹¹⁰

However, as scholars Akashi Yoji and Hayashi Hirofumi have pointed out, these were occupation forces coming into Southeast Asia after years of protracted conflict in China.¹¹¹ The experiences of this war had hardened attitudes and reinforced prejudices towards the Chinese people which made them more vulnerable to suspicion and more aggressive, discriminatory occupation policies. Within the context of the categories of exception established by the leadership, Japanese commanders had the freedom and authority to use extreme measures against 'anti-Japanese' or 'resisting' peoples. Thus, despite pre-war guidance for a more conciliatory approach, in almost all areas, occupation forces, armed with suspect lists prepared in advance, began an immediate round-up of leaders of anti-Japanese associations, GMD and CCP members, and other men singled out as having engaged in anti-Japanese activity by intelligence agents. Their fate varied according to local conditions. In Indonesia, where the Japanese had received one of their 'warmest

¹⁰⁹ JM 103, 17; Akashi, 'Japanese Policy', 61.

¹¹⁰ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 877.

¹¹¹ Hayashi, 'Chinese Massacres', 238-40; Akashi, 'Japanese Policy', 63-7.

welcomes', these men were detained for the duration of the occupation. Although investigations and raids were to continue, the Chinese community of Indonesia were thereafter afforded the opportunity to cooperate and, as they conformed to Japanese demands, later came to be viewed as a relatively pro-Japanese group.¹¹² As a result, they were treated comparatively well and in fact Japanese forces had intervened on their behalf when they became the targets of violence from Indonesians as a result of their past collaboration with the Dutch.¹¹³ In the Philippines, where the Japanese had met with a cooler reception, policies were similar, although the punishments harsher, as small groups of men apprehended by the *Kempeitai*, including the Chinese consular staff, were summarily executed.¹¹⁴ A military administration document outlining policy in Burma, where the IJA were also well-received, suggests that the 15th Army followed a similar approach in terms of fostering cooperation while warning that 'those [overseas Chinese] who might cooperate with the enemy and conspire against Japan shall be sought out and punished.'¹¹⁵ Born out of an underlying prejudice and mistrust, the IJA implemented a fairly uniform policy of pre-emptively striking at those most involved in pre-war anti-Japanese activity among the Chinese populations in Southeast Asia.

Massacres in Malaya and Singapore, counter to the argument of Geoffrey Gunn, were not representative of a general policy of ethnic cleansing or genocide targeting the Chinese in Southeast Asia, then.¹¹⁶ As the aforementioned examples indicate, they were part of a wider military strategy for establishing authority over a

¹¹² *The Kenpeitai in Java and Sumatra* (Selections from *Nihon Kenpei Seishi*), Barbara Gifford Shimer & Guy Hobbs (trans.) (Ithaca, 1986), 1029.

¹¹³ For more detail see Elly Touwen-Bouwisma, 'Japanese Policy towards the Chinese in Java, 1942-1945: A Preliminary Outline', in Kratoska, *Southeast Asian Minorities*, 55-64; Didi Kwartanda, 'Japanese Leadership and Organization in Yogyakarta during the Japanese Occupation', in *ibid*, 66-70.

¹¹⁴ Antonio S. Tan, *The Chinese in the Philippines during the Japanese Occupation, 1942-1945* (Quezon City, 1981), 35-42.

¹¹⁵ Doc. 6: 'General Plan for the Control of the Occupied Areas' (15 March 1942), in Trager, *Burma*, 51.

¹¹⁶ Geoffrey Gunn, 'Remembering the Southeast Asian Chinese Massacres of 1941-1945', *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 37(3) (2007), 273-4.

potentially problematic population. There was a crucial difference in British Malaya, however. In other areas only the leaders and those most involved in anti-Japanese activities were targeted, giving the Chinese population as a whole an opportunity (though usually under threat of violence) to submit to Japanese rule. With massacres beginning just three days after the British surrender, this opportunity was not afforded to Chinese men in Singapore and Malaya. The scale of violence as well as the indiscriminate targeting of the male population was exceptional in this case. Indeed, a military administration document from the 25th Army dated April 1942 in which it was stated that the Chinese who refused to cooperate would be 'dealt with by means of extremely severe measures ... while hostile elements shall be answered with capital punishment', represented the most ruthless approach of all administrations in Southeast Asia.¹¹⁷ In fact, while anti-Chinese prejudices were prevalent among occupation forces across the region, the military administration in British Malaya, under the guidance of 'hardliner' Colonel Watanabe Wataru, proved especially suspicious and discriminatory.¹¹⁸ Indeed, even after the situation had been 'improved' through the 'Great Inspection', there was a general sense that the Chinese were cooperating outwardly but were secretly conspiring, if not directly militating, against Japanese objectives.¹¹⁹ An intelligence report from the 5th Division's 41st Infantry Regiment in March 1942, for instance, had warned that 'these Chinese on the surface evince complete loyalty, but in view of their propensity to plot behind the scenes, strictest caution and vigilance is vital.'¹²⁰ As a result, the Chinese population were to live in constant fear of the *Kempeitai* who, in their continued search for hostile elements, monitored the population closely and had the power to arrest, torture, and

¹¹⁷ Doc. 47: 'Principles Governing the Implementation of Measures Relative to the Chinese' (April 1942), in Benda et al., *Administration in Indonesia*, 179–80.

¹¹⁸ Akashi, 'Japanese Policy', 64–5; Clancey, 'Japanese Imperium', 17.

¹¹⁹ JM 103, 17.

¹²⁰ ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 28, 1.

execute on the slightest suspicion.¹²¹

This prejudice played a role in driving violence since, as noted earlier, Japanese forces were typically more exacting in punishing infractions by Chinese in the peninsula. For example, while Malayan doctor T. J. Danaraj was let off with a warning for possession of a British calendar, the same for a Chinese man would have been a death sentence.¹²² An Office of Strategic Services (OSS) research report examining the potential effectiveness of US counter-propaganda initiatives observed that the Japanese were actively promoting a pro-Malay policy while the Chinese were 'being held in a position analogous to that of the Jews in Nazi-held countries.'¹²³ Though exaggerated, another military intelligence document assessing the situation in the occupied areas in August 1942 confirmed distinct disparities in the Japanese handling of the Malay, Indian, and Chinese groups, with the latter experiencing overtly repressive policies.¹²⁴ Immediately after the massacres had come to an end, for instance, the remaining Chinese population were coerced into 'donating' a fifty million dollar 'gift' to the military administration as atonement for prior anti-Japanese acts.¹²⁵ Any guerrilla activity during the occupation was also answered automatically by reprisals against the Chinese population, and though they did form the basis of much of the limited resistance in the area, there was no real attempt by the Japanese to confirm that they had been involved. Aside from the individual personalities of the commanders in British Malaya, the more extreme attitudes of the occupation forces in this area were rooted in the unique pre-war circumstances in the

¹²¹ ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 348; see Kathigasu, *No Dram & Tan, Kempeitai Kindness* for personal experiences with the *Kempeitai*.

¹²² T. J. Danaraj, *Japanese Invasion of Malaya and Singapore: Memoirs of a Doctor* (Kuala Lumpur, 1990), 101–2.

¹²³ OSS Publications, *Japan and Its Occupied Territories during World War II: 'Our Chinese Allies in Southeast Asia'*, 7–8.

¹²⁴ NARA, RG 165, G-2, MID, Entry 77: Japan, File 6960.117: 'Military Government in Occupied Territory' (27 August 1942).

¹²⁵ Onn, *Malaya*, 72–83; Shinozaki, *Syonan*, 45–8.

peninsula which had contributed to perceptions of the Malayan Chinese as manifestly hostile.

THE 'TREACHEROUS' MALAYAN CHINESE

Although pre-war anti-Japanese activity was ubiquitous among the Chinese populations of Southeast Asia, it was most extensive in Malaya and Singapore. There were strong ties to China and both the GMD and CCP had established support bases in the area. The Malayan Chinese had a long history of providing assistance to the Nationalist government, having sent aid and organised boycotts as early as 1915 in the wake of the Twenty-One Demands.¹²⁶ After the Manchurian Incident in 1931 and again following the outbreak of war with China in 1937, anti-Japanese activity surged becoming expansive and increasingly belligerent. According to statistics compiled by Stephen Leong, though the Chinese in the Philippines had contributed more per capita, Malayan Chinese contributions were substantial amounting to forty-eight percent of the total funds received by the GMD from Southeast Asia. As Anglo-Japanese relations deteriorated, the British administration grew more and more sympathetic to the Chinese, allowing anti-Japanese activities to thrive in the peninsula. Boycotts, for example, became particularly effective resulting, between 1937 and 1938, in a sixty-eight percent decrease in imports of Japanese goods.¹²⁷ This was significant at a time when the Japanese economy was under increasing strain due to the war in China and the deterioration of relations with its primary trade partners. As might be expected, men involved in these activities were at the top of the suspect lists prepared prior to entry into Singapore, indicating a punitive desire driving the massacres. More importantly, however, the widespread and pervasive

¹²⁶ Kratoska, *Japanese Occupation*, 15–6.

¹²⁷ Leong, 'Malayan Overseas Chinese', 317–9.

nature of anti-Japanism among the Chinese in this area contributed to a perception of this group as ill-disposed to, and supremely likely to oppose, Japanese rule.

This potential resistance was all the more threatening since the Chinese were the largest, most nationally conscious and economically powerful ethnic group in British Malaya. The military estimated that seventy to eighty percent of the population, for example, was Chinese and that they controlled upwards of eighty percent of the economy.¹²⁸ Figures provided by Paul Kratoska indicate that this was slightly exaggerated; prior to the Japanese occupation, around fifty-seven percent of the total population in Malaya and Singapore were Chinese.¹²⁹ Nevertheless, this is significant when contrasted to the Philippines where the Chinese, also particularly active against Japan in the 1930s, amounted to just one percent of the population.¹³⁰ Of greater significance, however, was the uneven racial distribution across the peninsula. As Kratoska pointed out, the Chinese typically dominated the urban centres while the Malay population, the second largest, were mostly rural. In Singapore, the primary financial and industrial zone under the British, the Chinese were the largest group amounting to seventy-eight percent of the total population in the city.¹³¹ As in other areas, it was understood that the economic recovery and prosperity of the peninsula, fundamental to the military's wartime priorities, would not easily be achieved without the assistance of this group.¹³² The Chinese, therefore, were well-placed to impede Japanese economic imperatives and any resistance might have dire repercussions for success in the war effort. The aforementioned intelligence report from the 41st Infantry Regiment, for example, rationalised continued vigilance

¹²⁸ JM 103, 17.

¹²⁹ See table in Kratoska *Japanese Occupation*, 19.

¹³⁰ Li Yuk-Wai, 'The Chinese Resistance Movement in the Philippines during the Japanese Occupation', *JSEAS*, 23(2) (1992), 308.

¹³¹ Kratoska, *Japanese Occupation*, 19.

¹³² *Ibid*, 93; Doc. 44, in Benda, et al., *Japanese Military Administration*, 169.

on account of their sizeable presence in Kuala Lumpur, 'a particularly important political, economic, business and commercial centre', which would have the effect of 'virtually plac[ing] the peninsula under the control of the Chinese.'¹³³ Combined with past anti-Japanese activity, their large numbers and considerable influence in the economic life of the area made the Chinese population's overt hostility, past anti-Japanese behaviour, and associated potential for resistance a particular source of consternation.

In spite of such concerns, testimony by Colonel Sugita Ichiji given at the Chinese Massacres Trial reveals that on the outbreak of war in December 1941, the 25th Army had originally intended to follow a more moderate approach.¹³⁴ Fujiwara Iwaichi, head of the *F-Kikan*, a unit designed to promote relations with the Indian population, concurred during his interrogation. According to him, cooperation was the ultimate goal and, in the words of his interrogator, 'the illusion had only been destroyed after the war began'.¹³⁵ Moderates, like Fujiwara, were especially appalled at the extreme policy employed by Army Headquarters because, as far as they could tell, the Malayan Chinese were as likely to submit to Japan's wartime goals, as other Chinese communities in Southeast Asia had been.¹³⁶ Michael Sasaki, a second-generation Japanese POW born and raised in the peninsula, similarly maintained that based on his experience in the area, the Chinese population would have accepted Japanese occupation and carried on with their lives as normal.¹³⁷ Thus, while suspect lists were being made in preparation for a purge of anti-Japanese elements as early as 28 December 1941, there is no indication that this was substantially different than those of other occupation forces in Southeast Asia at that

¹³³ ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 28, 1.

¹³⁴ *CMT Transcripts*, 11.

¹³⁵ NARA, RG 165, G-2, MID, Entry 79: SEATIC: Intelligence Bulletin, No. 234, 50.

¹³⁶ Fujiwara, *F. Kikan*, 193.

¹³⁷ NARA, RG 165, G-2, MID, Entry 79: SEATIC: Publication, No. 182, 15-6.

time. The radicalisation of the more drastic and indiscriminate measures adopted by the 25th Army in February 1942 then, occurred during the course of the Malayan Campaign.

CHINESE RESISTANCE DURING THE MALAYAN CAMPAIGN

Contemporary observers collectively pointed to the Malayan Campaign as the principle factor in the radicalisation of violence in early 1942. As Low and Cheng put it: 'we [were] nobody's darlings, we Chinese ... The further south he [Yamashita] got, the less he loved us.'¹³⁸ Indeed, in spite of their lightning attack, Japanese forces had begun to come up against stiff resistance and encountered setbacks on the approach to Singapore. As they advanced through Johore, increasing incidents of rape and looting were reported suggesting that fierce combat was radicalising troop behaviour.¹³⁹ The situation was such that after the capture of the city, troops were forbidden from entering Singapore. In fact, when it was decided to abolish prohibited areas for soldiers on 5 April 1942, Army Headquarters remained concerned over the potential for misconduct, warning that every act reflected on the prestige of the IJA and would have a 'profound impression' on the 'natives'.¹⁴⁰ The assault on the city, which Japanese commanders had initially anticipated would produce an early British surrender, became a prolonged affair.¹⁴¹ A number of Chinese men had participated in this fighting after the British had established a volunteer force, known as the Dalforce for its commander, Colonel John Dalley. Given some moderate training and limited supplies, this relatively small unit was to hinder the Japanese advance through attacks and fifth column activity behind enemy

¹³⁸ N. I. Low, *When Singapore was Syonan-to* (Singapore, 1973), 13.

¹³⁹ Onn, *Malaya*, 15–7.

¹⁴⁰ ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 9, 3–4.

¹⁴¹ JM 54, 95–6.

lines; essentially, through engaging in guerrilla-style tactics.¹⁴² According to Shinozaki, those in Army Headquarters were infuriated at this last minute support from the Chinese and a number of other contemporary observers attributed this activity to the drastic shift in policy in February 1942.¹⁴³ These statements must be treated with circumspect since for the most part these observers overestimated the military importance of this unit.¹⁴⁴ Chin Kee Onn, for instance, gave the following embellished appraisal: the Dalforce had 'given them [the Japanese] the most trouble, killed the greatest number of their men, checked their progress and built up the fighting morale of the whole Chinese nation'.¹⁴⁵ Though it is doubtful that the Dalforce played such a decisive role in the fighting, they were symbolically significant as the only active resistance offered to the Japanese by the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. Certainly, the *Kempeitai* showed determination in their efforts to locate former members of the Dalforce, even going so far as to trick men into coming forward with promises of release and work as policemen.¹⁴⁶ Some scholars, like Hayashi Hirofumi, have refuted the idea that massacres were a retaliation to Chinese participation in the Battle of Singapore since, contrary to the observations of contemporaries, the Dalforce was of limited military effectiveness.¹⁴⁷ However, the fact that more substantial resistance by Indian soldiers who fought alongside the British in Malaya and Filipino men who had taken up arms in the Philippines was more easily forgiven, in accordance with the more moderate policy

¹⁴² Akashi, 'Japanese Policy', 61; Cheah, 'Japanese Army', 98-100.

¹⁴³ Shinozaki, *Wartime Experiences*, 29; Low & Cheng, *This Singapore*, 15; Sidhu, *Syonan Interlude*, 65-6.

¹⁴⁴ For an overview of the military effectiveness of the Dalforce see Kevin Blackburn and Chew Ju Ern, Daniel, 'Dalforce at the Fall of Singapore in 1942: An Overseas Chinese Heroic Legend', *Journal of Chinese Overseas*, 1(2) (2005), 233-59.

¹⁴⁵ Onn, *Malaya*, 95.

¹⁴⁶ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 1498.

¹⁴⁷ Hayashi, 'Chinese Massacres', 236; see also Blackburn & Chew, 'Dalforce', 253.

in Southeast Asia, suggests that it was more about what this specifically Chinese guerrilla resistance represented than its results.¹⁴⁸

According to the defendants at the Chinese Massacres Trial, active resistance from this population fuelled concerns over the potential for resistance in the peninsula. For instance, Major General Kawamura Saburō, in command of the Singapore Garrison, testified that the reasons for the massacres as relayed to him by Staff Officer Tsuji Masanobu, centred on the putative preparations for guerrilla resistance being made by volunteers and communists who had 'gone underground'.¹⁴⁹ Nishimura and Sugita both pointed to the unrest in Singapore as further evidence of a 'grave situation' developing in the peninsula.¹⁵⁰ While Hayashi is likely correct that such statements were exaggerated in the context of the war crimes trials; it is important to note, as Hayashi has done to an extent, that the extreme violence towards the Malayan Chinese was shaped by the recent memories of anti-guerrilla warfare in China, of which members of the 25th Army were veterans. These troops had first-hand experience of the difficulties and resources required in effectively quashing this type of resistance. Since the peninsula was to become an integral part of the Japanese Empire and the majority of the invasion force was to move on to Sumatra, the possibility that guerrilla resistance *might* emerge among the largest, most economically important group (a possibility raised by the mere fact of the Dalforce), likely exacerbated pre-existing concerns over the anti-Japanese sentiment of the Chinese in this region. As in China, the established inability to identify volunteers cast suspicion on the whole populace placing the males in particular within a category of exception as potential anti-Japanese guerrillas. In

¹⁴⁸ Manuel E. Buenafe, *Wartime Philippines* (Manila, 1950), 130; see Fujiwara, *F-Kikan* for details regarding Indian POWs.

¹⁴⁹ *CMT Transcripts*, 153.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 13-8, 143.

other words, the experiences, learning, and taboos broken in China had already begun the process of radicalisation that allowed for extreme violence towards anti-Japanese and resisting peoples. However, as consideration of the situation in other territories reveals, the decisions of the 25th Army command in February 1942 were determined by the unique conditions in British Malaya which caused the Chinese to be viewed as a potent threat that, in spite of their significance to the economic prosperity of the peninsula, could and would be suppressed by an intentionally indiscriminate destruction of part of the male population.¹⁵¹

In February 1942 then, the 25th Army implemented a plan of intentional group destruction targeting a section of the Chinese male population of British Malaya. Massacres were arbitrary, singling out military-aged males regardless of whether they had engaged in guerrilla activities or had directly supported them. They were also pre-emptive, occurring immediately after the IJA had arrived into Singapore giving the overseas Chinese limited opportunity for resistance, or conversely, to comply with Japanese occupation. As such, Chinese men were targeted, not for proven opposition to Japanese rule, but because they fell into a category of people against whom it was acceptable to use extreme measures. The abruptness of the massacres also represented a pattern of radicalisation and learning informed by past experiences, prejudicial attitudes, and contempt developed during the course of war in China. This meant that the Malayan Chinese, as the largest and most actively anti-Japanese group in the peninsula, were seen as a particularly dangerous threat. Furthermore, Malaya and Singapore were essential to Japanese goals in Southeast Asia and a section of the 25th Army was soon to leave for Sumatra, leaving just a small defence force behind. Such considerations, exacerbated by the perceived

¹⁵¹ Akashi, 'Japanese Policy', 67.

'Chinese problem', the limited resistance of the Dalforce, and the initial bouts of unrest in the peninsula, further triggered the leap to more extreme measures at this time. While the emergence of genocidal violence in this instance was related to the radicalisation of attitudes towards the Chinese during campaigns in China, the breaking of taboos in terms of what constituted acceptable methods for suppressing resistance in this area opened possibilities for more exceptional practices towards other populations who, in contrast, were not seen as inherently anti-Japanese. In the final section of this chapter, I examine one such case through analysing the longer-term radicalisation of violence in the Philippines.

4.3

'ALL PEOPLE ON THE BATTLEFIELD... WILL BE PUT TO DEATH' Anti-Guerrilla Warfare in the Philippines, 1942-45

As in other areas, the Japanese invasion of the Philippines in December 1941 progressed swiftly. By 2 January, Manila had been captured and, while fighting continued in Bataan province until May 1942, the surrender of the capital marked the beginning of the Japanese occupation.¹⁵² Proclaiming the Islands free of the 'oppressive domination' of the US, Lieutenant-General Honma Masaharu outlined Japanese aims of creating a 'Philippines for the Filipinos' and implored the people to share wartime burdens and cooperate in this endeavour.¹⁵³ However, such rhetoric had limited appeal for a people who were already in the process of transitioning to independence. As such, the IJA received a lukewarm reception from the populace who were cautious of Japanese intentions in the Islands.¹⁵⁴ Rumours of soldiers' brutality in the provinces and an awareness of the IJA's record in China added, in some quarters, to an underlying animosity and caused the people of Manila to be apprehensive of, if not outwardly hostile to, Japanese troops.¹⁵⁵ Japanese victory, then, was far from triumphant. The lacklustre welcome, the ambivalence of the populace, and the continued resistance of thousands of Filipino soldiers in Bataan, contributed to Japanese suspicions of the people, in contrast to the more welcoming Indonesians and Burmese, as pro-American.

¹⁵² For American and Japanese perspectives of this campaign see *Reports of General MacArthur, Volume 1: The Campaigns of MacArthur in the Pacific* (Washington D.C., 1966), 6-21; JM 1: 'Philippines Operations Record (6 November 1941 - 30 June 1942)', respectively.

¹⁵³ 'Proclamation' (3 January 1942), *Official Journal*, Vol. 1, 1-2.

¹⁵⁴ Ricardo T. Jose, 'Accord and Discord: Japanese Cultural Policy and Philippine National Identity during the Japanese Occupation (1942-1945)', in Li Narangoa & Robert Cribb (eds.), *Imperial Japan and National Identities, 1895-1945* (London, 2003), 249.

¹⁵⁵ Marcial Primitivo Lichauco, "*Dear Mother Putnam*": *A Diary of War in the Philippines* (Manila?, 1949), 17; Agoncillo, *Fateful Years*, 310-1; Pacita Pestaño-Jacinto, *Living with the Enemy: A Diary of the Japanese Occupation* (Pasig City, 1999), 15.

The short bouts of unrest and looting that preceded the entry into Manila did little to assuage concerns and, though this was swiftly suppressed, the 14th Army sought to deter further disturbances through terror tactics similar to those employed in British Malaya. A declaration on 2 January threatened that 'offering resistance or committing a hostile act against the Japanese Armed Forces in any manner, leads the whole native land to ashes.'¹⁵⁶ Filipino civilians were soon to discover that such warnings were not empty threats. The IJA followed through with fervour and brutality to set an example of the perils of non-compliance.¹⁵⁷ Filipinos were impelled to watch the torture, beating, or execution of their fellow countrymen and soldiers would frequently mete out punishments that were disproportionate to, what were often, minor infractions.¹⁵⁸ One man, for example, was shot in the back in these first few days simply for refusing to bow to a Japanese sentry.¹⁵⁹ Punishments such as these were justified under the broad rubric of 'resistance' which allowed soldiers to impose penalties for a wide variety of acts including; attacks on Japanese installations, the distribution of pro-American flyers, and, as two civilians discovered in February 1942, the failure to walk around sandbags.¹⁶⁰ Where the perpetrators could not be directly identified, Japanese troops took hostages and imposed collective punishments. Manuel Buenafe, for instance, was given the impression that, for the IJA, 'the easier thing was to shoot every one suspected.'¹⁶¹ Consequently, José Reyes observed, Filipinos 'lived in constant dread, fear, and anguish brought about

¹⁵⁶ 'Warning', *Official Journal*, Vol. 1, 1.

¹⁵⁷ Agoncillo, *Fateful Years*, 304-6; 'Three Looters Shot Dead', *Manila Tribune* (4 January 1942).

¹⁵⁸ NARA, RG 153, JAG, WCB, Entry 143: Case Files, 1941-1945 (hereafter Case Files), No. 40-0 (Books I-IX), gives details of numerous incidents during the first months of occupation.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid* (Book III).

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*.

¹⁶¹ Buenafe, *Wartime Philippines*, 82; 'Warning', *Official Journal*, Vol. I, 12; examples can be found in Case Files, No. 40-0 (Book VIII).

by a reign of terror.'¹⁶²

Despite the similarities with the techniques employed in British Malaya, however, genocidal violence as a means of ensuring compliance from a potentially hostile population did not become an option at this stage in the Philippines. In fact, the military administration showed a greater inclination towards fostering amicable relations through more conciliatory means.¹⁶³ For the most part, these efforts were directed towards co-opting the Philippine elite through accommodation of the existing government and loose assurances of future independence.¹⁶⁴ However, occupation forces did engage in some limited pacification works and proved uncharacteristically forgiving of past resistance by Filipino POWs.¹⁶⁵ Though not necessarily treated well, having been forced to walk sixty miles under appalling conditions from Bataan to Camp O'Donnell in Tarlac (now known as the Bataan Death March), a decision was made to release prisoners rather than subject them to 'wholesale extermination' which, Honma suggested in an address to the people in July 1942, might have been 'simpler'.¹⁶⁶ In sum, the administration in the Philippines reflected general military policy in Southeast Asia in tending to vacillate between violent subjugation and conciliation. As in Malaya and Singapore, such decisions were determined by pre-war plans, long-term intentions, and subjective perceptions about these groups.

¹⁶² José G. Reyes, *Terrorism and redemption: Japanese Atrocities in the Philippines*, Jose Garcia Insua (trans.) (Manila, 1945), 16.

¹⁶³ Sven Matthiessen, *Japanese Pan-Asianism and the Philippines from the Late Nineteenth Century to the end of World War II* (Leiden, 2016), 86-91.

¹⁶⁴ 'Premier Tojo's speech in the 79th session of the Diet' (21 January 1942), *Contemporary Japan* (February 1942), 310 for promise of independence.

¹⁶⁵ For a more detailed study of these efforts refer to Nakano Satoshi, 'Appeasement and Coercion', in Ikehata Setsuho & Ricardo Trota Jose (ed.), *The Philippines under Japan: Occupation Policy and Reaction* (Quezon City, 1999), 21-58.

¹⁶⁶ *Address to the Filipino People* (Manila, 1942), 4; for the Bataan Death March see Buenafe, *Wartime Philippines*, 121-7; Case Files, No. 40-17.

'PHILIPPINES FOR THE FILIPINOS': JAPANESE PLANS FOR THE ISLANDS

The inclusion of the Philippines in Japan's pre-war plans was comparatively last minute since the military initially hoped to expand into Southeast Asia while avoiding war with the US. As the main US foothold in the Pacific, the Islands were to be occupied primarily to destroy the ability of the Americans to fight effectively in the area and not on the basis of any perceived strategic or economic value. If anything, planners were concerned that the Islands would be a burden to the Empire.¹⁶⁷ Though the Philippines were to be included as part of the Co-Prosperity Sphere in the long-term, early occupation documents indicate that they were to be nominally independent guided, not governed, by Japan.¹⁶⁸ Thus, the occupation was initially envisioned to be more hands-off and collaborative with the primary aim of establishing a pro-Japanese government.¹⁶⁹

The belief in the potential for cooperation was grounded in assumptions about the Filipino people and their long-standing desire for independence which had evolved through pre-war interactions. While Japanese involvement in Southeast Asia had generally been limited, there had been some modest pre-war engagement with the Philippines and Davao had become home to the largest Japanese immigrant community in Southeast Asia.¹⁷⁰ Japanese pan-Asianists had also taken an early interest in the question of Philippine independence. In fact, they had (unsuccessfully) lobbied on behalf of Filipino revolutionaries, such as Emilio Aguinaldo, who had appealed to Japan for assistance in their fight against Spain in the 1890s.¹⁷¹ While the

¹⁶⁷ Satoshi, 'Appeasement and Coercion', 28-31.

¹⁶⁸ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 1176: 'General Outline for Hastening Conclusion of War against the United States, Great Britain, Netherlands, and the Chungking Regime (12 November 1941)'.

¹⁶⁹ Satoshi, 'Appeasement and Coercion', 31-5.

¹⁷⁰ Grant K. Goodman, 'The Japanese Occupation of the Philippines: Commonwealth Sustained', *Philippine Studies*, 36(1) (1988), 98-104; Lydia N. Yu-Jose, 'World War II and the Japanese in the Prewar Philippines', *JSEAS*, 27(1) (1996), 64-81.

¹⁷¹ Jose, 'Accord and Discord', 252; Lydia N. Yu-Jose, *Japan Views the Philippines, 1900-1944* (Quezon City, 1992), 18-9, 156-7.

US had proved more adept at fostering an amicable relationship with the Philippines (the brutal suppression of the Philippine Insurrection notwithstanding) after it took control from Spain in 1898, anti-American rebels, like Artemio Ricarte who lived in self-imposed exile in Yokohama from 1915, continued to forge connections in Japan which, after victory over Russia in 1905, had become something of a role model among nationalists in Asia.¹⁷² Having 'returned to Asia' in the 1930s, Japanese businessmen and diplomats pursued stronger links between the two countries through a variety of economic and cultural policies.¹⁷³ Such measures found moderate welcome in some quarters as Filipino leaders sought to develop a Philippine economy and national identity as separate from the US.¹⁷⁴

As a result of these early interactions, it was assumed in 1942 that the Filipino people had a robust sense of nationalism which contributed to a strong aversion to foreign domination. This meant that, despite the close ties with the US, the Filipino people might be amenable to the grand strategy of constructing an 'Asia for the Asiatics'. Furthermore, though typically viewed as a highly westernised and, consequently, 'materialistic, lazy, pleasure-seeking people' who, having been exposed to the 'degenerating influences' of the 'West' for so long, had lost their true 'Oriental character', they were also understood to be more developed than other populations having been governed as a commonwealth since 1935.¹⁷⁵ Thus, attitudes towards the Filipino people were fundamentally different than those towards the overseas Chinese. While the IJA were somewhat distrustful of the Filipino people as pro-American and potentially hostile, it was believed that, despite their apparent

¹⁷² Li Narangoa & Robert Cribb, 'Japan and the Transformation of National Identities in Asia in the Imperial Era', in Narangoa & Cribb, *Imperial Japan*, 3-6; for discussion of Japan's role in Philippine Independence see Grant K. Goodman, 'The Problem of Philippine Independence and Japan: The First Three Decades of American Colonial Rule', *Southeast Asia: An International Quarterly*, 1(3) (1971), 165-90.

¹⁷³ Goodman, 'Japanese Occupation', 100-1.

¹⁷⁴ Jose, 'Accord and Discord', 251.

¹⁷⁵ *Address to the Filipino People*, 6-7.

antipathy, Filipinos were not an irrevocably anti-Japanese threat. They could be persuaded to cooperate through cultural policies designed to eradicate European and American influence, 'revive' Filipino culture, and cultivate stronger links through dissemination of Japanese language, customs, and values.¹⁷⁶ Such attitudes, coupled with the fact that the Islands were not as important in either the long or short term, meant that, while the administration was willing to use terror to maintain peace and order, extreme violence was not deemed necessary to ensuring compliance. However, as resistance developed, necessitating more direct involvement in the Islands, Japanese occupation forces began to rely more heavily on violence and terror and, in doing so, fuelled further opposition.

CYCLES OF VIOLENCE: PHILIPPINE RESISTANCE AND JAPANESE RESPONSES, 1942-1943

Despite the furtive enmity of the populace, resistance activities in the Philippines had been negligible at first. Scattered American and Filipino soldiers, after successfully evading capture, had formed small bands that operated in the mountainous and remote provincial regions. These units were ill-equipped, disorganised, inexperienced in guerrilla tactics, and were limited in numbers.¹⁷⁷ According to Robert Lapham, an American lieutenant who commanded a guerrilla unit operating in central Luzon, they could easily have been wiped out in these first weeks.¹⁷⁸ However, Japanese forces had been preoccupied by continued fighting in Bataan and had engaged in only minor mopping-up operations until the American surrender in May 1942. After the capitulation, Filipino soldiers continued the fight for a time but,

¹⁷⁶ See Goodman, *Japanese Cultural Policies*; Luis C. Dery, 'Japan's new order in the Philippines, 1942-1945: A blueprint for Asia under Japan', *Philippine Social Sciences Review*, 48(1-4) (1984), 310-18; Matthiessen, *Japanese Pan-Asianism*, 109-63 for discussion of occupation policies.

¹⁷⁷ OSS Publications, *Japan and Its Occupied Territories during World War II: 'Guerrilla resistance in the Philippines'* (21 June 1944), 2.

¹⁷⁸ Robert Lapham & Bernard Norling, *Lapham's Raiders: Guerrillas in the Philippines, 1942-1945* (Lexington, 1996), 209.

with Japanese forces now able to concentrate their full attention on 'mopping-up', had mostly been defeated by the end of July.¹⁷⁹ This was a short-lived peace. Coinciding with the first Allied offensive in the Pacific at Guadalcanal in August, riots on Negros Island began a succession of serious uprisings in the Visayas. Over subsequent months, Japanese forces found peace and order more difficult to maintain in the Islands as a number of disparate guerrilla groups formed and their effectiveness slowly improved.¹⁸⁰

The proliferation of active resistance in the Islands from mid-1942 reflected a growing discontent among the Filipino people. Although the military administration had been largely successful in co-opting the political elite (more a reflection of an alignment of interests than of enthusiasm for Japan's 'Philippines for the Filipinos'), the limited efforts at winning over the populace were less effective.¹⁸¹ Initially, a widespread confidence that the US would return and that Japanese occupation was only temporary had encouraged many to keep their heads down and carry on with their lives as best they could under martial law. However, the realities of Japanese rule soon provoked further hostility and dissatisfaction.¹⁸² The occupation proved to be, in spite of Japanese claims to the contrary, based on a fundamentally colonial relationship. Filipinos grew resentful of being treated as a conquered people and were aware of the hypocritical inequality intrinsic to Japanese 'co-prosperity'.¹⁸³ As Buenafe wrote: '[t]he password of "co-prosperity" worked only one way'.¹⁸⁴ Heavy handed economic initiatives severely impacted standards of living in the Islands and intrusive cultural policies began to impinge on daily life making the populace more

¹⁷⁹ 'Address by the Director-General of the Japanese Military Administration' (12 August 1942), *Official Journal*, Vol. 6, xxviii; JM 3, 'Philippine operations record, Phase II Dec 1942-Jun 1944', 4.

¹⁸⁰ NARA, RG 226, OSS, RAB, Entry 16: File No. 53213, 'Political Review of the Philippines, January 1942-September 1943', 24-5.

¹⁸¹ Goto, 'Cooperation, Submission, and Resistance', 286-7.

¹⁸² Jose, 'Accord and Discord', 262.

¹⁸³ Agoncillo, *Fateful Years*, 747.

¹⁸⁴ Buenafe, *Wartime Philippines*, 150.

determined in their opposition.¹⁸⁵ As explained in an Allied intelligence report covering the situation in the Philippines at this time, resistance 'received new emphasis with the hatred engendered by Japanese occupation and ruthlessness.'¹⁸⁶ That is not to say that all entertained the prospect of direct, armed confrontation. Filipino resistance manifested in diverse, predominantly passive ways. For many, it involved small acts of defiance such as hiding products the IJA wanted to procure, secretly listening to American broadcasts, and not accepting military notes as currency.¹⁸⁷ In some respects, continuing on as normal in spite of the administration's efforts to reorient Philippine society represented a tacit rejection of Japanese rule. Some, however, did offer more direct assistance to the burgeoning guerrilla movement. This support typically involved providing supplies, shelter, and intelligence, in addition to some limited engagement in fifth-column or seditious activity.¹⁸⁸

As in occupied China, the success of guerrilla tactics was contingent on a close relationship with local communities. Indeed, rising sympathy and support among the people was pivotal in transforming what originally were small, straggler units into a more developed resistance movement which, though not of a scale akin to that in China, proved to be the most sustained and stubborn opposition the IJA faced in Southeast Asia.¹⁸⁹ As the aforementioned intelligence report warned, however, 'it was easy to exaggerate the military importance of guerrillas' and, as Reynaldo Ileto has shown, this is an element that continues to be overstated in the

¹⁸⁵ Agoncillo, *Fateful Years*, 747-8; for instance see a petition explaining the issue of Philippine resistance to the Commander-in-Chief of the Fourteenth Army dated 20 April 1942, ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 167: 'Discipline of Imperial Troops', 2.

¹⁸⁶ File No. 53213, 27.

¹⁸⁷ Agoncillo, *Fateful Years*, 648.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 649-77 gives detail of guerrilla resistance in the Philippines.

¹⁸⁹ 'Guerrilla Resistance in the Philippines', 1-2.

post-war narrative.¹⁹⁰ For much of 1942, the effectiveness of the insurgents continued to be undermined by deficiencies in organisation, experience, and equipment, as well as the communication and logistical difficulties associated with the geography of the archipelago. Prone to in-fighting and factionalism, they were often impeded by a lack of unity. Some groups also had an uneasy relationship with local communities as they plundered supplies and enacted violent reprisals to prevent collaboration with the Japanese.¹⁹¹ Nevertheless, guerrilla resistance was 'decidedly significant' as an indicator of public sentiment and intelligence reports from the 16th Division garrisoned in Manila reveal that Japanese forces were aware of the importance of popular support in sustaining guerrilla resistance in the Islands.¹⁹² Accordingly, the IJA established 'neighbourhood associations' (based on the *hokō* system utilised, in various forms, in other Japanese colonies) to act as coercive spy networks through which civilians were monitored and held collectively accountable for disturbances in their areas.¹⁹³ However, these methods proved limited in deterring cooperation from the people who had to weigh up fear of reprisal from the Japanese with fear of reprisal from the rebels who were more integrated into society than the few sparsely populated Japanese garrisons.¹⁹⁴

Although never a threat in a military sense, the pervasiveness of guerrilla activity over these months hindered Japanese efforts to consolidate their control outside of the main cities.¹⁹⁵ More importantly, it forced the IJA to devote further

¹⁹⁰ File No. 53213, 27; Reynaldo C. Iletto, 'World War II: Transient and Enduring Legacies for the Philippines', in Hock, *Legacies of World War II*, 74–91.

¹⁹¹ Juan Labrador *A Diary of the Japanese Occupation, December 7, 1941–May 7, 1945* (Manila, 1989), 147; Lichauco, "Dear Mother", 90; Agoncillo, *Fateful Years*, 754–60.

¹⁹² File No. 53213, 27–8; ATIS: Current Translations, No. 147, Doc. 21: 'Intelligence Reports', 4.

¹⁹³ 'Strict Official Discipline Urged: Neighborhood groups formed', *Manila Tribune* (17 August 1942); for details of this system in the Philippines see ATIS: Research Reports, No. 126: 'The Hokō System'; ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 358: 'The Hokō System in Formosa and Proposed for the Philippines', 15–21; ATIS: Enemy publications, No. 307: 'Duties and Training of Military Police', 8; ATIS: Enemy publications, No. 348, 3.

¹⁹⁴ Agoncillo, *Fateful years*, 356.

¹⁹⁵ Buenafe, *Wartime Philippines*, 174; JM 3, 4.

manpower and resources, in spite of plans for an indirect occupation, to the maintenance of peace and order across the Islands.¹⁹⁶ This was to become more of a problem towards the end of 1942 as Japanese forces became more preoccupied with, and overstretched by, Allied offensives in the Pacific.¹⁹⁷ As a consequence, in November that year, it was announced in the *Manila Tribune* that the administration had exhausted its patience with these 'ignorant and misguided people' and, in the face of the damage they had wrought, deemed more 'drastic measures' necessary. Henceforth, the IJA would employ 'intensive operations ... to the end that these unruly elements may be completely wiped out.'¹⁹⁸ In combating an enemy that was mobile and not easily identifiable from civilians, Japanese troops confronted difficulties similar to those encountered in Taiwan, Korea, and China. Much as they had been in those areas, Japanese troops were advised by their superiors not to rely on traditional encirclement techniques. 'Punitive action' was deemed to be the best method of pacification'. Thus, 'intensive operations' were to focus on destroying guerrilla bases and severing support from local communities through violent reprisals against *barangays* (villages) suspected of having harboured them.¹⁹⁹ From then on, areas of guerrilla activity were at risk of bombardment, destruction of property, and reprisal massacres.²⁰⁰ However, Japanese troops were to be restrained in their efforts lest they incite further resistance among the populace. A 16th Division intelligence report documenting these operations in Pampanga, for example, advised that 'although the burning of houses harbouring the enemy is necessary to prevent their being used during future attacks, wanton burning of houses should be

¹⁹⁶ Satoshi, 'Appeasement and Coercion', 34.

¹⁹⁷ Yuma Totani, *Justice in the Asia and the Pacific Region, 1945-1952: Allied War Crimes Prosecutions* (Cambridge, 2015), 31.

¹⁹⁸ 'Army will annihilate guerrillas in Visayas', *Manila Tribune* (21 November 1942).

¹⁹⁹ NARA, RG 165, G-2, MID, Entry 79: PACMIRS Translations, No. 1, 53-7.

²⁰⁰ See Case Files, No. 40-0 (Books IV & V) & 40-1187 for examples.

avoided... Every soldier should realise that the local inhabitants are greatly influenced by his slightest action.’²⁰¹

Indeed, much like in China, such methods incensed the populations of these areas and occasionally augmented guerrilla numbers as, with their homes destroyed and livelihoods decimated, more and more men took to the mountains.²⁰² Despite these more ‘intensive operations’, Japanese intelligence reports documented an escalation in the frequency and nature of guerrilla activities through the first months of 1943. At this time, subversive acts of sabotage, espionage, and dissemination of propaganda were supplemented with more audacious raids and incendiary attacks in areas that were seen to be collaborating with the Japanese.²⁰³ This activity appears to have peaked around mid-1943. At their most daring, guerrillas attacked Japanese installations and murdered soldiers in daylight and, amid a series of strikes throughout Luzon in June, made an assassination attempt on José P. Laurel, a collaborator and future president of the ‘independent’ Philippine Republic.²⁰⁴

The boldness of the resistance movement at this time was driven by a number of factors. After victory at Guadalcanal in February that year, 1943 had seen the Allies go on the offensive placing the Empire under greater strain. As war began to turn against Japan, conditions in the occupied territories deteriorated leading to severe shortages of food and other essential items.²⁰⁵ Increased privations, expectations of an impending American return to the Islands, and the growing ruthlessness of anti-guerrilla measures, contributed further to rising popular discontent and strengthened support for the resistance movement. Additionally, guerrilla units had become better organised and more efficient after having

²⁰¹ PACMIRS Translations, No. 1, 56-7.

²⁰² Agoncillo, *Fateful Years*, 748-9; JM 3, 4.

²⁰³ ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 343: ‘Counterintelligence Reports’, 9-45.

²⁰⁴ Proculo L. Mojica, *Terry's Hunters: The True Story of the Hunter's ROTC Guerrillas* (Manila, 1965), 344.

²⁰⁵ JM 3, 10.

developed important underground networks. They also received aid from Allied intelligence agents who delivered supplies by submarine and helped coordinate operations between the disparate groups.²⁰⁶ At the same time, the quality, number, and disposition of Japanese forces was constantly fluctuating. The Philippines were used as a staging area where 'green' troops were sent from Japan to gain experience prior to their transfer to the front, hampering attempts to bring the guerrilla situation under control.²⁰⁷ Thus, facing serious practical impediments, and fighting a losing battle in respect to pacification efforts, Japanese forces met the intensification of guerrilla activity with an escalation of their own.

During the latter half of 1943, punitive expeditions were enhanced with a practice similar to that used during the mopping-up of 'bad elements' in British Malaya in 1942. This practice, known among Filipinos as 'zonification', focused anti-guerrilla operations more directly on the civilian population and placed men in particular at risk of more systematic violence. During these operations, Japanese troops would suddenly descend on an area, usually between curfew hours of midnight and 5am, and would block all access in and out of the area. At dawn, soldiers would go door-to-door rounding up all male civilians, and occasionally women and children too, forcing them out of their homes to congregate at a nearby church or school. While they waited, usually without food, water, or sanitary provisions, to be 'investigated' by the *Kempeitai*, thorough searches of houses, often accompanied by looting, would be carried out. In some cases, investigations involved men passing in front of a 'magic eye' – a hooded informant – who would point out those who allegedly had guerrilla connections. The *Kempeitai* supplemented this with

²⁰⁶ For discussion of Allied intelligence operations in the Philippines, see *Reports of MacArthur*, 298–307.

²⁰⁷ JM 3, 10; Lapham, *Lapham's Raiders*, 209.

torture techniques to force confessions and further accusations.²⁰⁸ Those suspected of either being a guerrilla or having assisted them were usually taken away to be executed.²⁰⁹ Such methods had a devastating impact. Life in the provinces was considerably disrupted as men began to leave for the mountains rather than risk the arbitrary violence meted out by troops who could torture and execute on the slightest suspicion. 'Zonification' practices were also believed to have been a crushing blow to the resistance movement as activity appeared to decline from late 1943.²¹⁰ It is important to note, however, that the diminished activity of the guerrillas at this time overlapped with a more determined conciliatory effort by the Japanese government to secure cooperation from the Filipino people by declaring independence on 14 October 1943. Following this, the new Republic had announced a period of amnesty which gave guerrillas until 25 January 1944 to surrender with full pardon.²¹¹ At the same time, punitive expeditions were postponed in all but the most troublesome areas providing a short respite and an opportunity for guerrillas to extend their underground networks, replenish supplies, and coordinate their forces.²¹² The decrease in guerrilla activity around this time, therefore, may have been deceptive, influenced by a 'wait-and-see' – or rather 'wait-and-hope' – attitude to independence which, if truly realised, would have seen an end to Japanese dominance in the Islands. It soon became apparent that independence was nominal since there were no outward signs of scaling back Japanese control in the Islands.²¹³ Consequently, the cycle of violence constituted and fuelled by Philippine resistance

²⁰⁸ For accounts of this practice see Case Files, File 40-0 (Book VIII & IX); see also NARA, RG 331, SCAP, Entry 1214: War Crimes Reports, No. 131: 'Atrocities in Iloilo Province, 1943' & No. 140: 'Punitive Expedition on Panay Island, 1943'; Lichauco, "Dear Mother", 120-1; Labrador, *Diary*, 166.

²⁰⁹ ATIS: Bulletin, No. 1862, 'Censorship Report', 1.

²¹⁰ MA. Felisa A. Syjuco, *The Kempeitai in the Philippines, 1941-1945* (Quezon City, 1988), 45-6; Mojica, *Terry's hunters*, 342, 349-50; See ATIS: Current Translations, No. 147 for a collection of Japanese intelligence reports documenting this decline.

²¹¹ 'General amnesty granted', *Manila Tribune* (25 November 1943).

²¹² ATIS: Current Translations, No. 146: 'Intelligence Reports', 1-7; Labrador, *Diary*, 186.

²¹³ Lichauco, "Dear Mother", 150-2; ATIS: Bulletin, No. 1767, 6-7; see also Claro M. Recto's Letter in Agoncillo, *Fateful Years*, 1033-45.

and the progressively more systematic responses by Japanese forces over the course of these years resumed. However, like the intensification of anti-guerrilla campaigns in occupied China in 1941, it was a shift in the geopolitical context that instigated the radicalisation of anti-guerrilla strategy in 1944 and which laid the foundations for the embrace of genocidal violence in early 1945.

THE RETURN OF THE AMERICANS AND THE RADICALISATION OF VIOLENCE, 1944

By early 1944, it was clear that war with the Allies was progressing badly and, as the US continued its advance in the Pacific, an American return to the Philippines appeared imminent.²¹⁴ For the first time, the Islands were to have a decisive role in the war as a final opportunity to thwart American forces before they began their attack on Japan itself. In short, the Philippines had become an area of utmost importance in a war that many troops had come to believe would mean 'national death' if they should be defeated. A first class seaman captured in September 1943, for instance, had told his interrogator that if Japan should lose the war, there would no longer be any such country.²¹⁵ Following instructions received from the Southern Expeditionary Army on 15 March, preparations for defence of the Islands began in earnest.²¹⁶ Since the Philippines had not previously been an area of strategic importance having hitherto been used as a supply base, there was considerable work to be done in terms of constructing military installations and fortifications ready for a decisive front-line role.²¹⁷ Defence preparations were made all the more challenging by the deteriorating peace and order situation in the Islands. In anticipation of the US invasion, guerrilla units which had formerly been at odds put aside their internecine

²¹⁴ JM 3, 12; ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 359, 2.

²¹⁵ ATIS: Interrogation Reports, No. 193; see also Nos. 545, 600, 601 & 613.

²¹⁶ WO 203/6310: Doc. 11, 26-8.

²¹⁷ JM 4: 'Philippines Operations Record (July - November 1944)', 1-2.

struggles to begin preparations of their own for the coming battle.²¹⁸ Aside from obstructing Japanese efforts through disrupting and sabotaging defence works, these units also stockpiled weapons, gathered intelligence, and much to the alarm of Japanese forces, encouraged popular unrest through dissemination of propaganda.²¹⁹

Exacerbating concerns over a potential uprising was an overall perception of the Filipino people as resolutely anti-Japanese by this time. Though initially viewed as potential collaborators, years of Filipino antipathy and tenacious guerrilla resistance (despite the granting of 'independence'), had contributed to a shift in Japanese attitudes. As they began to plan for the US invasion, commanders grew more apprehensive of the peoples' trustworthiness.²²⁰ For example, a monthly battle report from the 16th Division dated April 1944 warned that the Filipinos 'secretly anticipate a Japanese-American war in the Philippines'.²²¹ First Lieutenant Oishihashi Masao, captured in July 1944, told his interrogator that the Americans would likely have no problem recapturing the Philippines since the people were 'definitely pro-Allied'.²²² Private First Class Yamamoto Shirō, captured in October 1944, also observed that the Filipinos had not hidden their dissatisfaction with Japanese rule and were evidently very pro-American.²²³ The attitude of the populace was understood to be a 'prime concern' since it was recognised that an uprising would seriously hinder efforts to repel the advancing American forces. Indeed, if the situation was left unchecked, the already inadequate forces in the Islands would soon be fighting a two-front war.²²⁴ Thus, conscious that they could not take a 'light

²¹⁸ JM 3, 12.

²¹⁹ ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 370: '16th Division Battle Report' 1-6; No. 359: 'Guerrilla Resistance in the Philippines', 2-7.

²²⁰ *Official Journal*, Vol. 9, xxiv.

²²¹ ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 370, 6.

²²² ATIS: Interrogation Reports, No. 600, 12.

²²³ *Ibid*, No. 610-B, 9.

²²⁴ JM 3, 40-2.

view' of the increasingly aggressive behaviour of the insurgents or the excitement among the populace, the 14th Army launched a more intensive campaign against the guerrillas.²²⁵ According to intelligence reports, Japanese units were engaged in almost continuous punitive operations from Spring 1944 having launched 939 expeditions in April followed by no less than 1,037 separate actions in June.²²⁶ Based on the premise that guerrillas were 'not good' for the country and should be 'exterminated', Japanese forces used increasingly indiscriminate methods in areas deemed rife with guerrilla activity.²²⁷ For instance, on Panay Island where the IJA had limited control outside the main city of Iloilo, a situation report to the commander of a unit operating in Libacao had advised that the inhabitants were 'all hostile' and 'requested not only that, as is normal when a punitive expedition is sent out, the houses be burnt, but that even the women and children be killed.'²²⁸

However, such efforts proved to be of limited success. With the war situation critical after the fall of Saipan in July 1944 had placed Japan within striking distance of the US air force, the leadership ordered the 'Tiger of Malaya', Yamashita Tomoyuki (held in high esteem for his defeat of the British at Singapore in 1942), to take command of Japanese forces in the Philippines. On his arrival in early October, Yamashita judged the situation in the Islands to be serious for, according to testimony given at his trial in 1946, there was evidence of considerable anti-Japanese sentiment among the people and guerrillas had 'interfered with military operations at quite a few places.'²²⁹ Second Lieutenant Matsubara Shunji, captured on 23 December 1944, confirmed during his interrogation that 'with the approach of the American Army, sabotage and stealing increased to a great extent'. He further noted

²²⁵ ATIS: Enemy Publications, No. 359 gives details of these operations to September 1944.

²²⁶ *Ibid*, No. 358, 13.

²²⁷ ATIS: Bulletin, No. 1723: 'Military Police Reports', 2.

²²⁸ ATIS: Philippines Series Bulletin, No. 4, 8.

²²⁹ NARA, RG 331, SCAP, Entry 1322: US vs. Tomoyuki Yamashita (hereafter *Yamashita Trial*), 3520, 3545.

that, with the arrival of Yamashita, 'more severe measures were adopted'.²³⁰ Indeed, in laying out his plans for the defence of the Islands at a conference of the Chiefs of Staff on 11 October 1944, Yamashita had stressed the importance of a swift and decisive subjugation of the guerrillas.²³¹ Coinciding with the first American landings at Leyte just over a week later, there was a drastic shift in anti-guerrilla strategy which saw an increase in the scale and intensity of violence visited on the Filipino populace.

As a result of the added sense of urgency in suppressing Philippine resistance brought about by the American invasion, Japanese forces became less rigorous in their efforts to identify insurgents. During punitive expeditions in areas known to have a strong guerrilla presence, men were executed en masse. For example, Warrant Officer Yamaguchi Yoshimi wrote in his diary on 28 November that the new punitive actions were 'something to look forward to' since 'it seems that all men are to be killed'. In an entry on 1 December, he further clarified that his unit had received instructions for an expedition in Rizal province and, since guerrillas were 'very active' there, the goal would be to 'kill all men and also to kill the women who run away.'²³² Mariano Vergara Batungbacal, a Filipino interpreter employed by the Japanese, witnessed such actions in practice in Bataan after the commander of his unit, having received 'top secret' orders in November, began to conduct excessive 'zonifications' which, in one extreme case, resulted in the massacre of almost all male residents of Orion on Christmas Day.²³³

Violence became even more extreme on Leyte, an island in the Visayas that had been plagued by unrest for much of the occupation, after US troops had landed

²³⁰ ATIS: Interrogation Reports, No. 673, 9.

²³¹ *Yamashita Trial*, 3520-3545; ATIS: Current Translations, No. 152, Doc. 10: 'Philippines Operation Plan Summary', 3.

²³² ATIS: Bulletin, No. 1858: 'Yamaguchi Yoshimi Diary', 8.

²³³ NARA, RG 407, Philippines Archive Collection, Entry 1085: 'Affidavit of Mariano Vergara Batungbacal', 3-5.

there on 20 October. At Dulag, one of the sites of the landings, for example, thousands of civilians were killed by Japanese soldiers as they tried to evacuate.²³⁴ Operation orders received by the 26th Division Field Hospital, active in the area on 16 November 1944, revealed that such measures had been sanctioned by the Division Commanding General who had ordered all 'natives' be killed.²³⁵ On a small island just off the coast of Leyte, where it was believed that three Americans were hiding, Japanese troops also escalated their anti-guerrilla operations. According to a US investigator, after several visits during December, the 'slaughter had reached its frenzied height' on the 29th when between eight hundred and one thousand men, women, and children were rounded up in a church at Dapdap, given numbers, and then taken in batches to secluded places where they were bayoneted.²³⁶ An extract from a diary belonging to a member of the Fourth Company contained reference to this incident and revealed that, as a general practice, this unit had 'killed people who made suspicious moves'.²³⁷

The radicalisation of violence at this point, however, was not universal. For the most part, commanders' decisions to use 'severe measures' were contingent on their interpretations of local conditions, specifically, the extent of the guerrilla presence and the proximity of the US forces. For example, during his interrogation following capture in the vicinity of Antipolo, where over 500 civilians were killed in February 1945, Osada Teizo explained that in late 1944 his unit had received instructions that all Filipinos caught stealing food or supplies, inspecting defence positions, aiding the US forces, or harming Japanese troops, were to be put to death. He recalled that little had been done about it until early 1945 when the US landed on

²³⁴ Case Files, No. 42-0-13.

²³⁵ ATIS: Bulletin, No. 1721: '26 Division Field Hospital Operation Orders', 2.

²³⁶ War Crimes Reports, No. 298: 'Massacres in Camotes Islands'.

²³⁷ *Yamashita Trial*, Exhibits, No. 341: 'Report on Dapdap Massacre'.

Luzon. Following this invasion, original orders were revised and a decision was made to kill the entire population of Antipolo.²³⁸ The testimony of Sakata Yūzō, a first lieutenant of the 17th Division, supports this. According to Sakata, orders to carry out guerrilla subjugation more 'aggressively' in November had not been fully implemented since the Americans had yet to land on Luzon and so there was less strategic imperative necessitating 'drastic measures'.²³⁹ After the landings at Lingayen Gulf on 9 January, and in anticipation of an assault in Batangas province, a second meeting of commanders was called during which, Sakata alleged, they were instructed to kill all Filipinos, including women and children.²⁴⁰ As highlighted by these examples, the assault on Luzon in January precipitated the most radical escalation of violence as Japanese forces gave up attempts to identify insurgents and implemented an indiscriminate defence strategy that involved the intentional destruction of Filipinos in areas of military importance.

EMBRACING GENOCIDAL VIOLENCE: MASSACRES AT MANILA AND A 'COLD BLOODED EXTERMINATION CAMPAIGN' IN SOUTH LUZON, 1945

The US landings at Lingayen Gulf triggered a further escalation of violence largely because of the tactical significance of Luzon to Japanese defence strategy. The capture of the largest and most strategically important island would signify decisive victory in the coming battle.²⁴¹ As such, commanders placed great emphasis on the exigence of the situation and mobilised troops by reminding them that they were engaged in a struggle for survival in this war.²⁴² There was a lot at stake in the upcoming battle, then. However, Luzon had not been well-prepared for the assault

²³⁸ NARA, RG 165, G-2, MID, Entry 79: ADVANTIS Interrogation, No. 17557-J (13 March 1945), 4.

²³⁹ NARA, RG 331, SCAP, Entry 1321: US vs. Masatoshi Fujishige et al. (hereafter *Fujishige Trial*) (1946), Sakata Yūzō's Testimony, 67-74.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 68.

²⁴¹ NARA, RG 165, G-2, MID, Entry 79: SEATIC: Translation, No. 88, 22-3.

²⁴² *Ibid*; ATIS: Current Translations, No. 150, Doc. 41: 'Instruction of the Director', 9; NARA, RG 165, G-2, MID, Entry 79: ADVANTIS: Interrogation, No. 0179113.

in January since, against Yamashita's wishes, Terauchi Hisaichi, commander of the Southern Expeditionary Army, had ordered forces redeployed to defend Leyte in late 1944.²⁴³ Thus, Yamashita planned a protracted campaign and focused on fortifying his position in the northeast of Luzon while units operating along the projected path of the American forces were to focus on slowing, if not thwarting, their progress. In doing so, commanders embraced intentionally group-destructive measures to prevent Filipinos from providing assistance.

In Manila, around twenty thousand predominantly naval troops, under the command of Rear-Admiral Iwabuchi Sanji, fortified themselves for a last ditch effort at repelling the rapidly advancing US forces. This was in spite of Yamashita's plans to abandon the city and engage the enemy in a protracted campaign in the surrounding areas.²⁴⁴ As American troops entered the city from the north on 3 February, Japanese soldiers implemented a scorched earth policy that soon devolved into the widespread destruction of businesses, homes, hospitals, educational institutions, and places of worship.²⁴⁵ At the same time, troops began rounding-up and executing the male inhabitants of the southern districts. In Intramuros on 5 February, for instance, civilians were required to congregate at Manila Cathedral where men were separated and marched away to Fort Santiago (*Kempeitai* headquarters during the occupation) to be killed – a procedure that was repeated at a number of locations across the south of the city over the following days.²⁴⁶ At Fort Santiago, already overcrowded due to rigorous arrests conducted by the *Kempeitai* from November 1944, these men were put to death, often through drenching cells in

²⁴³ Aubrey Saint Kenworthy, *The Tiger of Malaya: The Story of General Tomoyuki Yamashita and "Death March" General Masaharu Homma* (New York, 1953), 70–5.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 74–5.

²⁴⁵ ATIS: Bulletin, No. 1875: 'Manila Defence Force Order'.

²⁴⁶ See NARA, RG 407, Philippines Archive Collection, Entry 1085: 'Report of Investigation of Atrocities Committed by the Imperial Japanese Forces in Intramuros, Manila, P.I. during February 1945' (April 1945).

gasoline and setting them on fire or by throwing in hand grenades.²⁴⁷ From 8/9 February, women and children were also included in this wholesale slaughter. During the post-war trials, survivors recounted with remarkable consistency terrible stories of soldiers shooting on sight; of troops marching into hospitals to kill patients in their beds; of sentries waiting by entry points to kill those who tried to flee their burning homes; of hand grenades being thrown into air raid shelters; and of *bancas* (boats) being destroyed and machine guns placed along the Pasig River to prevent escape to the liberated areas.²⁴⁸ The systematic devastation wrought in the southern districts continued unabated until the US had fully liberated the city on 3 March. By this time, the south of Manila had been almost completely laid to waste and it was estimated that over 91,000 civilians had lost their lives as a result of deliberate massacre.²⁴⁹

During the trial of Yamashita, held responsible for atrocities as commander of both IJA and IJN forces in the Philippines at the time, the defence described the massacres at Manila as a tragic consequence of soldiers who, facing imminent defeat and probable death, simply 'went berserk'.²⁵⁰ It is true that there was a frenzied character to some of the atrocities perpetrated by troops in the city and, though Filipinos and Chinese were the primary targets of destruction, civilians of neutral countries were sometimes caught up in the violence.²⁵¹ Furthermore, sources suggest that some infuriated and vengeful soldiers took advantage of a context that allowed

²⁴⁷ War Crimes Reports, No. 109: 'Atrocities at Fort Santiago'; ATIS: Bulletin, No. 1941: 'Diary', 2.

²⁴⁸ For summaries of the extent of atrocities in Manila see *Sack of Manila* (Washington D.C., 1945); Office of the Resident Commissioner of the Philippines to the United States, *Report on the Destruction of Manila and Japanese Atrocities* (Washington D.C., 1945); Case Files, No. 40-18 (Books I-VI).

²⁴⁹ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 1358: 'War Crimes Death Victims'.

²⁵⁰ United Nations War Crimes Commission, *Law Reports of Trials of War Criminals*, Vol. 4 (London, 1948), 5; see also A. Frank Reel, *The Case of General Yamashita* (1949; reprint edn, New York: Octagon Books, 1971), 103.

²⁵¹ War Crimes Report, No. 66: 'Massacres of Civilians at the German Club, Manila'.

them to indulge in atrocities, particularly in acts of raping and looting.²⁵² However, survivor testimonies, supplemented by captured Japanese documents, also underscored an organised and methodical quality to the violence in Manila. As summarised by US investigators, '[t]he atrocities usually followed a definite and familiar pattern, and the dominant element in the pattern was a maximum of slaughter with a minimum of gunfire'.²⁵³ Indeed, a Manila Naval Defence Force order from 8 February had specifically instructed troops that:

... when Filipinos are to be killed, they must be gathered into one place and disposed of with the consideration that ammunition and man power must not be used to excess. Because the disposal of dead bodies is a troublesome task, they should be gathered into houses that are scheduled to be burned or demolished. They should also be thrown into the River.²⁵⁴

Survivors' accounts reveal that soldiers were abiding by these directions. At St. Paul's College on 9 February, for example, civilians had been gathered into the dining room on the pretence of being given food and shelter. Unbeknownst to them, chandeliers in the room had been laden with explosives. As they rushed to the drinks and biscuits underneath the chandeliers, the explosives were set off and soldiers later returned to kill survivors.²⁵⁵ An order issued by the Kobayashi group, an army force stationed in the city, on 13 February also revealed that such acts were part of a radicalised anti-guerrilla strategy. This order advised troops that 'there are several thousand Filipino guerrillas. Even women and children have become guerrillas ...' and, because of that fact, instructed that 'all people on the battlefield with the exception of Japanese military personnel, Japanese civilians, and Special

²⁵² See a compilation of affidavits from Spanish observers in *Report on the Destruction of Manila*, 21–42 for further discussion.

²⁵³ War Crimes Reports, No. 66: 'Massacre of Civilians in Manila'.

²⁵⁴ 'Manila Navy Defence Force Battalion Order (8 February 1945)', cited in *Report on the Destruction of Manila*, 64.

²⁵⁵ War Crimes Reports, No. 53: 'Massacre at St. Paul's College'; see also *Yamashita Trial*, Exhibits, Nos. 100–106 for sworn statements detailing this incident.

Construction Units...will be put to death.'²⁵⁶ These construction units comprised members of the Makapili, a pro-Japanese organisation created in 1944 to assist in defence preparations and, further suggestive of the deliberate nature of violence in the capital, Manila Naval Defence Force orders reveal that they had been given passwords so as to identify them as friendly elements to soldiers.²⁵⁷ Amidst the chaos of battle in Manila then, Japanese forces implemented orders that involved the widespread destruction and mass killings of the residents of the southern districts as part of a defence strategy.

The massacres at Manila were not isolated incidents. In south Luzon, in the provinces of Batangas and Laguna in particular, the newly formed *Fuji Heidan* under the command of Fujishige Masatoshi employed a scorched earth strategy reminiscent of the Three Alls policy utilised in occupied China in 1941. At Yamashita's trial, the prosecution described the extreme violence in this area as a 'cold-blooded extermination campaign', an assessment that the defence found difficult to argue against.²⁵⁸ Frank Reel, one of Yamashita's lawyers, for example, wrote of violence in the provinces that: 'there appeared to be a pattern of calculated, cold-blooded murder, including what was evidently the planned elimination of entire villages.'²⁵⁹ Indeed, more so than in Manila, violence had a systematic character in the provinces representing a distinctly anti-guerrilla strategy that continued to take the form, albeit a more radical one, of earlier punitive operations. Due to a military policy of destroying documents and orally delivering orders, conflicting testimonies at the war crimes trials held in the Philippines obscured the origins of orders, such as that received by a unit operating around Tanuan on 8 March, which had advised soldiers

²⁵⁶ ATIS: Bulletin: No. 2062: 'Kobayashi Group Order (13 February 1945)', 19.

²⁵⁷ ATIS: Bulletin, No. 1875, 8.

²⁵⁸ *Yamashita Trial*, 38.

²⁵⁹ Reel, *General Yamashita*, 104.

to '[s]hoot guerrillas. Kill all who oppose the emperor, even women and children.'²⁶⁰ For lower level commanders, 'superior orders' became their primary defence, while higher level commanders claimed that instructions had been so broad as to give considerable freedom to those on the ground to implement a policy of 'thorough' guerrilla suppression based on the situation in the areas they operated.²⁶¹ What can be inferred from these contradictory testimonies is that the intensification of violence in early 1945 was part of a policy which saw high command call, perhaps ambiguously, for more rigorous suppression of resistance in order to secure the rear areas in anticipation of the US advance.²⁶² On the ground, this permitted commanders to direct the intentional and indiscriminate destruction of Filipino populations in areas viewed as having strategic importance with apparent impunity.

As a result, Japanese forces left a trail of destruction in their wake as they moved throughout the region burning *barangays* and towns and massacring inhabitants in their path. The diary of an unknown soldier discovered in Luzon on 23 May 1945, for example, contained the following entry for February: 'every day is spent hunting guerrillas and natives. I have already killed well over 100 ... Although it is for my country's sake, it is sheer brutality.'²⁶³ The accounts of survivors, echoing the horrific tales from Manila, revealed that in numerous locations, men, women, and children were assembled in buildings that were then set on fire or, as in Bauan, laden with explosives, with soldiers waiting to kill those that tried to escape.²⁶⁴ In other areas, such as Lipa where around eighteen thousand civilians were killed during February, inhabitants were taken to nearby cliffs or rivers and were

²⁶⁰ ATIS: Bulletin, No. 1995: 'Notebook', 3.

²⁶¹ NARA, RG 331, SCAP, Entry 1338: US vs. Hagino Shumpei et al. (1947), 351-7; *Fujishige Trial*, 1318-25.

²⁶² See, for example, Testimony of Uehara Zenichi, *Fujishige Trial*, 1278-86

²⁶³ ATIS: Bulletin, No. 2071: 'Diary', 11.

²⁶⁴ War Crimes Report, No. 69: 'Massacre in Bauan (28 February 1945)'.

bayoneted before being thrown over the edge or into the water.²⁶⁵ On 16 February, in the vicinity of Taal, where three hundred and twenty identified and many more unidentified Filipinos had been massacred, soldiers threw hand grenades into a ravine after finding a group of one hundred and fifty civilians taking refuge, after which they proceeded to bayonet survivors.²⁶⁶ Even after units had begun their retreat to the mountains in March, Japanese forces continued their campaign. For instance, a unit operating around Lake Taal received instructions to begin their retreat on 17 March and were advised that '[t]here will be many natives along our route from now on. All natives, both men and women, will be killed.'²⁶⁷ The exact number of civilian deaths in south Luzon is undetermined; however, estimates by US investigators suggest that at least twenty-five thousand Filipinos were killed in Batangas province alone.²⁶⁸

During the trials, the use of these more extreme measures was rationalised by commanders as an overly aggressive effort to suppress the putative guerrilla threat in the Islands.²⁶⁹ However, as pointed out by the prosecution at Fujishige's trial, while there was an established guerrilla presence in Batangas and Laguna, there had been no identifiable activity from insurgents in many other localities – Taal, Bauan, and Lipa for instance – decimated by Japanese troops.²⁷⁰ Furthermore, captured Japanese documents indicate that such acts were not just over-zealous reprisals for guerrilla activities. For example, Private First Class Matsuoka Itoji of the 23rd Division wrote on 27 March 1945 that '[t]aking advantage of darkness, we went out to kill the natives. It was hard for me to kill them because they seemed to be good people. Frightful cries of the women and children were horrible. I myself stabbed

²⁶⁵ War Crimes Report, No. 84: 'Massacres in Lipa (February 1945)'.

²⁶⁶ War Crimes Report, No. 90: 'Massacres in Taal (February 1945)'.

²⁶⁷ ATIS: Bulletin, No. 1999: 'Notebook', 1.

²⁶⁸ *Yamashita Trial*, Bill of Particulars.

²⁶⁹ *Fujishige Trial*, 67-73.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 1440-3

and killed several persons.’²⁷¹ The diary of Fujita Eisuke, a company commander in the *Fuji Heidan*, further revealed that all inhabitants of Calamba had been killed for ‘security reasons’ on 13 February, further clarifying the reasons for this in the following entry on 17th:

... because ninety percent of the Filipinos do not feel pro-Japanese but on the contrary are anti-Japanese, Army Headquarters issued orders on the 10th to punish them. In various sectors, we have killed several thousands (including young and old, men and women, and Chinese, in addition to Filipinos). Their houses have been burned and valuables have been confiscated.²⁷²

As indicated here, there was a considerable concern over the anti-Japanese sentiment of the Filipino peoples at this time. To be sure, defendants had frequently argued that their actions had been justified on the basis that almost all of the population had become anti-Japanese and were likely to aid the American forces.²⁷³ Thus, the changing geopolitical situation, as well as immediate strategic insecurities exacerbated by a context of resistance which had fostered a perception of the Filipino population as wholly anti-Japanese, contributed to the embrace of extreme violence at this time. In other words, in early 1945, facing a decisive battle with American forces, which they were not adequately prepared for, and fearing the threat of an uprising from a people understood to be anti-Japanese at this point, Japanese forces adopted and accepted genocidal measures to mitigate the perceived existential threat faced in the Islands.

More so than in China, the embrace of extreme violence in Southeast Asia was concomitant to the experience of resistance from local populations. Japanese perceptions of the ‘war of liberation’ as a final east-west clash, a struggle for survival

²⁷¹ ATIS: Bulletin, No. 2018: ‘Notebook’, 4.

²⁷² *Ibid*, No. 2088: ‘Diary’, 4–5.

²⁷³ *Fujishige Trial*, 1394–6.

for the Asian races, meant that, while the peoples of this region were not fundamentally enemies, their continued right to exist within Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was contingent on complete submission to the demands placed upon them by the occupation forces. In other words, opposition to the Japanese was not acceptable and would be dealt with by methods that allowed for the destruction of 'anti-Japanese' or 'resisting' groups. The centrality of resistance to the emergence of genocidal violence in Southeast Asia explains the significant variation in treatment of the populations of this area. The Japanese occupation of Indonesia, where the Japanese had been welcomed as liberators, for example, was relatively devoid of violence. This, of course, was in contrast to those areas discussed in this chapter, where Japanese forces had enacted exceptional measures against the Malayan Chinese and the Filipino people at certain points during the occupation.

As the analysis of this chapter has shown, however, it was not simply the experience of resistance that produced outbursts of genocidal violence. Indeed, the radicalisation process in Southeast Asia was facilitated and driven by a complex amalgamation of contextual factors which produced diverse responses throughout the Empire and caused the Japanese to behave differently with regard to the various population groups they encountered. In both cases examined in this chapter, these factors included: the insecurities and needs of the immediate wartime situation; the longer-term ideological objectives which shaped Japanese perceptions of, and strategies for, Southeast Asia and its peoples; hardened attitudes and learning from past experiences of resistance in other areas; and finally, the existential fears that had emerged in the geopolitical context of the early 1940s. When particular interactions between factors generated a perception of heightened insecurity, the leap to, and embrace of, a radicalised notion of violence had become much easier as a result of prior experiments and pursuits during the war in China.

CONCLUSION

After discovering that the Suluk tribe had assisted a large-scale Chinese uprising at Kota Kinabalu (then Jesselton) in British Borneo in October 1943, Japanese troops, under the command of Second Lieutenant Shimizu Kiyogi, engaged in punitive expeditions against the tribe in February 1944. These expeditions involved the arrest, torture, and execution of men as well as indiscriminate reprisal massacres, forced displacement, and destruction of property. These actions were of such intensity that the tribe was almost completely wiped-out; according to a report by British war crimes investigator, Colonel M. J. Dickson, there were only 129 survivors out of a population of over 400 and, of those, only twenty or so were adult males.¹ In Burma during summer 1945, Colonel Ishikawa Seigi led his troops on a series of similar expeditions to the village of Kalagon after receiving intelligence that warned of British paratroopers having landed in the area and begun training villagers for guerrilla resistance. Against the backdrop of a war progressing unfavourably to Japan as well as a recent revolt by the Burmese Independence Army, efforts to locate those paratroopers were undertaken with a sense of urgency and included torture-based interrogation techniques. Frustrated with continued failure to locate the paratroopers, the violence of Ishikawa's forces escalated on 8 July 1945 when all 630 inhabitants, including women and children, were massacred and the village destroyed.²

¹ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 1659A: 'Dickson's Report'; for further details of this incident see Maxwell Hall, *Kinabalu Guerrillas: An Account of the Double Tenth Rising against the Japanese Invaders in North Borneo* (1949; later edn, Kota Kinabalu, 2009); Oot Keat Gin, *The Japanese Occupation of Borneo, 1941-1945* (London & New York, 2001), 98-102; Hara Fujio, 'The 1943 Kinabalu Uprising in Sabah', in Paul H. Kratoska (ed.), *Southeast Asian Minorities in the Wartime Japanese Empire* (London, 2002), 111-32.

² See IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 1539A-1541A for sworn statements and documents pertaining to this incident; Yuma Totani, *Justice in the Asia and the Pacific Region, 1945-1952: Allied War Crimes Prosecution* (Cambridge, 2015), 133-44 for one of the only detailed English language treatment of the massacre.

Understanding how commanders, like Shimizu and Ishikawa, came to accept, rationalise, and employ, what was a morally defunct, and at times, genocidal, military strategy has been a primary focus of this thesis. The rationales given by these commanders as part of post-war British war crimes proceedings, captures the essence of the nature of violence in the Japanese Empire. In justifying the actions of his unit in British Borneo, Shimizu, for instance, defended his orders as necessary against a hostile and resisting enemy. Furthermore, he argued, these tactics had been within the remit of general army directives to execute 'detrimental elements' in areas under Japanese control, particularly important since, at that time, Allied bombardment had begun in earnest in the region.³ Ishikawa related a similar argument and advised that his actions had also been in accordance with instructions received from his superiors. Colonel Tsukada Misao, who had ordered the expeditions, further rationalised Ishikawa's behaviour, reasoning that: '[t]he people of Kalagon village were hostile towards the Japanese, therefore they could be killed.'⁴ What these examples draw attention to, and what has been borne out through more in-depth analysis of the case studies in this thesis, is that the embrace of such extremes was, like Dirk Moses and Dominik Schaller have shown in respect to other imperial contexts, shaped more by security than racial logics.⁵

Indeed, when and where it emerged, extreme violence in the Empire was genocidal in character; that is, it was deliberate, methodical, organised, and involved the indiscriminate destruction of peoples on the basis of their group identity.

³ TNA, WO 235/882: 'Transcript of Trial of Second Lieutenant Shimizu Kiyogi et al.' (July 1946), 39–43.

⁴ IMTFE: Exhibits, No. 1541A: 'Report of A. M. Sturrock, President of War Crimes Court at Rangoon'.

⁵ A. Dirk Moses, 'An Antipodean Genocide?: The Origins of the Genocidal Moment in the Colonization of Australia', *JGR*, 2(1), (2000), 89–106; Dominik Schaller, 'Genocide and Mass Violence in the "Heart of Darkness": Africa in the Colonial Period', in Donald Bloxham & A. Dirk Moses (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies* (2010; pbk edn, Oxford, 2013), 345–64.

However, the Japanese military did not embark on their campaigns of conquest in China and Southeast Asia with extermination in mind. In fact, group-destructive violence in the Empire, neither pre-meditated nor part of an overarching sustained plan, contradicted pan-Asian strategies for creating a cooperative, if paternalistic and essentially unequal, economic and defensive bloc in the region. In coveting cooperation or, at the very least, acquiescence in this goal, the leadership's policies towards other Asians were not borne out of racial hatreds or eliminationist desires, though prejudice, discrimination, and an embedded sense of Japanese superiority would facilitate the embrace of genocidal violence. Whether group-destructive measures were adopted by the Japanese forces, as well as the timing of such a decision and the extent of the ensuing violence, were affected by particular conditions in the occupied territories, the responses from local populations, and the demands of the geopolitical context of war in Asia. In other words, genocidal violence emerged in the Empire as part of a dynamic process of radicalisation and escalation influenced by constantly shifting macro, meso, and micro level contextual factors. In tracing the dynamics involved in this process, the methodological approach employed in this thesis has underscored a complex and interconnected relationship between a number of diverse factors which can be broadly grouped under the categories of *resistance*, *ideology*, and *insecurity*. As the analysis has shown, the interplay between these elements, crucial in producing outbursts of genocidal violence, was determined to a considerable extent by short-term geopolitical and local conditions. However, that interplay was also rooted in, shaped by, and therefore, must be understood within, the longer-term historical context of imperialism.

This is why this thesis began with an exploration of the imperialism-violence nexus. Violence was an inherent part of the nineteenth and twentieth century empire-building process. The extension of foreign control over resources and the maintenance of an unequal power dynamic that divested oppressed peoples of their lands, freedoms, and rights made the use or threat of force a pre-requisite for the success of the imperial project. Attempts to legitimise such efforts through recourse to ideological and spatial arguments created invariably violent, racialized spaces of exception where oppressors could operate with relative impunity. Such conditions were conducive to violence perpetrated against oppressed peoples who were viewed as uncivilised and inferior. It also laid the foundations for the embrace of more extreme, genocidal violence within the imperial space. However, that potential was rarely unleashed. In fact, 'excesses' were thought to be damaging to the imperial economy and could be harmful to the prestige and legitimacy of the project.

Still, it was the specific ideological facets of imperialism that laid the foundations for the unleashing of this genocidal potential. The binary 'us and them' relationship of the imperial space, the trope of 'vanishing races', and racist evolutionary theories which framed extinction as a natural, indeed, beneficial part of human progress, created a context in which oppressors could accept and rationalise the use of otherwise morally reprehensible and questionable measures. The radicalisation of attitudes that contributed to more and more extreme violence in the imperial space, however, was often, if not always, triggered by resistance. Indeed, the conflict generated by opposition was central to exacerbating fears and hatreds, in undermining perceptions of the oppressed as agreeable to imperialism, and in generating conditions that permitted and fuelled the escalation of violence in retaliation. Resistance produced vicious responses, especially when oppressors

struggled against the guerrilla-style tactics that characterised these asymmetric conflicts. Indeed, the nature of imperial struggles facilitated a progressive degeneration of conduct, allowing for the use of more objectionable measures, and caused a general diminishing of inhibitions in respect to targeting whole populations. There was more at work in bridging the moral gulf between legitimate military actions and genocidal strategies, however. Resistance brought to the fore latent fears and insecurities associated with an imperial system founded on competition and rivalry and increasingly understood in Social Darwinian terms as a struggle for survival. Thus, it was usually at those times when the imperial project was threatened and, particularly, when that threat was perceived to be existential in nature, that oppressors developed a 'destroy them to save us' mentality in the imperial space. While not inherent in imperialism, all imperial powers had the potential to engage in genocidal violence given the right impetus. That impetus was located, first, in the Social Darwinian ideologies and insecurities which informed the *fin de siècle* imperial system, and second, in the ways in which those broader ideologies and insecurities were contextualised and perceived by imperial powers as they responded to resistance in their projects. Essentially, instances of extreme violence in the Japanese Empire must be understood through interactions with the imperial system and, most importantly, the impact this had on perceptions of, and responses to, resistance in the areas they occupied.

Early Japanese responses to opposition in Taiwan and Korea followed patterns similar to that of other imperial powers. Operating with increased freedom in spaces of exception, Japanese forces met resistance from local peoples deemed to be less advanced and invariably inferior, with subjugation techniques that frequently involved recourse to violence. Learning from these first encounters with asymmetric,

guerrilla-style conflict, Japanese troops refined and progressively adopted practices that permitted attacks on the livelihoods and lives of civilians. It was during these years that the scorched earth policies, summary executions of prisoners and suspicious military-aged males, collective punishments, and reprisal massacres (which would be used more frequently and on a larger-scale in China and Southeast Asia) became essential components of Japanese military strategy when addressing resistance. However, while the military showed a propensity for escalation, typically when faced with particularly virulent or large-scale uprisings or when resistance brought international embarrassment, violence did not manifest to the same extremes as it would in China and Southeast Asia between 1937 and 1945. The intensification of the military's efforts in those years was, to a large degree, due to important contextual changes which caused the Japanese leadership at that time to perceive Japan's survival as an independent nation as increasingly threatened.

From the outset, Japanese leaders saw imperialism as absolutely vital to the continued independence of Japan within a competitive and perilous world in which the strong seemed to devour the weak. As a consequence, more so than other powers, the insecurities of imperial rivalry preoccupied Japanese leaders who viewed European expansion in Asia with apprehension. Intensifying these concerns was the permeation of European race thinking which positioned Japan as inhabiting a fixed place of inferiority in the racial hierarchy as a 'semi-civilised' people. Thus, at a basic level, the Japanese Empire can be understood as having developed in reaction to insecurities and sensitivities derived from their entry into the imperial system of the mid-nineteenth century after years of relative seclusion. The result was that, despite considerable progress in advancing the nation's international status, these elements

would never be far from the surface as Japanese leaders engaged with that system. Indeed, the rhetoric of the 1930s and 1940s reflected the influence of such factors.

By the time of the outbreak of war in China, the nation was committed to forging a path in Asia independent of the international system. Anti-Western and pan-Asian undercurrents had been developing for several years as a growing number of militarists, politicians, journalists, and intellectuals circulated their dissatisfaction with the putative mistreatment of their nation by the other imperial powers. In 1932, international condemnation over Japanese aggression in Manchuria, which the leadership had characterised as a 'lifeline', resulted in a symbolic rejection of an international system deemed to be discriminatory to Japan as a non-white, resource-poor latecomer to the imperial game. Against the backdrop of popular support for the military, the leadership adopted their proposals for a more autonomous, pan-Asian regional solution to the economic vulnerabilities and concomitant security dilemmas that pervaded the Empire as a result of global retrenchment and protectionist trade policies in the wake of the Wall Street Crash of 1929. Such efforts were focused on the continent where long-held Japanese interests were thought, not irrationally, to be under attack from Chinese nationalism and the apparent spread of communism as a by-product of the rising power of the Soviet Union. The Chinese, however, were not amenable to paternalistic arguments for a 'cooperative' relationship and, in 1937, Chiang Kai-shek stood firm against the piecemeal encroachment of the Japanese military into Chinese territory. With the Japanese also refusing to abandon their goals for creating an autonomous pro-Japanese zone in north China, deemed vital for national defence at this point, the minor skirmish at Marco Polo Bridge in July 1937 escalated into a full-scale, total conflict.

Far from resolving perceived economic and defensive quandaries at this time, the conflict in China exacerbated them and contributed to a geopolitical context understood to be increasingly unfavourable, if not actively hostile, to Japan. Indeed, relations with the US and Britain deteriorated rapidly as those powers offered support to Chiang Kai-shek's government and added to the economic strain of the war by enacting a series of trade sanctions. The result of this was to intensify anti-Westernism and pan-Asianism which filtered more and more into official policy as several prominent figures advocated the removal of Western influence from Asia and the creation of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Thus, when the situation became more acute after the US imposed a full embargo cutting off access to oil and steel in July 1941, the leadership perceived this to be a potentially existential crisis and committed to expansion into Southeast Asia, an area of abundant natural resources and vast markets, as the only viable solution to this crisis. When war broke out in the Pacific, then, it was widely understood in Japan to be an existential struggle. Reflecting a revival of older Meiji discourses, the war was framed as a struggle for survival, a long-awaited clash between the East and the West, between the oppressed and the oppressors. Thus, rooted in and shaped by the nation's long-term interactions with the imperial powers as well as changing perceptions of Japan's place in this system, this war had become a zero-sum game. The by-product of this was to make resistance at this time an intolerable threat to the leadership's solutions to maintaining the nation's independence in this ostensible struggle for survival.

As in other empires then, the experience of opposition would prove to be a catalysing factor which sparked the radicalisation of attitudes and the escalation of violence. However, it did so against the backdrop of a turbulent context of insecurity

and uncertainty which proved conducive to extreme violence perpetrated by the Japanese military during their wars in Asia between 1937 and 1945. Indeed, unprecedented and fierce, Chinese resistance thwarted efforts to decisively end the fighting in 1937. Alarm and frustration at the inability to quickly subjugate the Chinese, who were viewed as backwards in comparison to the Japanese, contributed to the characterisation of the war as a punitive campaign. In framing war in these terms, the leadership established a de facto space of exception where commanders were free to use all available means, including illegal methods of warfare, in their efforts to force an unequal and inferior people to submit. The result was a battlefield context conducive to extreme violence as Japanese forces, under pressure to decisively end a conflict that could jeopardise Japan's long-term security goals, took advantage of the atmosphere of impunity and permissibility and utilised unconventional, objectionable, and sometimes illegal, practices to terrorise the Chinese people into submission. War in the Pacific was only marginally better in some localities, despite this conflict being characterised as a benevolent liberating mission. While the military leadership placed more constraints on soldiers' conduct in Southeast Asia and commanders were to be more restrained in their methods so as to win crucial support from the peoples of this region, there were significant exceptions. Much as they had in China, the leadership allowed for, and often sanctioned, extreme measures against 'resisting' or 'anti-Japanese' groups as dangerous threats to Japan's wartime efforts. In doing so, they upheld, though restricted somewhat, the impunity and permissibility established in China and allowed for those long-established imperial practices of scorched earth policies, summary executions, collective, and reprisal violence in this war of liberation. Essentially, when they resisted these objectives, particularly given the existential security concerns of the war, Asian populations became vulnerable to extreme

violence as a putatively reasonable solution to the threat of opposition in the Empire. Consequently, in this international climate, genocidal measures were more readily used as an acceptable means of smashing, and in some cases, 'wiping out' resistance.

This did not produce a sustained genocidal campaign, however. Commanders made decisions to pursue group-destructive policies at specific times and under particular conditions. In the four case studies of this thesis, a pattern of radicalisation, triggered by resistance, preceded the adoption of genocidal strategies, though it varied in scale, intensity, and duration in all cases. The massacres at Nanjing in December 1937, for instance, took place in the wake of a campaign of cumulative destruction as Japanese forces, already frustrated by the fierce fighting at Shanghai, marched through the Yangtze Delta. In British Malaya, massacres of Chinese men in February 1942 occurred after a much shorter radicalisation period which was fuelled more by past experiences and memories in China. The embrace of genocidal methods in occupied China in 1941 and in the Philippines in 1945 was the apogee of years of unsuccessful and progressively more indiscriminate and systematic anti-guerrilla warfare. In general, however, the radicalisation process in each case was premised on similar trends. These involved sporadic encounters with guerrilla units, anti-Japanese elements, and hostile civilians which, to varying degrees, intensified already existing, if latent, prejudices, hatreds, and fears. Soldiers were also primed for greater levels of violence as an atmosphere of impunity was cultivated by their commanders, parameters of admissible action were continually extended, distinctions between combatants and non-combatants were blurred, if not completely obliterated, and taboos in respect to treatment of civilians were serially broken. In all cases, then, Japanese forces were mentally prepared and open to extreme, otherwise objectionable, measures prior to the adoption of those measures.

The embrace of practices that ultimately involved destroying part, or at times, the whole, of a group in areas of operation was dependent on further contextual factors.

Despite a considerable difference in scale, the massacres at Nanjing in December 1937 and British Malaya in February 1942 manifested as genocidal mopping-up campaigns that specifically targeted the military-aged male population. The purpose of these efforts was three-fold. Commanders aimed to punish for resistance, eliminate a perceived threat, and pre-empt further opposition by terrorising the remaining population into submission. In both cases, Japanese forces were under increased pressure to decisively stamp out resistance. In China, the Japanese leadership were anxious to avoid a prolonged conflict and, as such, field commanders aimed to deliver a symbolic and decisive blow to the GMD's capital, Nanjing, to bring Chiang Kai-shek back to the negotiating table. Similarly, in February 1942, Japanese forces were to quickly and decisively establish their rule in British Malaya as the strategic and symbolic core of the Empire in Southeast Asia in order to begin the process of exploiting the region's resources before moving on to fight in Sumatra. Accordingly, commanders embarked on their campaigns with these considerations in mind and genocidal strategies would unfold in response to conditions on the ground which intensified the perceived threat of resistance and made group-destructive violence seem a practical and rational solution. Indeed, it was the unique circumstances in the Malay Peninsula which fuelled a more radical policy towards the overseas Chinese in that area than was applied towards them in other Southeast Asian countries. The Malayan Chinese had become especially vulnerable to Japanese suspicions and ire for having carried out a relatively successful anti-Japanese campaign and for being the largest, most economically powerful, and therefore, dangerous ethnic group in the peninsula. The activities of

the Dalforce during the Battle for Singapore in early February and the state of disarray as rioting and looting swept through Malaya and Singapore in the wake of the British surrender contributed further to the decision to employ a more extreme policy. The confusion and chaos of the Chinese retreat, the practicalities of dealing with large numbers of surrendering soldiers, the uncertainties and fear associated with an undetermined 'plainclothes soldier' presence in the city, essentially, local conditions, also contributed to commanders' decisions to massacre unarmed Chinese soldiers and a substantial part of the military-aged men in and around Nanjing in 1937. Thus, the genocidal mopping-up campaigns in these areas, while influenced by the broader geopolitical atmosphere, were fuelled and shaped by conditions on the ground.

The drastic escalation of anti-guerrilla strategy in occupied China in 1941 and the Philippines in 1945 was almost the inverse of the pattern observed at Nanjing and in British Malaya. For years, Japanese forces operated in an unfavourable and difficult battlefield situation in these areas as they combatted guerrilla resistance to their consolidation efforts. Analogous to other imperial contexts, Japanese troops engaged increasingly in the unconventional measures that were long-established as central to this type of warfare. Soldiers moved through the countryside in occupied China and the Philippines during the occupation years periodically destroying villages, executing suspicious-looking men, and massacring civilians in reprisal for assistance provided to the guerrillas or for their attacks on Japanese units. The intensity of violence ebbed and flowed during this time in response to periods of increased and diminished guerrilla activity. In the Philippines, for example, resistance and responses to it constituted and cultivated a cycle of violence which led to cumulative escalations. These escalations were not necessarily linear, influenced

by changes in the immediate situation and the broader geopolitical context. 'Zonification' practices were implemented, for instance, at a peak in guerrilla activity, but also during a turn in the course of the war against Japan. It was the important shifts in the international context that fuelled the eventual escalation to genocidal measures in both cases. In 1941, a combination of wider geopolitical uncertainties and immediate security issues, compounded by the importance of north China to Japan's abiding objectives and the need to eradicate the threat of communism, proved the necessity of finally consolidating the occupied areas to make future plans possible. Since past experiences and efforts had proven unsuccessful, Japanese forces applied ruthless, indiscriminate, and ultimately, genocidal methods to 'wipe-out' resistance in the occupied areas. Towards the end of 1944, the Philippines had become important as the site of the last decisive battle before the invasion of Japan itself, a role it was ill-prepared for. At the same time, the Japanese faced an impending American return to the Islands within a context of more audacious guerrilla activity and a potentially massive uprising from the Filipino people, believed to be wholly anti-Japanese at this point. Like in occupied China, past failures and new pressures from a geopolitical context that seemed to spell disaster for Japan in its struggle for survival, laid the foundations for reasoning that the destruction of Filipino populations residing in areas of tactical importance was a strategic, and justifiable, necessity. As such, though shaped by the circumstances on the ground, changes in the geopolitical context in these cases intensified the perceived threat of resistance. These more existential concerns produced even more radical responses as Japanese forces in these areas not only targeted military-aged men for elimination, but women, children, and the elderly, also.

An examination of Japanese violence through the conceptual lens of genocide, then, can be much more productive and insightful than scholars, like Joshua Fogel (discussed in the introduction), have previously suggested. In moving beyond a Holocaust-derived framework for analysis, the approach taken in this thesis has provided a foundation for understanding instances of extreme violence in the Japanese Empire as sporadic outbursts which were contingent on the interplay between multifarious contextual factors. To reiterate, the emergence of genocidal violence in the Empire was not predetermined; it was bound up with experiences and encounters with victim groups on the ground, influenced by the demands and pressures of the fluid international context, underpinned by embedded perceptions of the Japanese 'self' and the Asian 'other', and driven by longstanding, yet mutable, insecurities of competition and rivalry which were intrinsic to the imperial system at that time. In this respect, while there were different dynamics that underlay Japanese imperialism, genocidal violence in the Empire manifested in ways that were not unlike that of other empires. This underscores the importance of bringing the Japanese case further into dialogue with the research of those who explore the radicalisation process in other empires as well as the work of Martin Shaw and Mark Levene who have begun to explore the broader historical and global trends that produce contexts conducive to genocidal violence.⁶ In other words, as I have shown by contextualising my case studies against the backdrop of empire, violence, and genocide in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and by situating them within the

⁶ Martin Shaw, *Genocide and International Relations: Changing Patterns in the Transitions of the Later Modern World* (Cambridge, 2013); Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of the Nation State, Volume II: The Rise of the West and the Coming of Genocide* (2005; pbk edn, New York & London, 2013).

longer-term context of Japanese imperialism as borne out of the same system that influenced genocide in other empires: extreme violence in the Japanese Empire cannot be fully understood as a distinctly Japanese phenomenon. As in other empires, this violence came about through a dynamic and chaotic process of radicalisation which, though specific to each case and point in time, was triggered by resistance, intensified by existing insecurities, and facilitated by the ideologies that fed into those insecurities and shaped perceptions of those who were resisting.

In emphasising this point, it is hoped that the benefits and insights of examining Japanese imperial violence through the conceptual lens of genocide will stimulate further research in the future. This is important because analysis of cases where there is no overarching plan for the destruction of races, where there is no racial component driving violence, and where genocidal measures manifest as counter-insurgency efforts, are pertinent to the current geopolitical climate. At the time of writing, a number of conflicts, in Darfur and Syria for instance, are marred by outbursts of genocidal violence. However, because the nature of this violence is sporadic, inconsistent, and often related to counter-insurgency, some scholars, like Alex De Waal, question the 'applicability' and usefulness of genocide to understanding the situation in those regions.⁷ Moses has argued that genocide can be, at a fundamental level, a form of counter-insurgency, shaped more by security logics than racial hatreds.⁸ The case of Japanese violence analysed in this thesis has yielded results that, in my opinion, lend further credence to such arguments.

⁷ Alex De Waal, 'Reflections on the Difficulties of Defining Darfur's Crisis as Genocide', *Harvard Human Rights Journal*, 20 (2007), 25-33; see Martin Shaw, 'Darfur: Counter-insurgency, Forced Displacement, and Genocide', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 62(1) (2011), 56-61 for further discussion.

⁸ A. Dirk Moses, 'Revisiting a Founding Assumption of Genocide Studies', *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, 6(3) (2011), 287-300.

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