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## The Search for a Usable Past: The U.S. and the Lessons of the Occupation of Japan

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## The Search for a Usable Past: The U.S. and the Lessons of the Occupation of Japan\*

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Anniversaries in the civic life of a nation are moments for reflection and commemoration of significant historical events. In the U.S., the anniversary of the end of World War II in the Pacific has often produced heated debate over the use of the atomic bombs to end the war. At times, that debate has roiled U.S.-Japan relations as representatives from each country sought to extract apologies from their former adversary: Americans demanding one for Pearl Harbor; Japan asking for one for Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In 2015, the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II in the Pacific passed without much of the usual controversy. The most notable aspect of commemorations in the U.S. was the celebration of the heroism and service of the last remaining veterans of the conflict. The enemy was rarely mentioned at these ceremonies. Political leaders in Washington and Tokyo likewise shied away from issues that might inflame public opinion.

In Washington, government officials used the anniversary to highlight instead the constructive relationship that leaders in both countries built out of the ashes of the war.<sup>1)</sup> In praising the durability of the postwar U.S.-Japan relationship, Americans frequently praised U.S. occupation policies for establishing the foundation of a relationship built on reconciliation and mutual respect. This recent emphasis on the spirit of reconciliation and the positive outcomes of the postwar occupation of Japan marked a new development in how Americans viewed the occupation. In adopting this self-congratulatory perspective on the occupation, American officials and commentators seemed unaware that over the last seventy years, Americans' perceptions of the success of the U.S. occupation have changed dramatically. Until the 1990s, the debate over the outcomes and meaning of the occupation was largely an academic exercise, with many scholars pointing out the shortcomings of the U.S. democratization effort. This was especially the case in the 1980s, when Japan emerged as a major economic competitor to the U.S. Following the end of the Cold War, however, policymakers, influenced by public commentators and think tanks, saw the occupation as a successful example of American nation-building. In particular, the Japanese example was used to rebut skeptics who questioned America's ability to transfer democratic values to non-western countries. This reconceptualization of the les-

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sons of the occupation reached its apogee during the period immediately before and after the U. S. invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Given the American public's relative inattention to U. S.-Japan relations, the idea that policymakers found it useful to cite examples from the history of that relationship was noteworthy in itself. But the idea that the U. S. occupation of Japan should be viewed as a model for action in the early years of the twenty-first century was perhaps even more surprising. For much of the first three decades after the end of the war, U. S.-Japan relations were of interest primarily to academic specialists, diplomats, and military officers assigned to bases in Japan. The tensions accompanying treaty revision in 1960, Japanese protests over the Vietnam War, and the trade frictions that led to the Nixon shocks barely or only briefly seeped into public awareness.

### **1. The occupation as a flawed reform effort**

By the mid-1980s, however, commentators, politicians, and analysts were warning about Japan's economic assault on America. The period from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s was the heyday of Japan-bashing in the United States. Many Americans today, certainly those under the age of forty-five, are completely unaware that there was a time in the recent past when many of their fellow citizens viewed Japan in terms similar to the way China is viewed now.<sup>2)</sup> As Takuya Sasaki has noted, these recriminations emerged in the waning days of the Cold War after decades in which Japan and the United States had avoided discussions of the past in favor of cementing their alliance against the Soviet Union.<sup>3)</sup> With the end of the Cold War, anniversary commemorations became the platform for venting long-submerged feelings over Pearl Harbor, the Bataan Death March, and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Such circumstances were hardly conducive to positive assessments of U. S. occupation policy in Japan. Something, it seemed, had gone horribly wrong.

There were several explanations offered for Japan's alarming success in American markets. The most extreme, and least scholarly, was that Americans had been duped by the Japanese. The United States had been generous and merciful in victory, and the Japanese had taken advantage of American naiveté. One American statesman put it bluntly on the fortieth anniversary of the end of the war: "To clarify two facts," he said. "First, we are still at war with Japan. Second, we are losing."<sup>4)</sup> Writing in *The New York Times* in 1985, the nationally famous journalist Theodore White wrote "What we are faced with now is the idea that events contradict history's logic. Perhaps we did not win the war, perhaps the Japanese, unknown even to themselves, were the winners."<sup>5)</sup> Talk of economic Pearl Harbors abounded, and magazine illustrations showing Japanese businessmen as samurai or sumo wrestlers conveyed the message that the U. S. occupation had failed to uproot the feudal values that animated Japan's economic warriors.<sup>6)</sup>

There were, of course, calmer appraisals. But even these commentators found the source of current trade frictions in the failure of the United States to democratize Japan's

economy during the occupation. In short, these authors tended to see the reverse course as a necessary adjustment at the time, which had unfortunate consequences later.<sup>7)</sup> In this respect, they diverged from a large group of American and Japanese historians who viewed the reverse course as the result of a conservative Cold War shift in American postwar policy. For our purposes, however, it is important to note that even less excitable analyses of Japan-U. S. relations in this period found fault with the occupation and America's postwar treatment of Japan.

## **2. The occupation as a model for nation-building**

Then, a little more than a decade later, the occupation was transformed into an American success story and the model for U. S. action in the Middle East. In October 2002, as the administration of President George W. Bush contemplated an invasion of Iraq, *The New York Times* reported that, according to senior White House officials, the administration was “developing a detailed plan, modeled on the postwar occupation of Japan, to install an American-led military government in Iraq if the United States topples Saddam Hussein...”<sup>8)</sup> The same officials were also cited as looking to the example of Japan, as opposed to Germany, because they did not want to divide Iraq into occupation zones, as had been the case with Germany after the war. Finally, General Tommy Franks, the likely commander of the invasion, was expected to reprise the role of Douglas MacArthur as head of the occupation.<sup>9)</sup>

The origin of the use of the occupation of Japan as a model for Iraq is not clear.<sup>10)</sup> The example of Japan was enthusiastically, if incongruously, employed by the neoconservative Max Boot in his book *Savage Wars of Peace*, a book about America's “small wars” published in 2002.<sup>11)</sup> As early as September 2002, *The New York Times* also mentioned an unidentified group of analysts as preferring the example of Japan over Germany.<sup>12)</sup> Although we do not know who in the Bush administration began to promote the idea of using the occupation of Japan as a successful model, it is clear that this was not the first time that the success of the occupation of Japan was used to support the practice of nation-building. During the 1990s, America's post-Cold War forays into Panama, Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti provided the inspiration for a search into the historical record for prior examples of nation-building. Soon, a cottage industry emerged in which academics and policy analysts engaged in a lively discussion of the practice of “democratization” and “nation-building.” One influential work that cited the occupation of Japan as an example of successful democratization was Tony Smith's *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century*. Published by the prestigious Twentieth Century Fund, an organization committed to influencing public policy, Smith's book identified the occupations of Germany and Japan as the biggest successes in what he perceived as an American tradition of liberal internationalism.<sup>13)</sup> Works by Smith and other scholars appeared in scholarly presses and think-tank publications, but their ideas also seeped into more widely read journals of opinion such as *Commentary*

and the *New Republic*.

Alarmed by this trend, and by the idea of nation-building in general, Gary Dempsey and Roger Fontaine of the libertarian Cato Institute disparaged what they saw as the facile use of the occupation of Japan as a justification for late-twentieth century nation-building projects.<sup>14</sup> Japan was leveled after World War II, they noted, and citing historian John Dower, they emphasized that the Japanese military authorities had been thoroughly discredited, and the Japanese people were ready to embrace defeat as an escape from certain death and a means to a better life.<sup>15</sup> The libertarians at the Cato Institute were horrified by the prospect of further American attempts at nation-building, but up to this point, the debate over nation-building contained a largely theoretical air. Past failures and successes, with Japan being an example of the latter, were analyzed and investigated in order to enhance decision making in the indefinite future in some unspecified country or “failed state.” Then, in the autumn of 2002, shortly after the U. S. Senate voted to grant the president the authority to use force in Iraq, the plans for an occupation of Iraq were leaked to the press. The future had arrived. Iraq was the next country scheduled for an American-style makeover. And Japan was being used as the precedent.

### **3. Debating the occupation as a model for postwar Iraq**

This news prompted the recently installed Senate Majority Leader, Tom Daschle (D-SD), to ask if the reports were true. If so, he added, the administration had a lot of work to do to prepare for an occupation. Moreover, if Japan was being used as the model, it would be imperative that the president clearly explain to the American people the enormous resources that would be required to implement such a program. Daschle then moved on to point out what he saw as the flaws inherent in comparing postwar Japan to postwar Iraq. To begin with, he noted, the United States had preserved much of the Japanese governmental machinery, including the emperor, and governed through them. Did the U. S. plan to do the same in Iraq? Or would it “have to start from scratch?” The U. S. also kept nearly 80,000 troops in Japan for six years after the war. Did the Bush administration plan something similar for Iraq? The cost of any such program would be tremendous, he added; thus, the president would need to consult with Congress in advance. Finally, Daschle noted, Japan, unlike Iraq, was a homogeneous nation untroubled by sectarian or ethnic strife. Daschle respectfully asked the administration for clarification and more information, but his initial assessment was clear: bad history made for bad policy.<sup>16</sup>

That judgement was soon seconded by John Dower, America’s premier scholar of modern Japan and the author of *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (1999), which won the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award. “Does America’s successful occupation of Japan after World War II provide a model for a constructive American role in a post-Saddam Iraq?” he asked. “The short answer is no.”<sup>17</sup> The long answer included some of the same points made by Daschle, notably the preservation of the Japanese bureaucracy and the decision to maintain the emperor on the throne. But Dower also

noted that the American occupation of Japan acquired its legitimacy from near universal approval in the international community. This was especially true in Asia, where most countries had been victims of Japanese militarism. The success of the occupation's liberal program also owed much to its New Deal roots. Land reform, new rights for labor, revision of the civil and penal codes, reform of educational institutions, and, of course, the new constitution were all part of a liberal agenda developed during the war. The "remarkable success" of the occupation also owed much to the "charismatic" Douglas MacArthur, to whom ultimate authority to implement the desired reforms was granted. All of these changes were facilitated by Japan's "unconditional surrender," which resulted in a "non-negotiable" grant of authority to the victors. But the cooperation of the Japanese people, the thorough rejection of Japan's wartime leaders, and, crucially, Japan's prewar democratic movements were essential to the occupation's success.<sup>18)</sup>

The United States, according to Dower, could expect few, if any, of these conditions to obtain in postwar Iraq. Other similar opinion pieces followed, usually employing the same arguments made by Dower. The disagreement between those in the administration who saw Japan as a precedent and those on the outside who did not could scarcely have been starker. Those differences should not, however, obscure an interesting commonality shared by both sides in the debate. Both agreed unequivocally that the occupation had been a success. In fairness to Dower and other scholars who entered the fray, newspaper columns do not by their nature encourage the heavily qualified statements most academics employ in scholarly discourse. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that in contrast to many revisionist historians, Dower saw unconditional surrender as a constructive policy. Similarly, Dower's recognition of the importance of the emperor to the occupation's success contradicted his previous contention that by sparing Hirohito from trial, the occupation had relieved the Japanese of any need to confront their own culpability for their country's aggression. Dower's assessment of MacArthur's role in the occupation also reversed a trend in the historical literature that had begun to minimize his contribution to that of policy implementer and actor-in-chief.<sup>19)</sup>

On March 1, 2003, days before United States' invasion of Iraq, the president sought to reassure the public about America's goals in Iraq. "Rebuilding Iraq will require a sustained commitment from many nations, including our own," he said. "We will remain in Iraq as long as necessary and not a day more." Turning to the past, he noted that "America has made and kept this kind of commitment before, in the peace that followed World War II. After defeating enemies, we did not leave behind occupying armies; we left constitutions and parliaments. We did not leave behind permanent foes; we found new friends and allies. There was a time when many said that the cultures of Japan and Germany were incapable of sustaining democratic values. They were wrong. Some say the same of Iraq today. They too are mistaken."<sup>20)</sup>

The immediate aftermath of the Iraq War revealed just how influential the example of the Japanese occupation had been to would-be nation builders. On his flight to Iraq, Noah Feldman, senior constitutional advisor to the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq,

discovered that “without exception,” his colleagues on the plane “were all reading new books on the American occupation and reconstruction of Germany and Japan.”<sup>21)</sup>

Within months, however, what had appeared to be a quick victory had developed into a protracted struggle. In the midst of these unfavorable developments, President Bush sought to reassure the public that the United States had the ability to create a democratic Iraq. Capitalizing on the “Greatest Generation” phenomenon, Bush repeatedly compared the American challenge in Iraq to the American success in defeating and democratizing Japan and Germany. The message was clear: here was an opportunity for a new generation to don the mantle of greatness. Speaking to members of the American Legion on August 26, the president said:

As many of you saw firsthand in Germany and Japan after World War II, the transition from dictatorship to democracy is a massive undertaking. It’s not an easy task. In the aftermath of World War II, that task took years, not months, to complete. And yet the effort was repaid many times over as former enemies became friends and allies and partners in keeping the peace.<sup>22)</sup>

He repeated this refrain two weeks later in an address to the nation on the War on Terror. “America has done this kind of work before,” he assured them. “Following World War II, we lifted up the defeated nations of Japan and Germany and stood with them as they built representative governments.”<sup>23)</sup> In November, the president returned to this theme to make the case that progress was being made in Iraq. Citing reforms in education, improvements in hospitals, and newly formed representative governments at the local level, Bush explained, unconvincingly, that, “This is substantial progress, and much of it has proceeded faster than similar efforts in Germany and Japan after World War II.”<sup>24)</sup>

The commemoration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Pacific War on August 30, 2005, provided Bush with yet another opportunity to dwell on the success of the American occupation of Japan and the constructive bilateral relationship that followed the signing of the peace treaty.

Democracy takes different forms in different cultures. Japanese democracy would be different from American democracy. The Japanese constitution would guarantee the universal freedoms that are the foundation of all genuine democracies, while, at the same time, reflecting the unique traditions and needs of the Japanese people. It allowed for both an electoral democracy and a hereditary monarchy. It set Japan on the path to a free society.<sup>25)</sup>

The president continued:

With every step toward freedom, the Japanese economy flourished. With every step toward freedom, the Japanese became a model for others in the region. With every step toward freedom, the Japanese became a valued member of the world community, a force for peace and stability in the region, and a trusted and reliable ally of the United States of America. *ibid.*

Pausing briefly to recount his father’s experience as a young pilot in the Pacific War, the president then turned to the main message of his speech. “Today, we must not forget the lessons of the past, and the lesson of this experience is clear: The most powerful

weapon in the arsenal of democracy is the spirit of liberty.” Pointing to evidence of democratic developments in the Middle East, the president touted the advances made in Iraq.

In Iraq, people have come together to write a constitution that guarantees freedom for all Iraqi citizens. The document they have produced protects fundamental human freedoms, including freedom for women, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, freedom of conscience, and freedom of expression. This constitution is the result of democratic debate and compromise, and the Iraqi citizens can be proud of what they have accomplished. *ibid.*

Bush made his most detailed comparison of the American experiences in Japan and Iraq in August 2007. The speech came after four years of war and at a time when the press reported that the American people were losing patience with the occupation of Iraq. In most of his earlier speeches, Bush had often paired the occupations of Japan and Germany, citing both as examples of America’s success in spreading democracy in the wake of war. In this instance, speaking to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, he focused exclusively on America’s Asian wars. One of his goals was to use Japan as an example of democratic reforms being transplanted in a non-Western society. To counter the growing criticism coming from contemporary Middle East specialists, Bush cited former Ambassador Joseph Grew as one of the self-assured experts who insisted that Japan could not be transformed into a democracy. The president also scoffed at those who insisted on putting the emperor on trial and abolishing Shinto. And he noted that there had been many American and Japanese critics of MacArthur’s liberal constitution. The provisions securing female equality had come in for especially violent criticism, he noted. These and other examples showed that the experts could be wrong, he argued. The clear implication was that his critics were also wrong today.<sup>26)</sup>

The president’s references to the preservation of Shinto and the institutionalization of female equality had clear parallels to American objectives in Iraq and Afghanistan. To those who said that constitutionalism and female equality would not take root in the Middle East, he said look at the American experience in Japan. In this respect, his brief retelling of the history of the occupation served his purposes well. It worked less well, however, as history. For example, Bush seemed unaware that it was conservatives from his own party who were the most vocal opponents of the democratization programs carried out during the occupation of Japan. He also neglected to mention that the promotion of equal rights for women did not survive the end of the occupation. Overall, President Bush helped to insert the history of the occupation of Japan into public discussion, but even his most sustained analysis of that experience provided only a superficial gloss of that complicated subject.

Historians sought to rectify this situation with John Dower taking the lead. Between March and December 2003, Dower published five different columns in major metropolitan newspapers that aimed at refuting the administration’s use of the occupation of Japan to justify its policies in Iraq.<sup>27)</sup> In this way, he brought a capsule summary of the history of the occupation to the attention of a broad reading public. Other historians contributed



to that effort. In January 2003, a group of scholars published an “Urgent Appeal from Students of the Allied Occupation of Japan” that denied the applicability of the Japan model to nation-building efforts in Iraq or elsewhere in the third world.<sup>28)</sup> According to these historians, the United States’ success during the occupation had depended on unique circumstances in Japan. “In Japan,” they argued, “the reform program moved ahead relatively smoothly due to a prewar democratic tradition, the absence of armed conflict, the maintenance of internal social order, and the survival of governing institutions, including the emperor.” “Another striking difference” according to the historians, was “the preponderant role played by General Douglas MacArthur in effecting a positive outcome. The charismatic Allied Supreme Commander had an understanding of Japan’s history and cultural traditions.”<sup>29)</sup>

Some of these observations were unremarkable. Most historians agree that the occupation’s most successful and lasting reforms were those that had roots in the prewar Japanese experience. These included support for labor unions, land reform, and women’s suffrage, whereas other transplanted reforms, such as a decentralized education system with elected school boards and localized police departments, made little headway.<sup>30)</sup> On the other hand, the reference to the emperor as an asset to the occupation was a jarring note given that many of the authors of the “Appeal” have found much to criticize in the Americans’ refusal to hold Hirohito responsible for the war. Even more startling, however, was the authors’ willingness to recycle the old myth of MacArthur as someone who understood Japan’s history and cultural traditions and was devoted to liberal reform.

Following the fall of Baghdad, historians continued to highlight differences between the case of Japan and Iraq. Gone was the image of MacArthur as the knowledgeable Japan hand. With the occupation of Iraq underway, they elaborated on their earlier criticisms by highlighting what they viewed as important differences between the United States after World War II and the America that occupied Iraq. According to John Dower, “Consistent with New Deal thinking—and, indeed, consistent with the lessons of successful wartime planning, and with the history of developing economies more generally—the government was assigned a major role in setting priorities and guiding reconstruction.” This New Deal approach was in stark contrast to what Dower termed the Bush administration’s “hard-core ‘free market’ ideology.”<sup>31)</sup> Historian Mark Selden similarly stressed the New Deal roots of occupation social reforms in Japan and noted how such liberal policies were “anathema to the supply-siders running the occupation . . .” in Iraq.<sup>32)</sup>

#### **4. Selective forgetting: Policy analysts and the lessons of the occupation of Japan**

As historians were disparaging the Bush administration’s misuse of occupation history, social scientists, policy analysts, and military officers debated the subject among themselves in more specialized journals and think-tank publications. These scholars were less likely to reach the broader public than Dower’s columns. Instead, they aimed to influence policymakers. Most of the authors of this literature doubted the accuracy of Bush’s

use of the Japan example, but they found some value in comparing that experience with Iraq for the purpose of divining lessons for future nation-building endeavors. The RAND Corporation, the United States Institute for Peace, the Army War College, and Carnegie Endowment, among others, held symposia and issued papers and monographs that examined the U. S. experience in Japan for guidance.<sup>33)</sup>

This flurry of academic activity found numerous examples of nation-building in the American past in part because there is no single agreed upon definition of the term. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, nation-building refers to “creation of a new nation, especially a newly independent nation.”<sup>34)</sup> Clearly, the occupation of Japan did not fit this description. But another working definition holds that nation-building encompasses one or more of the following three activities: “unification of disparate ethnic groups, democratization, and economic reconstruction.”<sup>35)</sup> It appears that this is the more commonly used definition, given that most studies of the occupation that viewed it as a form of nation-building emphasized the American role in democratization and economic reconstruction. Interestingly, the effect of the occupation on the unification of disparate peoples within Japan received little attention from policy analysts, perhaps because it has only recently become a subject of interest to the historians whose work forms the basis for most of the comparative policy-oriented studies.

Although the policy analysts were judicious in their approach and based their analyses on the work of professional historians, including John Dower, Michael Schaller, and Howard Schonberger, the lessons they discovered seemed to be of dubious value to future policymakers. Future viceroys were advised to be mindful of the inverse relationship between the size of the occupation force and the incidence of violence. “In fact,” read one unhelpful lesson, “most adequately manned post-conflict operations suffered no casualties.” It is not clear, however, how officials would know they have the right number of troops for the job, unless, of course, they suffer no casualties.

In another instance, a study by the Rand Corporation viewed Japan as one of two postwar successes, the other being Germany, but it also noted that from the start of the occupation, there was “some tension between the U. S. policymakers who advocated the democratization of economic opportunity and those who favored working with existing economic elites.” Eventually, the authors added, “U.S. global interests trumped the desires of SCAP reformers,” and American policy shifted toward an emphasis on recovery. According to the RAND group, that policy shift, known to historians as the “reverse course,” “contributed to the consolidation of political and economic power in Japan by the conservatives.”<sup>36)</sup>

The authors of the same study concluded that “Idealistic reforms designed for the long-term improvement of the recipient nation must sometimes give way to the immediate, global concerns of the occupying power.”<sup>37)</sup> In glancing over this controversial “lesson,” the authors shrugged off what appeared to be a glaring contradiction between the goal of nation-building and its reality. For neoconservatives, and most other advocates of nation-building in Iraq, democratization was the fundamental objective of American

policy. Nevertheless, the RAND group asserted without much introspection that sometimes that cardinal principle must be sacrificed to America's global interests.

For historians, this tension between ideals and interests would be the starting point for investigation; for policy analysts, it rated only brief notice. The reason for this disinterest may be found in the RAND group's ultimate "lesson" of the Japan experience: "Democracy can be transferred to non-Western societies," they declared.<sup>38)</sup> With that optimistic conclusion in mind and in anticipation of further adventures in nation-building, the RAND Corporation published *The Beginner's Guide to Nation-Building*. Readers too busy to plow through this handbook anxiously awaited the inevitable publication of *Nation-Building for Dummies*.<sup>39)</sup>

There were other obvious shortcomings in these lesson-driven studies of nation-building. Policy analysts comparing the occupation of Japan to preparations for the invasion of Iraq often cited the years of planning that preceded the Japanese surrender as one reason for its success. In reality, however, despite that planning, in a matter of days, abruptly and without warning, the Truman administration discarded a basic premise on which its plans rested. In accepting Japan's surrender, the Truman administration abandoned the concept of direct military government used in Germany and decided to rule Japan through the existing government. The administration also unexpectedly underwent a wholesale change of personnel in a key policymaking organization when experienced Japan hands left the Foreign Service. To further complicate matters presiding over the whole affair was a politically potent commander who continued to behave like "an unguided missile of United States foreign policy long before he crossed the Yalu."<sup>40)</sup> It is difficult to see what lessons can be drawn from that case other than "expect the unexpected."

Policy analysts hoping to obtain guidance from America's success in Japan directed their attention to the democratization and reconstruction aspects of nation-building. They did not look to the Japan experience for lessons on another activity that often comes under the heading of nation-building, "unification of disparate ethnic groups." This is understandable since Americans did not play a significant role in unifying disparate ethnic groups in Japan. They did, however, contribute to the ethnic construction of postwar Japan in ways that historians are only now beginning to explore.

To begin with, elimination of Japanese control over Korea, the Kuriles, and the Ryukyus pared the empire down to its more ethnically cohesive core islands. As part of the demilitarization and decolonization process, the United States also repatriated several million Japanese soldiers and settlers to the main islands. Ralph Braibanti has likened this process to the reduction of Turkey to the Anatolian heartland after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. These territorial readjustments had the constructive effect of strengthening a sense of historical continuity and cultural cohesion among Japanese at a time when defeat could easily have fomented a crisis of national identity.<sup>41)</sup>

More recently, historians have looked more critically at how these territorial and population adjustments affected Japanese society. According to Andrew Gordon, the

process of absorbing 6.9 million repatriates to Japan constituted a “complex undertaking which left a legacy that has not yet been studied or fully understood.” He does note, however, that soldiers who were ridiculed for having been part of a disastrous war played a prominent role in the 1950s in organizing groups that called for rejection of American imposed reforms, including the peace constitution.<sup>42)</sup> In the past few years, historians have begun to examine the process of repatriation and deportation in postwar Japan as part of a broader movement to study the effects of decolonization on the home islands. During the occupation, more than one million Koreans were deported to the peninsula as part of a program to match peoples with their “appropriate” national territories.<sup>43)</sup> At the same time, SCAP separated the Ryukyu and Amami Islands from the jurisdiction of mainland Japan and placed them under direct military governments. This administrative contrivance was intended to preserve direct control over areas deemed essential to American basing plans. As part of this process, American authorities encouraged the inhabitants to reassert their historical identity as Ryukyuan.<sup>44)</sup> Through the movement of Koreans out of Japan and the promotion of secession in the Ryukyus, SCAP helped “lay the basis for Japan’s postwar myth of ethnic homogeneity.”<sup>45)</sup>

In this way American nation-building in Japan inadvertently conformed to what Eric Weitz has called the Paris system, referring to the peace conference of 1919 and its practice of seeking ethnic purity for nations through deportations.<sup>46)</sup> Repatriation of Japanese from the overseas empire conformed to American desires to create stability throughout postwar Asia, and it was also consistent with the humanitarian impulse prevalent in American society. By the same token, the deportation of Koreans, especially when the administration of the process was left to the Japanese, reflected the more unenlightened aspects of American immigration law and relegated Koreans in Japan to second-class status, a “subtle apartheid that Occupation policy tacitly condoned in the interests of preserving internal order.”<sup>47)</sup> Contemplation of that outcome in Japan should be enough to make us think more humbly about what we call success in foreign affairs and make us think more carefully about what is involved in nation-building.

As mentioned, there was little or no discussion of the issue of ethnic cohesion in the policy studies on nation-building that studied the Japan precedent. Also overlooked in these policy studies was the collaboration of American occupation authorities with the officers of Unit 731, the infamous program that tested chemical and biological weapons on prisoners in Manchuria during most of the war. As is well known, American officials shielded many of the program’s officers from prosecution in exchange for the records of their experiments. One would think that this was a subject of genuine relevance for those who sought modern day lessons from studying America’s experience in Japan. After all, the United States invaded Iraq because Saddam was alleged to possess weapons of mass destruction. Nevertheless, this issue went unmentioned in most of the think-tank publications.

## 5. New policy, new history: The occupation as an example of reconciliation

By the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, despite all of the recent discussion of the U. S. occupation of Japan, most of it in positive terms, Japan specialists in the United States were fretting over the future of the most important bilateral relationship in the world, bar none.<sup>48)</sup> The China market beckoned, and once again, U.S.-Japan relations were slipping out of public awareness. Americans had briefly looked back towards the occupation as a guide to the future and then looked away.

Concerns for the future of the alliance were probably exaggerated, as Prime Minister Abe's recent visit to the U. S. and the enhanced security coordination between Washington and Tokyo suggest. No doubt, some people worried about the possibility for friction as the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Pacific War approached, especially in light of Prime Minister Abe's stand on textbook revision. But if the anniversary of the end of the Pacific War had the potential to revive some old controversies, it also offered an opportunity to assess the state of the relationship.

The new theme in administration pronouncements was reconciliation. The idea of reconciliation seems to have particular relevance as the administration copes with regional rivalries in Asia, but it also has special significance as the United States re-opens relations with Cuba and seeks to improve its relations with Iran.

The focus of American policy has shifted from nation-building to building new relationships with old foes. In this new, post-nation-building environment, the occupation of Japan has taken on new meaning as the starting point of a valuable and productive relationship. The main message is no longer about what the United States did to transform Japan. It is about how the two nations achieved reconciliation and created a lasting partnership. In a statement issued by President Obama on V-J Day (Victory over Japan), he said, "The end of the war marked the beginning of a new era in America's relationship with Japan. As Prime Minister Abe and I noted during his visit in April, the relationship between our two countries over the last 70 years stands as a model of the power of reconciliation: former adversaries who have become steadfast allies and who work together to advance common interests and universal values in Asia and globally."<sup>49)</sup>

Secretary of State John Kerry also emphasized the importance of reconciliation in his V-J Day remarks. "Today," said Kerry, "we also reflect on the remarkable transformation of our relationship with Japan, from wartime adversaries to stalwart friends and allies. Our enduring partnership testifies to the power of reconciliation and draws strength from a shared commitment to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law."<sup>50)</sup>

It was probably just a coincidence, but two weeks earlier, on August 14, the unofficial V-J Day, the secretary of state was in Havana to formally re-designate the U.S. Interests Section as the U. S. Embassy Havana. While in Havana, he met with senior Cuban government officials as part of the process of reestablishing diplomatic relations with Cuba.<sup>51)</sup> Thus, it would seem, that for policy makers, the U. S.-Japan relationship is still a model

for action, but instead of nation-building, the postwar experience is now perceived as a case study in the value of reconciliation in foreign relations.

## Notes

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- 10) It appears that the idea originated in the National Security Council. Dower, J. W. (2010). *Cultures of war: Pearl Harbor/Hiroshima/9–11/Iraq* (pp. 350–52). New York.
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- 13) Smith, T. (1994). *America's mission: The United States and the worldwide struggle for democracy in the twentieth century*. A Twentieth Century Fund Book. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
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- 15) The authors also decried the use of the German occupation as another example of nation-building. In addition, they noted that Japan and Germany had been serious threats to American security, had the potential to contribute greatly to world prosperity, and were not plagued by internal conflict. Ibid.
- 16) U.S. efforts in post-conflict Iraq, (2002, October 10–November 8). Congressional Record, V. 148, Pt. 15. Retrieved from [https://books.google.com/books?id=t7042n9JXX8C&pg=PA20992&lpg=PA20992&dq=Japan+%2B+Iraq+%2B+Senate&source=bl&ots=g4FPpsb\\_au&sig=\\_3pmge5nsItRrjrn8AKFYZkFWtI&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CEsQ6AEwCGoVChMI5LSS8-e3yAIVyDI-Ch2lrAVx#v=onepage&q=Japan%20%2B%20Iraq%20%2B%20Senate&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=t7042n9JXX8C&pg=PA20992&lpg=PA20992&dq=Japan+%2B+Iraq+%2B+Senate&source=bl&ots=g4FPpsb_au&sig=_3pmge5nsItRrjrn8AKFYZkFWtI&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CEsQ6AEwCGoVChMI5LSS8-e3yAIVyDI-Ch2lrAVx#v=onepage&q=Japan%20%2B%20Iraq%20%2B%20Senate&f=false)
- 17) Dower began by noting that the terrorist attack on 9/11 had prompted comparisons to Pearl Harbor and added that the Bush administration appeared to be taking a page from Japan's playbook by adopting a

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  - 19) Revisionists such as Howard Schonberger had seen the maintenance of the government bureaucracy as an impediment to occupation reform. Dower's assessment of that decision was more positive. David Greenberg, however, cautioned that "Even with these radical reforms, it should be noted, Japan's democracy today remains deeply flawed and captive to its bureaucracy, and its economy still favors government industrial planning over free enterprise. Greenberg, "Is Iraq the New Japan?" cited above.
  - 20) The president's radio address (2003, March 1). The American Presidency Project. Retrieved from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=25130&st=&st1=>
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  - 24) Remarks at Whitehall Palace (2003, November 19). American Presidency Project. Retrieved from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=812&st=&st1=>
  - 25) Remarks on the 60th Anniversary of V-J Day in San Diego, California (2005, August 30). The American Presidency Project. Retrieved from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=64853&st=&st1=>
  - 26) Remarks at the Veterans of Foreign Wars National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri (2007, August 22). American Presidency Project. Retrieved from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=75710&st=&st1=>
  - 27) The titles cited here are taken from the bibliography of a paper published by the Olin Institute at Harvard University. They are: A warning from history: Don't expect democracy in Iraq (2003, February/March). *Boston Review*; Occupation preoccupation (2003, March 30). *The New York Times*; Occupations and empires: Why Iraq is not Japan (2003, May 9). *San Jose Mercury News*; The other Japanese occupation (2003, June 20). *The Nation*; Bush's comparison of Iraq with postwar Japan ignores the facts (2003, Dec. 8). *Los Angeles Times*.
  - 28) U.S. plans for war and occupation in Iraq are a historical mistake: An urgent appeal from students of the Allied Occupation of Japan (2003, January 24). Retrieved from <http://japan.indymedia.org/newswire/display/45/index.php>
  - 29) The appeal included the questionable generalization that "the emperor, the Japanese government, and the people cooperated in demilitarizing and democratizing the country." The signers of the Appeal included John Dower, Andrew Gordon, Bruce Cumings, Mark Selden, Takamae Eiji, Daizaburo Yui, and Hosoya Masahiro. Ibid.
  - 30) Gordon, A. (2009). *A modern history of Japan* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (pp. 232–36). New York: Oxford University Press.
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  - 32) Selden, M. (n.d.) Notes from ground zero: Power, equity and postwar reconstruction in two eras. *The*

*Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*. Retrieved from <http://www.japanfocus.org/-Mark-Selden/1647>

- 33) The following is a sample of that literature: Dobbins, J., Jones, S. G., Crane, K., & Degrasse, B. C. (2007). *The beginners guide to nation-building*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation; Dobbins, J., McGinn, J. G., Crane, K., Jones, S. G., Lal, R., Rathmell, A., Swanger, R. M., & Timilsina, A. R. (2003). *America's role in nation-building from Germany to Iraq* (p. 53). Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation. Retrieved from [http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph\\_reports/MR1753/](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1753/); see also Jennings, R. S. (2003). *The road ahead: Lessons in nation building from Japan, Germany, and Afghanistan for postwar Iraq*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace; How valid are comparisons? The American occupation of Germany revisited. Retrieved from [www.ghi-dc.org/publications/ghipubs/bu/034/34.205.pd](http://www.ghi-dc.org/publications/ghipubs/bu/034/34.205.pd). The Japan example is also briefly discussed in Record, J. & Terrill, W. A. (2004, May). Iraq and Vietnam: Differences, similarities, and insights. Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College. Retrieved from <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/ssi/>; Major Camarena, M. J. (AY 03–04). In search of a new type of army: Nation building and occupation. School of Advanced Military Studies, United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; Katz, S. N. (2004, May 14). Gun barrel democracy? Democratic constitutionalism following military occupation: Reflections on the U.S. experience in Japan, Germany, Afghanistan and Iraq. The Bodek Lecture, University of Pennsylvania.
- 34) To confuse matters further, the term is sometimes used interchangeably with “state building.” The Oxford English Dictionary definition is: “*nation-building* *n.* and *adj.* (a) *n.* the creation of a new nation, esp. a newly independent nation; the encouragement of social or cultural cohesion within a nation; (b) *adj.* characterized by or relating to such activity.” *OED Online* (Oxford: 2009). The term is used in one entry in the *Encyclopedia of American Foreign Relations* but is not defined. “Dictatorships.” Schmitz, D. F. (2002). In Burns, R. D., DeConde, A. & Logevall, F. (Eds.). *Encyclopedia of American Foreign Policy*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 3 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
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- 37) Dobbins, et. al., *America's role in nation-building from Germany to Iraq*, p. 51.
- 38) Rand book looks at nation-building from Germany to Iraq (2003, July 28). [News Release for the book Dobbins, et. al., *America's role in nation-building from Germany to Iraq*], 51. Retrieved from <http://www.rand.org/news/press.03/07.28.html>
- 39) When I saw the *Beginners guide*, I thought the next logical publication would be *Nation-building for dummies*. In the process of writing this paper, I found that at least one author has already used that title in a review of a book on nation-building. Dobbins, J., Jones, S. G., Crane, K. & DeGrasse, B. C. (2007). *The beginners guide to nation-building*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation. (2008, June 28). Failed states: Nation-building for dummies. [Review of the book *Fixing failed states: A framework for rebuilding a fractured world* by A. Ghani, A. & C. Lockhart]. *The Economist* (US). Retrieved from <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:kosBYS6fCPsJ:www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-204985765.html+nation+building+for+dummies&cd=2&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us>
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- 41) Gordon. *Modern history of Japan*, p. 228; Dower. *Embracing defeat*, pp. 58–61.
- 42) Watt, L. (2009). *When empire comes home: Repatriation and reintegration in postwar Japan* (p. 3). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
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- 48) Calder, K. E. (2009). *Pacific alliance: Reviving U.S.-Japan relations*. New Haven, CT.
- 49) Statement by the president on the 70th anniversary commemorating the end of World War II in the Pacific (2015, September 2). Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/09/02/statement-president-70th-anniversary-commemorating-end-world-war-ii>
- 50) On the 70th Anniversary of the end of World War II in the Pacific (2015, September 2). Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2015/09/246573.htm>
- 51) Travel to Cuba <http://www.state.gov/secretary/travel/2015/t17/index.htm>

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## 有用な過去の探求 ——米国内における日本占領政策の教訓——

マーク・ガレッキオ

終戦後 70 年の間に、占領政策が成功だったか否かに対する米国の見解は劇的に変化した。1990 年代以前は、占領政策の成果や意義については学問の対象であり、多くの研究者が占領政策における占領地の民主化の努力不足について指摘した。その最たる例は 1980 年代における米国経済の競争相手国としての日本の台頭である。

しかし、冷戦終結後、政策立案者は一般の論者やシンクタンクに影響され、占領政策を米国による国家再建の成功例とみなすようになった。特に日本の例は、非西洋諸国を民主化する米国の手腕を疑問視する懐疑派への反証を示すモデルとして引き合いに出された。議論の批判者側は、日本占領下で起こった特異的かつ再度起こりえない教訓に焦点をあてつつ、そもそも国家再建を国家間で比較することはできないと主張し、反論を試みた。しかし、歴史修正主義の研究者たちのこうした主張は、日本の復興におけるマッカーサーおよび天皇の果たした役割といったテーマについて、それまで自らの研究が導き出してきた結論に矛盾する内容であった。

今日においても、新保守主義の評論家は、米国の行動主義的外交政策を正当化する実例として占領が成功したことを引き合いに出すが、オバマ政権当局者は、占領政策を和解の意義を表す一例として引用することを好む。和解という考え方は、政権がアジア地域の情勢に対応する際の施策として訴求力があると考えられる。