

21: JAPAN'S ABORTED BUT DEADLY FASCIST PROCESS¹

a. What are the satisfactory and unsatisfactory aspects of the various "limited," "unlimited" and "intermediate" explanations for what fascism is? Which type and which example of that type is the least unsatisfactory and why does it explain fascism less badly than the other explanations?

b. In what ways did Japan satisfy Wolfgang Sauer's preconditions for and stages of a fascist process from 1868 until 1945? Why did Japan not go as far into a fascist process as Germany did? What trouble did that moderation in the pursuit of fascism not prevent Japan from falling into?

Fascism remains one of the nastiest words employed by students of modern Japanese politics. Until recently it was normally employed by Japanese Socialists (JSP, now SDPJ) not only against politicians of the 1930s, but also against members of the dominant postwar Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

Some of my best friends in Japan at least fellow travel with the LDP. Very few, if any of them, deserve to be called fascists. However, I agree that at least some people now and a fair number during the '30s deserve the label "fascist."

I must, therefore, define fascism very carefully in ideational determinist terms, lest I either lose a few more of my diminishing circle of academic consensus friends in America or my LDP friends in Japan.

Fascism is one of the perennial topics of 20th century political history. Though always considered important (no matter how much people deny use of the label), the level of interest in it ebbs and flows more or less in proportion to the interest in Marxism amongst intellectuals. This is because Marxists use the label fascism more frequently than do most academic consensus historians.

Marxists make fascism the inevitable last substage in the domestic history of

Capitalist Society. Despite the 1989-91 seeming collapse of Marxist commonwealths, the current generation of academic consensus scholars still feels obliged to defer to those who use (and abuse) labels like "fascist" as Marxists do.

A. "Limited" and "Unlimited" Explanations of Fascism

Unfortunately, there is no consensus even within the academic consensus as to who should be labeled fascists and why. Some accept only one or a handful of 20th century political movements as legitimately characterizable as "fascist." This is a "limited" explanation. Others call fascist practically any movement of which they disapprove. This is an "unlimited" explanation. There are also several interesting explanations between these two extremes.

The in-between definitions of fascism are, in principle, the most satisfying ones. If, as in unlimited explanations, practically everyone can be called a fascist, the label does not serve to distinguish groups from each other. If, as in limited explanations, only one group fits the label fascist, some other label will be needed if you want to compare like groups with each other.

1. The "limited" explanation

The easiest and most respectable way out for a historian is to embrace the most limited of way to define fascism. Proponents of the limited theory insist on spelling this particular "f-" word with a capital "F." That would make it the name of the movement founded by Mussolini early in this century just after World War I, and which ruled Italy until the mid-1940s.

Mussolini's Fascism is something of a dog's dinner intellectually, but at least we can point at something concrete when we use the label "Fascism" for it. We can then at least try to describe what Mussolini and his Fascist Party did to make them and their party unique.

The weird mixture of ideas in Mussolini's Fascism included socialism, which Mussolini called "corporatism."

Corporatism is the attempt to socialize the market by bringing bureaucrats, busi-

nessmen and labor union leaders together into committees. These committees collectively (i.e. corporately, in the sense of a collective's deliberations) decide what should be produced, how much of it should be turned out, what the businessmen should charge for it, and what they should pay their workers to make it.

Normally, the bureaucrats join with the labor union representatives to outvote the owners of businesses. This keeps these nominally private owners of capital goods from responding to the pressures of the market. Corporatists gain the ends of socialism without confiscation of businesses and formal abolition of the market.

However, even if all Fascists/fascists were/are corporatists, not all corporatists are fascists. If all corporatists were fascists, you would have to label Franklin Roosevelt a fascist for sponsoring the National Recovery Administration (NRA) in 1933-34. The NRA, admittedly partly inspired by Mussolini's example, brought together unions, management and bureaucrats to fix prices and set production quotas in committees set up for each major industry. At least it did so for a few months until the Supreme Court threw it out as unconstitutional.

The Italian Fascist Party was named after its symbol, the ancient Roman symbol of unity, the *fascis*—a bundle of sticks with a hatchet bound in with them so that the blade of the hatchet protrudes from the top with its edge facing outward.²

Mussolini's Fascism had a sentimental attachment to the glories of ancient Rome, but so did our Founding Fathers. They admired Rome because it was the largest of the ancient republics, just as the U.S. was the largest of the modern republics. Mussolini glorified Rome for less exalted reasons. He took the Romans as the ancestors of the modern Italian nation-state and its African empire. In ancient times Rome enjoyed the sort of respect to which Mussolini believed his state was entitled to in modern times.

Mussolini and his house ideologues also possessed a hyperbolic attachment to

² But the Patent Office could not issue a copyright to Mussolini for the *fascis* as Fascism's trademark. The U.S. too once used the *fascis*, and long before the New Deal. You can find it on the obverse of the old Mercury Head dime. Though it might have been appropriate to keep the *fascis* on the reverse of the postwar Roosevelt dime to symbolize the New Deal's corporatism, the U.S. Mint removed it from that coin because by then the *fascis* had become too identified with Fascism.

¹ 1st dr, 11/87; 5th rev., 9/99. By Edward H. Kaplan

violent talk. Just as the late comedian Lenny Bruce liked to talk dirty, presumably for deep and obscure cultural and psychological reasons, the late Benito Mussolini and his friends liked to talk violent.

Mussolini liked to lie even more than most politicians, and bragged about administering “a Scotch douche of lies” to the public whenever necessary.

Behind both the violent talk and the lies was a deep attachment to hyperbole. Mussolini's house philosopher, Giovanni Gentile, coined the pretentiously exaggerated term “totalitarian” to apply to the form of government Mussolini said he aimed to construct. The Italian Fascists took this label as a compliment. Their government would, they claimed, be capable of total control—control of everything done by every Italian. Of course no government has ever been able to do that. The propensity to make such a claim was, however, an intrinsic part of the mix of traits that constituted Italian Fascism.

There is nothing elsewhere in the world then or since, some historians of modern Italy will tell you, that looked precisely like this collection of weird politics and half-baked ideas. They usually add that there is a very grave danger of doing violence to the specifics of modern Italian history and almost equal if not more violence to the specifics of everybody else's history if you try to label any other 20th century polity as “fascist.”

This problem of who else might plausibly be called “fascist” arose even while Mussolini was still in power. In 1934, Mussolini decided to host a convention of all the Fascist or fascist-seeming parties of Europe. When the Spanish Falange Party got its invitation, its leaders got mad, insisted they were not Fascists, and refused to come. Falangists were not out to recreate the glories of ancient Rome; they were trying to restore the glory of the early modern Spanish monarchy and were insulted at being lumped in with these vulgar Italians!

Still, Mussolini must have had *some* reason for including the Falangists on his invitation list. Maybe the Falangists were being a bit too snippy, though if we are to be honest historians, we must do what I have just done, and also take into account their protest against being called fascists.

The people whom I will be calling Japanese fascists also claimed they were not fascists because their culture was so different from Europe's. Many scholars

then and since have tended to agree. In his biography of one of the supposed Japanese fascists of the 1930s, George Wilson labeled him a “revolutionary populist nationalist.”

Of course since that is one definition (among other possible ones) for fascism, the label change merely begs the question of whether the same label can fit both Italian and Japanese revolutionary populist nationalists.

2. “Unlimited” definitions

The limited definition of fascism is rigorous and hence easily defensible. But in the end many people (including me) are not satisfied with it, since we can spot similarities between Italian Fascism and at least a few other contemporary and later political movements.

There is, however, a risk that on the rebound from the above extremely limited definition of fascism, one can go all the way to the other extreme to embrace an unlimited definition:

For example, you can take the Italian Fascists at their word and say that fascist means “totalitarian” or “totalist.” If a totalist state is one that *attempts* to control everything or at least everything important, you have a seemingly good reason for equating Hitler and Stalin, or Mussolini and Castro or (on the other side of the political spectrum) even some harmless contemporary conservative like Rush Limbaugh with Attila the Hun.

If your politics tend toward the right, as is the case for some refugees from Stalin's Russia, you can argue that Russia's xenophobia, militarism and mindless tendency to expand made it a fascist polity for centuries under the Tsars and that it remained fascist under Lenin and Stalin.

If your politics tend toward the left, you can equate not just Spain's Franco but also Chile's Pinochet with Hitler (or perhaps just with Mussolini, if you are in a moderate mood).

We all tend to define fascism in this sort of open-ended fashion at least some of the time. I have done it myself. Some justify it by saying that left and right (usually not carefully defined) meet at their extremes, so the one can easily turn into the other. Actually, however, all the totalitarians appear to be on the left, if left is defined as interventionism, and right as anti-interventionism.

There is considerable empirical evi-

dence for such inter-convertibility of fascists and communists. Even back in the days when Mussolini and Hitler and Stalin simultaneously terrorized the planet, there was talk of “radish communists” to describe people who were red (i.e. communist) on the outside, but white (i.e. fascist) on the inside. Converse types also occurred. “Beefsteak fascists,” as they were called, were brown (the color of the German Nazi Storm Troopers' shirts) on the outside, and red on the inside.³

Historically, particular fascists and communists have often switched parties with alarming rapidity. Hitler himself is quoted as having once even said that there wasn't much wrong with Marx, apart from his having been a Jew. Castro's father and uncle were card-carrying Falangists back in Spain. Castro's enemies have often argued that the acorn has not fallen far from the Falangist tree.

And yet, though there is a lot of truth to this approach, it is not in the end satisfactory. One can more easily make jokes to dine out with it, or use it to write indignant but sparkling letters to the editor more easily. Unfortunately, however, the unlimited definitions of fascism employing these catch phrases do not make certain necessary distinctions.

For example, not all socialists are totalists. Before 1989, some of them—like the Yugoslavs and the Hungarians—were even describable as *market* socialists.

Conversely, some of the people often called fascists, like Pinochet in Chile, are so devoted to the market that they hire Chicago School (but, alas, not Austrian School) economists, like Pinochet's “Chicago boys,” to advise them. Still worse for the credibility of any unlimited definition of fascism, Pinochet ran out of reasons to assassinate his enemies after killing some 3,000 of them; thereafter his idea of a dirty fascist trick was to threaten to privatize the universities if their faculty and students did not stop badmouthing him. He appointed a businessman rector of the biggest state university and raised tuition to make the university cover more of its own costs. No doubt few undergraduates anywhere would approve of tuition increases, but since this policy aimed at increasing the size of the market sector, whatever else Pinochet was, he was clear-

³ On particularly bad days, I have been known to label certain Rockefeller Republican environmentalists as “watermelon environmentalists” (green on the outside, but pink on the inside).

ly not a totalist of the left or right.

If there was any doubt of Pinochet's un-totalist nature as a politician, it was put to rest when he accepted the negative verdict of a referendum late in 1988, and agreed to step down in favor of an elected president in 1990. Not only wasn't he a totalitarian, in the end he even proved something of a bust as an authoritarian.

Pinochet probably was no worse than what my crowd would call a dirty s.o.b. In this unexpurgated age we need not call him a fascist just to avoid using so ungentle a cussword as s.o.b.

The two polar extreme ways of defining fascism—limited and unlimited—are inappropriate, if only because they only lead us deeper into incoherence. We need, therefore, to see if there are any intermediate views between these two extremes that are more satisfactory. We require definitions of fascism that plausibly identify more than one instance of it, but do not label so many polities as fascist as to leave the term meaningless.

Some historians have given up on the possibility of finding such definitions and simply refuse to use the word. I am not of their number. Hence this chapter.

B. Marxist & Some non-Marxist "Intermediate" Views on Fascism's Nature

1. Lenin

a. Lenin interprets Marx

Lenin came up with this century's most influential intermediate definition of fascism. He wrote on fascism as the ruler of Russia in the early 1920s. This was just after Mussolini came to power in Italy, and some six years after Lenin wrote his equally influential tract on imperialism. Lenin explained fascism much as he had explained imperialism. If Imperialism is what you get *abroad* during the last stages of monopoly capitalism, fascism is what you get *at home* during such times.

Marx, Lenin argued, had already anticipated such a development as Mussolini's big "F" Fascist Party's takeover of Italy. The first small "f" fascist, though he did not have the label, was Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, the grotesque nephew of the original Napoleon Bonaparte, who subverted the 1789 Revolution. Like his

late uncle, Louis Napoleon subverted the 1848 Revolution in France, made himself into the dictator, and then the Emperor of the French.

Since he expected a communist revolution to be the very next thing on the agenda after the people took to the barricades in 1848, Marx's nose was put seriously out of joint by this development. Marx did not storm the barricades himself, either then or later. He did what you might expect of an intellectual. When the going got tough he ran away to England, then sat down in his room and wrote a nasty essay. "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte" proclaimed that there was nothing to worry about after all. The revolution was not cancelled, it was just postponed for a bit.

As monopoly capitalism turns overripe, Marx observed, "unprincipled alliances" tend to form between scared monopoly capitalists and a few surviving members of the old feudal ruling class.

The capitalists are frightened by the growing anger of the proletariat and of the communist intellectuals who are teaching the proletariat about the necessity for revolution. They also worry about the smaller-scale capitalists whom they have just finished bankrupting, and the gangsters that some impoverished proletarians have become.

The surviving feudal ruling class types are even more frightened. They are frightened by the same people who are terrifying the capitalists, and also of the capitalists themselves, since these capitalists have only just recently unhorsed them from power with the 1789 French Revolution that ended Feudal Society.

Still, even though capitalists and feudal rulers fear and despise each other, all the other bogeymen look even worse to both of them, and so feudalists and monopoly capitalists have no one but each other to turn to.

These two groups get together, hire some gangsters to protect them, and then find themselves some clown prince to coordinate the gangsters. Whatever else one thinks of Marx's analysis, Louis Napoleon—a prime jerk if there ever was one—nicely fits that label. Only such a clown, Marx plausibly reasons, could lead such an unprincipled alliance. Serious leaders do not head radically unprincipled alliances. (Marx was mistaken on this point. Serious leaders will do so, if they cannot find any alternative.)

Despite its grotesque lack of fit to the needs of the age, Louis Napoleon's unprincipled alliance with both capitalists and feudal aristocrats would nevertheless manage to repress the revolution for a few years, Marx grudgingly conceded.

But not to worry, Marx assures his readers of the 1850s. This whimsical alliance's inner contradictions only make capitalism's situation worse. Its inevitable collapse will render the eventual socialist revolution all the more inevitable. In a way, the fascists are actually ensuring that the eventual revolution will be an excluding one by exacerbating the tensions within late capitalist society.

As always, Marx proved an inaccurate prophet. When Louis Napoleon's Second Empire (his late uncle's was the first) fell in 1871, the Paris Communards' attempt to make the excluding revolution Marx expected failed, and the French put together a third republic that was even more capitalist dominated than its predecessors.

Fifty years later, Lenin chose not to notice Marx's errors. All he thought he needed to add to Marx was the insight that the same sort of unprincipled alliance that Louis Napoleon had made had also recently taken form in Italy, in the aftermath of World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. The Italian Fascists also united aristocrats and capitalists to usurp power so as to try to head off the inevitable Communist revolution.

b. Lenin and Marx strike out

This Leninist interpretation of Marx has proved very influential. Even though neither Marx's nor Lenin's prediction of a Marxist revolution to follow a Bonapartist/Fascist episode was born out by events, it is still being used by Marxists.

I possess a Marxist handbill passed out on the WWU campus in 1973 that defines fascism in just the above terms. Campus Marxists were still using the same argument in letters to the editor of the *Western Front* in the '80s. It still creeps into the rhetoric of leftist editorial writers on and off campuses.

This Leninist interpretation has the advantage of simplicity of exposition. It prevents people from recognizing any similarities between fascism and socialism by asserting (rather than proving) that the two are inherently antagonistic. Pointing out similarities between the two movements is dismissed as merely part of the fascist apologists' bag of tricks de-

signed to confuse revolutionary classes.

In some ways Lenin's view is a genuine improvement on the previously enunciated limited and unlimited positions. At least it says that you can have more than one instance of fascism. Though all societies become fascist, it is only at a particular stage of each society's historical development that they do so.

Unfortunately, the Leninist explanation not only did not predict what would happen to Second Empire France, it missed the boat on Fascist Italy too. The revolution never broke out there either. Nor did Lenin accurately predict what would happen to Hitler's Germany.

Stalin's later use of Lenin's explanation led people on the left to believe that it was a good thing to have fascism, because that would speed up the coming of or at least intensify the inevitable revolution.

During the early 1930s, the German Communists, at Stalin's orders, even helped Hitler consolidate his position by joining him in attacking the Social Democrats, the strongest potential opponents of the Nazis. The price they and Germany and the world paid for that act of folly was grim. After destroying the Social Democrats, Hitler all but wiped out the Communists too.

Nor does the Marxist in-between explanation of fascism correspond to the empirical economic data. It assumes that only a mature capitalism will turn fascist. But Mussolini's Italy was far from being a mature industrial economy. The Leninist-Marxist intermediate view only half explains even German fascism, since Germany was the only industrially nearly mature nation to have turned fascist. It was far from mature in terms of the modernity of its ruling classes.

Why, however, one must ask of the Leninist explanation, was not England fascist? England was the first and hence most mature monopoly capitalist state. Yet England had only a handful of actual fascists (the followers of Sir Oswald Mosley, satirized during the '30s by P.G. Wodehouse in one of his Jeeves stories as Roderick Spode, leading a "Short Pants Movement" to expose Britons to the noble archaic naked knees of Spode's followers).

All the places Lenin's theory would lead you to expect to have turned fascist by the turn of this century—England, America, even France—had nothing more than such joke fascisms at their lunatic

fringes, movements which never had a chance to come to power.

Conversely, look at all the candidate interwar fascisms: Italy, for example. Was Italy a mature monopoly capitalist state? Hardly. What about Spain, Hungary, Japan, Romania? Romania! The empirical stage of development data just does not fit the Marxist-Leninist theoretical framework. All of these countries were at fairly early stages of their industrialization at best. Some of them had hardly begun to industrialize at all when they turned (or seemed to turn) fascist or suffered from the actions of strong fascist parties.

Even though Germany was borderline mature industrially, it was not at all a mature fully modern entity at the social or political levels. Germany was much more like Japan than England in those respects.

2. Robert C. Tucker & others

There are several other much more satisfactory middling positions than Lenin's. The one I like second best was enunciated by the political scientist Robert C. Tucker.

Tucker identifies generic (small "f") fascism as one of the options open to a revolutionary, modernizing government when its leaders begin to organize a nationalistic mass movement. Such a regime, Tucker argues, can become either communist, fascist, or nationalist.

It starts out as nationalist, so as to mobilize its masses into adopting a favorable view of development. Then, if things turn nasty for it in some way, it can either turn communist or fascist, depending on the accidents of the situation. Finally, it can become a totalitarian version of either fascism or communism.

Once this regime's modernization is complete, if it earlier did not turn communist or fascist, it can easily evolve back into a normal type of fully modern government. That is, even a fairly noisy and obnoxious mass-mobilizing nationalist government can lapse back into ordinariness once it accomplishes its task of modernization. It is much tougher for it to lapse back into normality if it had earlier become a communist or fascist government, particularly a totalist variant of these.

Tucker's explanation fits the empirical data loosely but reasonably well. The problem with it lies in its looseness. I suppose this is because Tucker is more an

empirical political scientist than a political philosopher. He does not look beyond the immediate causes of the political changes he chronicles.

The book that influenced me most when I first began thinking about this issue during the 1960s was one of the pioneering postwar books on the subject, Ernst Nolte's 1963 *Three Faces of Fascism*. Nolte was the first to define fascism in terms that transcended the accidents of any particular fascist experience.

Nolte noticed that fascists displayed a morbid fear of modernism (Nolte's label for what I call full modernity). Nolte already possessed the core of the approach I later got in more satisfactory general form from Eric Voegelin, and in more specific terms from Wolfgang Sauer.

Nolte's formulation fits Germany well enough, but it does not seem to lend itself as easily to topics in which I was interested—Japanese fascism, and display of superficial fascist symptoms by Nationalist China during the 1920s and 1930s.⁴

Nolte got into trouble in West Germany for arguing that Hitler was in some sense Germany's way of coping with modernity. He even argued that Hitler imposed on the Germans the first fully modern polity they had ever experienced. That sounds bad until you notice how unfavorable is Nolte's (and my) view of full modernity. For both of us, modernity is more part of the problem—the crisis of the second stage of high civilization—than its solution.

Gilbert Allardyce, and Stanley G. Payne, wrote separate articles during the mid-1980s trying to collect all of the proposed solutions to this problem. Allardyce's article⁵ is an attempt to see if a grand synthesis of all the main interpretations of fascism is possible.

Unfortunately, like Elizabeth A. R. Brown writing on the concept of feudalism, Allardyce ended up taking the counsel of despair. Brown concluded (somewhat erroneously) that the label "feudal" had no meaning except as "pertaining to

⁴ The Nationalists' Blue Shirts paramilitary paralleled Mussolini's Black Shirts and Hitler's Brown Shirts, though not as harmless as P. G. Wodehouse's fictional Short Pants Movement.

⁵ "What Fascism is Not: Thoughts on the Deflation of a Concept," *American Historical Review*, 84.2 (April 1979), 367-398. Allardyce was my classmate at the University of Iowa. Payne has since published a monograph, *A History of Fascism 1914-1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996) which defends use of the label fascist as a generic term.

fiefs." Allardyce despaired of coming up with any definition of fascism comprehensive enough to be interesting, but tightly enough stated as not to be trivial.

If a bright fellow like Allardyce despairs, this should be a warning that what follows is a risky enterprise (though that will not stop me from making the attempt to define fascism in the next section).

C. Wolfgang Sauer's Preconditions For Fascism

1. A "social disease" of full modernization

Allardyce did not take into account the work of the historian of Germany, Wolfgang Sauer, despite the fact that Sauer's key article on fascism appeared earlier (1967) in the same journal, the *American Historical Review*, in which Allardyce later wrote. Perhaps Sauer has been ignored because he taught at the academically somewhat unfashionable Temple University. (Naturally, since I work at the equally unfashionable WWU, that does not bother me.)

What follows is my somewhat massaged version of Sauer's theory. I have changed his jargon somewhat to fit him explicitly to the philosophical framework erected by Eric Voegelin. I also generalize his narrative just enough to ease its fit with Japan. You can look his article up to see if or how much I have distorted him.

Sauer makes fascism explicitly a kind of social disease of the period of transition from early to full modernity at all levels—the social and political, and not just the economic. He includes by implication the philosophical-religious levels as well. Aside from allowing me to make a feeble joke by calling fascism a social disease, this formulation allows Sauer to notice that as a society makes its transition to full modernity, one level of its life may lag or lead the others in development.

a. non-excluding revolution & lagging social sectors

These lags (I interpolate) can become longer if the society has gone through a non-excluding revolution to cross the threshold to full modernity. Indeed, even if a society starts out from an early modern base, if it then has a non-excluding

revolution, such lags would be inevitable. Such a society would subsequently run a greatly increased risk of catching fascism.

This is because a non-excluding revolution not only retains within the country people from the old ruling class, it allows many of them to retain ruling class status. New candidates for ruling class status continue to emulate the old rulers and their values. Hence there is a danger that the philosophical-religious and social levels will change much more slowly than both the industrial and political organization levels of life.

b. a foreign policy dilemma

The next precondition for fascism requires this sort of society to hit a crisis that turns into a dilemma. A dilemma is a crisis that you cannot solve. It is usually treated metaphorically as a kind of two-horned animal. No matter what you do, the dilemma is bound to gore you. If you grab one horn of the dilemma, the other horn gores you. If you then shrug, bind your wounds, and grab the other horn, the first one gores you. There is no way out. You might live or bluff your way through a normal crisis, but if that crisis is also a dilemma, you will be gored by it, perhaps fatally, no matter what you do.

How can such a crisis arise? I used to think that it was almost exclusively derived from foreign policy, because by definition a state cannot control all of the factors impinging on its foreign policy: There is always the "other" foreign party or parties—those with whom the state has diplomatic relations. A state may be able to finesse or bully its way through a domestic crisis, particularly if it is strong enough to control all the important actors, but it is much less likely to control every relevant actor abroad. Real dilemmas, therefore, tend to involve foreign policy.

That explanation fits the case almost all of the time in practice. But if you brood long enough about why foreign policy dilemmas arise in the first place, you realize they may be linked to something more fundamental.

When a society is making or getting ready to make a transition from one stage of civilization to another by going through a crisis of civilization, it also encounters that most fundamental form of alienation—the alienation of man from Heaven. That kind of alienation has been lurking in mankind's background ever since the appearance of civilization itself. The an-

guish associated with facing alienation may goad a society to get itself into the impossible situations that constitute dilemmas.

It may just be that a foreign policy dilemma is the easiest kind of dilemma to get into when a civilization starts to lose touch with its old Heaven.

For example, 20th century Germany's dilemma may have revolved not just around the very existence of a united Germany, but the very nature of the fully modern nation-state. The narrow foreign policy dilemma Germany encountered was, however, sharp enough to cause great mischief.

The European nations found it impossible between 1870 and 1945 to maintain a stable balance of power. This was because the large, united German state sitting in the middle between Western and Eastern Europe was too big and was becoming too rich for all the rest of Europe together to be capable of balancing it off.

And yet Germany remained too small and not quite wealthy enough to be able to swallow up enough territory to create a genuinely German universal state in Europe. It was only just big enough to get into or cause trouble no matter what it or its neighbors attempted to do to avoid trouble.

Between 1945 and 1990 a stable balance of power in Europe was finally restored, but it seems to have required splitting Germany apart. This was not a nice situation, but it was a stable one. People worry whether a reunited Germany since 1990 can retain that stability. (I think it can, once a post-Communist Russia solves its many problems and can balance off a united Germany's power. In any event, Germany has likely outgrown any renewal of a fascist process.)

It is perhaps no coincidence that Germany, which suffered from the most impossible of dilemmas, also went the furthest in the direction of fascism. Fortunately, once Germany's full modernity stabilized at *all* levels during the postwar generation, it no longer needed to stay disunited to stave off fascism. It had outgrown the stage when that particular social disease was a danger.

2. Losers and their fellow travelers

This last precondition for a fascist process, the dilemma, becomes the en-

gine, the source of the diabolical energy, that drives some people mad enough within a potentially fascist polity to begin a fascist process. So long as the dilemma remains actively perceived as unsolvable, ever larger numbers of ever more crucially placed sorts of people become a little insane.

America's "longshoreman philosopher," Eric Hoffer, in his books of socio-political aphorisms, *The True Believer* and *The Passionate State of Mind*, called such men "losers." "Losers" are people who have lost their status, or failed to gain the social status that they believe they are entitled to, and consequently have suffered a grievous loss of morale.

It is important to note that Hoffer-style losers are distinguished from merely unsuccessful people (the category into which most of us, myself included, best fit) because they blame such losses on the crisis of their times and not on their own inadequacies or bad luck, even if we can now judge that the latter was in fact the cause of their loss of status. Many merely unsuccessful people really fail because of the times rather than themselves, but they nevertheless blame themselves. They are not losers in the sense we are here interested in identifying.

These status losses start among people at or beyond the fringes of the boundaries of the ruling classes. Because people further in toward the center of power also fear becoming losers, they may become "fellow travelers" of these actual losers.

The losers become the core of a fascist movement in such a society if they blame their loserhood on the shifts toward full modernity rather than on the persistence of the limitations of the early modern starting point of these shifts or their own bad luck.

The longer the dilemma goes on, the more deep the crisis that it engenders, the more pressures it brings upon the ruling class and its adjuncts, and the further from the fringes toward the core does loserdom and potential loserdom (fellow traveler status) penetrate.

These fascist losers display all or most of the following rather unendearing traits:

First, they idealize some past stage of their own particular civilization's development, even to the point of making such a past up out of whole cloth. Even if those archaic glories never quite existed, the fascists nevertheless urgently desire to create them and insist on calling this

creation a restoration.

Second, they want to mobilize a mass of the people in order to complete such a restoration. Despite their archaic ultimate loyalties, this makes them fully modern as politicians. The adoption of mass mobilization techniques is one of the key criteria separating early modern from fully modern politics. The fascists, like other modern politicians, will often settle for mobilizing merely a mass of their fellow elite or would-be elite so long as they can still pretend to be mobilizing all of the masses.

Third, after mobilizing this mass or pseudo-mass, they want to use it to inflict unspeakable violence on their enemies. They speak about this unspeakable violence in excruciatingly loving detail because these enemies are taken to be the enemies of the old civilization that the losers idealize. Hence under no circumstances are they to be given any quarter. Perhaps verbal violence also represents a form of catharsis for people whose ability to act in other ways has been atrophied by their loss of status.

Fourth, somewhat paradoxically, the fascists want to go "back to the future" in some weird but real sense. They want to carry the industrial revolution back with them to their idealized or fictionalized restored past, if only in order to have enough and big enough guns to do unspeakably violent things to the enemies blocking the way back to the past's restoration.

These are not very logical people. Nor are they very nice guys. Hence non-loser ruling class types tend to snub them. This only exacerbates the losers' sense of loserhood and (so long as the dilemma continues to not be resolved) impels them to redouble their efforts.

3. A past vs. a future utopia

The difference between fascists and communists turns out to be surprisingly easy to pin down and this keeps Sauer's explanation from slipping into the ranks of unlimited explanations. Communists and fascists are indeed very similar. Both belong to the left, because both are heavily interventionist. But there is at least a formal difference between them.

The fascists utopianize a fictive past set just before or in the earliest stages of civilization. The communists utopianize a fictive future—the final stage of human history, when Pure Communism will at

last be achieved. But this difference, though significant, is more formal than substantive.

The future pure communism will be much like primitive communism, the original state of mankind before Slave Society introduced inequality and hence evil into human life. The communists idealize a past even more remote in time than the one idealized by most fascists. The main difference between Pure Communism and Primitive Communism is that the former will somehow add a full industrial revolution to the latter.

That makes Pure Communism look surprisingly like the fictionalized past of the fascists. The fascists will also recreate the primitive past some time in the future, and will also do so with full industrial technology.

Pure Communism differs from the fascist utopia, at least as Marx and Engels worked Pure Communism out, because it will be more homogeneous across varying societies. French and Russian and American and even Chinese or Hindu Pure Communism will all be very similar. By contrast, the fascisms produced for different societies would glorify quite different specific past histories.

This rough similarity between the fascist and communist utopias may be why Hitler could say Marx was not a bad fellow, except for having been a Jew. This also explains why so many Nazis could become Communists and vice versa (the radish communists and beefsteak fascists noticed by the unlimited explanations of fascism). Marx himself may have had to remain on the Nazi enemies list because of his Jewish ancestors, but his ideas were not so terribly far off the mark from a fascist perspective. So German Communists could turn Nazi in the 1930s, and East German Nazis could turn Communist after 1945. In the words of the sage Yogi Berra, it was *deja vue* all over again.

A second, historical, difference also helps us to distinguish between fascism and communism.

If the crisis-dilemma hits very early in a society undergoing full modernization process via an excluding revolution, particularly if it has had no preceding early modern stage to serve as the basis for full modernity, the crisis is likely to engender communism if it encounters a dilemma.

If the crisis hits later on in the full modernization process, and if an early modern base existed and the changes

moving the culture toward full modernization were tripped off by a non-excluding revolution, the result of the crisis is much more likely to be fascism.

The empirical evidence confirms this generalization, but it is also theoretically plausible. Perhaps a country with enough of a past to have evolved an early modern civilization will also possess a more remote past attractive enough to be utopianized for a fascist process. Conversely, a country not yet developed enough to have reached early modernity, is not likely to have a remote past attractive enough to be useful for that purpose.

You may object that both Russia and China seem to contradict this generalization, since they had highly interesting remote pasts, had already turned early modern, but did not turn fascist. True enough, but during this century both were still at fairly early stages of full modernization at the economic and political levels, and did not undergo non-excluding revolutions. Instead, they both had excluding revolutions, and whatever other mischief 20th century excluding revolutions may cause, they appear to inoculate a country against fascism.

D. Sauer's Stages of the "Fascist Process"

I will next set out the historical stages of a fascist process in Sauerian terms so that in the next sections we can see if the candidate Japanese fascism both fit the preconditions and went through all or most of such a fascist process's stages.

Fascism, like feudalism, but unlike becoming pregnant, is a process, rather than a one-time sharp change in state. You can get a little bit fascist, just as you can (as Korea did) go only part way into a feudal process. Similarly, you can enter into the first stages of a fascist process without later "going all the way."

1. Beginnings

During the first set of stages after the non-excluding revolution and the creation of the earliest losers, the dilemma appears and creates increasing numbers of ever more anxious losers and fellow travelers of loserdom. These bring pressure on each other by way of the new mass media that even the beginnings of full modernization makes possible.

The mass media include centrally controlled public schools extending up to the tertiary level. Secondary and tertiary schools assemble ever larger bunches of robust but impressionable students who can be mobilized to impersonate a mass of everyone else, and (once mobilized) hold riots against the government.

Losers become aware of each other through such mobilization exercises. They also form associations and clubs that they and their opponents can put fascist labels upon. This makes it easier for fellow travelers to notice what is going on and then begin to cluster around the pseudo-mass mobilizers.

If the dilemma keeps going, the increasingly well-organized loser/fascists can pressure the government to grasp the horn of the dilemma that they favor, at least tentatively. Since that does not resolve the dilemma, they can argue that the government did not grasp the horn they favor firmly enough.

2. Popular front governments

If they are successful, they form themselves or force the government to form what could be called a fascist popular front government. In its earliest incarnations, this sort of government may not even have any fascists or even fellow travelers in it. But it nevertheless carries out parts of a fascist program, turning some of its own personnel into fellow travelers in the process.

Formation of the first of these popular fronts, even if it does not yet form a government, can be used by us to mark the end of the beginning phase of the fascist process.

The second phase is dominated by one or by a series of these fascist popular front governments. Early on, participants in such a government must decide whether to bring into their ranks fascists or their fellow travelers. But this may not be important. If such a government lasts long enough, it creates fellow travelers from among the conformist meritocrats already serving in its administration.

Once the non-fellow travelers running the government follow the fascist line long enough, they turn themselves into fellow travelers and find it easier to co-opt already existing fellow travelers from outside government. The latter may encourage bringing full-fledged fascists into the governing coalition, or perhaps they

turn into full fascists themselves under the stress of maintaining the popular front.

Inevitably, however, there are clashes within the government between fellow travelers and those who have not yet become fellow travelers.

At this point, two possibilities exist. If the dilemma eases off and proves capable after all of being coped with, the non-fellow travelers may win out over the full losers. These popular front governments turn out to after all have bought time until the crisis proves resolvable. That is the source of the hope that animates some of the fellow travelers.

Nevertheless, unless the dilemma is somehow defused, the state and its society ooze ever deeper into the fascist process. If that continues long enough, the fellow travelers will sooner or later become dominant.

3. End of the process

Let us suppose that the dilemma continues to exist, and the resulting pressures result in bringing overt fascists into government. Then the process accelerates. The continuing dilemma provides the occasions to justify going faster in legislating the fascist agenda.

It may be that at the end of this phase, having taken the fascist fork of the road, the result is a government dominated by the fascists. Soon, the fellow travelers have either become fascists themselves or been pushed aside as faint hearts or muggumps.⁶ Now the final phases of the fascist process can begin.

Within the fascist-dominated government are both military and civilian fascists. If the military fascists win out in their factional quarrels with the civilians, the process can continue to poop along at a relatively slow speed, continuing to give time for the dilemma to defuse itself. If it does not, and if the dilemma involves foreign policy, war results anyway, even though military fascists are usually less ambitious than civilian ones.

A military-dominated fascism is more limited because military men are inherently disciplined. Much of the imagination that would lead to the worst forms of fascist mischief is trained out of them. As a consequence, if you are going to suffer

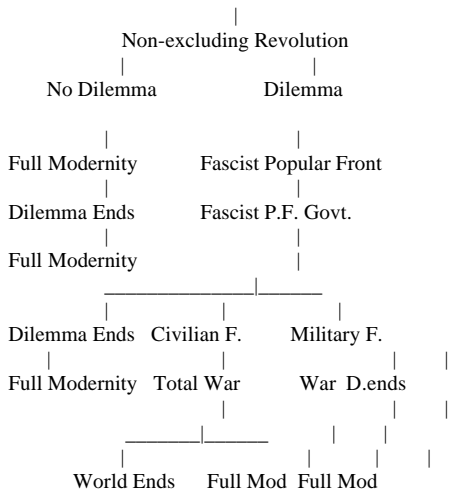
⁶ A 19th century American political term defined by a contemporary wit as a fellow with his mug on one side of the fence and his "wump" on the other.

from fascism, you are somewhat better off getting zapped by military than by civilian fascists. Japanese military-dominated fascism was less horrid than Germany's civilian version, but Japan nevertheless drifted into war.

If the vicissitudes of the dilemma-driven factional quarrels yield victory to civilian fascists, as happened in Nazi Germany, what then? Quite literally, *anything* becomes thinkable. There was no discipline, no abiding social habits left among the fully evolved German civilian fascists that might have limited the amount of mischief that they were ready to support their leaders in making. There is no philosopher whose ideas cannot be carried to their logical (and hence absurd and likely horrific) conclusion by such men.

The capacity for total warfare available to the 20th century state allows even mild-mannered parliamentary democracies to commit previously impossible and even inconceivable horrors during war. Literally anything can happen in a war which a civilian-dominated fascism begins. As the world saw in the case of Nazi Germany, that is just what did happen. (There seem to have been few limits placed even on non-fascist combatants in the wars of this century.)

THE ROAD TO FASCISM DECISION TREE



(Note that this decision tree optimistically yields only one chance in five of the world ending!)

So at this stage of the game, if a society has gone all the way to branch off onto the civilian fascist route, it has the potential to quite literally bring the world to an end once science and technology have made big enough bangs possible and placed the instruments for making them into the hands of these civilian fascists

dedicated to violence for its own sake.

Since the possible permutations at each stage are so complicated to describe verbally, it may clarify matters to employ here the kind of “decision tree” that the logicians have taught computer scientists and, through computer science, the businessmen and bureaucrats faced with complicated sequences of decisions to make:

E. Japan Satisfies Sauer's Preconditions For A Fascist Process

1. Consequences of a non-excluding revolution

a. redefining & culling the samurai

I have already made the case for characterizing the Meiji Restoration as a classic instance of a non-excluding revolution, indeed as one of the best instances of one during the 19th century. A non-excluding revolution, you will recall, retains the old ruling class, but redefines it and turns it into at least part of the new ruling class created by the revolution. New groups also get into the ruling class.

This may at first blush seem a more pluralistic and hence wholesome kind of revolution. However, because of the incompatibility of the ideas that legitimize each of these ruling elements, each can delegitimize the others. There is such a thing as too much diversity!

In the course of the Meiji and Taisho reigns up through the mid 1920s, the old, nominally military aristocracy was redefined. Its upper level daimyo and court aristocrats were given new Europeanized aristocratic titles which let them carry over their prestige intact into the new era. They retained or were granted enough property to maintain themselves as new fangled aristocrats.

At lower levels, some of the samurai were redefined as either civilian or military meritocrats. The rest were told to give up their two swords and advised to get modern haircuts. They could still consider themselves genteel, but were no longer in the ruling class. Naturally these men took such treatment hard. They were the first to think of themselves as Hofferian “losers.”

Some samurai had, of course, already fallen out of the bottom of the ruling class during Tokugawa times. These were the

warriors who had not made it onto the salary rolls when the 16th and 17th century sword laws separated those who would remain samurai from those who would not.

Some of these ex-samurai retained direct ownership of land. Others took up innocuous careers, often as village schoolmasters. A very small number of them, called *ronin*, retained the two swords illegally, and wandered from one place to another, often going to work for and becoming gangsters.

These last provided the rough historical model for Japanese fiction's equivalent of the equally mythical Wild West gunfighter. These were the virtuous but hard *ronin* supposedly strutting through the fringes of early industrial Tokugawa Japan, righting wrongs for fun and profit.

Some of those leading the *ronin* life during the 1850s came to be called *shishi*—righteous knights—men prepared to go out and cut down bumptious Europeans and any damnable Tokugawa politician who dared to sign a treaty with the Europeans. Taming these fellows was one of the first policing tasks of the new Meiji rulers. Some were hung or shot. Others were recruited for the new army. Most were reduced to mere gangster status after 1876, when even legitimate samurai lost the right to wear the two swords.

In each new generation after 1868, however, more people were excluded from the ruling class. Those who failed to make the first cut in the 1870s were followed by those who failed to make the cut during the drastic and ongoing transformations of state and society during the '80s and '90s. This involved turning the next generation of samurai into a hybrid modern civilian and military meritocracy.

b. institutionalizing meritocratic culling

Eventually, this culling of the ruling class was institutionalized. Each new year provided a new class of candidates for the civil service exams and entrance exams for the new military academies. These exams were formally instituted by the Meiji authorities by the end of the '80s.

The ranks of the military meritocracy disproportionately included graduates of the Tokyo Imperial Military Academy. The civilian meritocracy came disproportionately from the Germanized Tokyo Imperial University. A disproportionate number of men on the fast track to demonstrating their fit to these new templates

of merit were from Satsuma and Choshu.

Inevitably, many candidates were unable to fit the new templates of merit. Some of these failures could still be informally recruited into what amounted to the cadet branch of the ruling class—particularly those with a more or less genteel aura about them.

Such men had either tumbled down from the ruling class or had clambered up far enough to at least imitate the shabby genteel manner of the pre-Meiji ex-samurai. They were unable to clamber a bit higher so as to actually enter either the military or civilian branches of the new meritocracy. As among desworded Tokugawa samurai, most still became schoolteachers. A highly visible minority became modern journalists.

Some people did make it into the new meritocracy from below. That, after all, is one of the goals of establishing a formalized set of templates of merit by way of a state-controlled educational system. The aim is to recruit a few good non-ruling class men for the ruling class each year.

But even successful new meritocrats could not guarantee such status for their own sons, who would in each generation have no better than a 50-50 chance to fit themselves to whatever templates of merit were currently in use.⁷

Fortunately for the stability of Japan's ruling class during this difficult period of transition, these new meritocrats still essentially functioned within a Neo-Confucian template of merit, particularly at the upper and middle ranges of the civilian bureaucracy. The requirement for mastery of the new Western techniques was largely confined to the military and lower ranks of the civilian new meritocracy.

c. plutocrats' tainted legitimacy

But though Neo-Confucianism could legitimize even new meritocrats, it could not legitimize the plutocrats who were bankrolling and sometimes running the new political parties. The man of wealth, as such, had never had any role to play within the Confucian framework (no more so than within the Platonic framework in ancient Greece). The parties and the plutocracy bankrolling them finally had a

constitutional niche to fill under the 1889 Constitution, but no way to stably legitimize themselves.

Buddhism had once provided legitimization for the plutocrats thrown up by the 16th century independent leagues of cities, but it had lost that power when it was "tamed" by Oda Nobunaga in the late 16th century and by his Tokugawa successors during the 17th century. And so in the late 19th and 20th centuries Buddhism could not play the kind of role that Calvinist Protestant Christianity is sometimes said to have played in legitimizing business activity in 17th through 19th century northwestern Europe.

The new plutocrats did not appear as legitimate from a Neo-Shintoist point of view either. All that Neo-Shintoism could do, mainly because of the privileged position within the public school curriculum granted it by the Imperial Rescript on Education, was to define the Emperor's link to Heaven and thereby provide a common set of values for the whole of society, including the ruling class. It could not, however, legitimize the new plutocratic segment of the ruling class as such.

d. mutual delegitimization

Under the 1889 Constitution, the legitimate classes—Neo-Confucian civilian meritocrats, Neo-Shintoist military meritocrats—and the not-quite legitimate plutocrat class had all nevertheless to collaborate to run the new government. Neo-Confucian bureaucrats needed to control the plutocrat-linked parliament. The parliamentarians needed bureaucratic allies to exert any real power over the executive branch. Plutocrats needed (or thought they needed) access to political favors and the moral legitimacy of the meritocrats.

Military meritocrats may have seemed the most powerful of all the factions. Aside from their control over the major instruments of coercion, they could use their Neo-Shintoist connection with the Emperor as his modern "teeth and claws" to justify exerting a veto over the other components of the ruling class, a veto that became in all but name a part of the constitutional order, since no cabinet could stay in power if the military men serving as army and navy ministers resigned.

But to accomplish anything positive, the military needed the collaboration of its civilian rivals. The parliament could, for example exert a kind of veto of its own. Under the 1889 Constitution, if it failed to

pass a current year's budget, the previous year's budget was carried over. But that would not give the military the yearly increase it needed to meet Japan's increasing imperial ambitions.

There was, therefore, no alternative to collaboration among the several components of the ruling class. But this collaboration inevitably tainted military and civilian meritocrats and the aristocrats with the plutocracy's aura of illegitimacy, and did so without allowing much Neo-Confucian or Neo-Shintoist legitimacy to rub off onto the plutocracy.

Potentially, after 1890, the whole ruling class was rendered vulnerable. If they did not quite become "losers," they remained in grave danger of being reduced to the status of "fellow travelers" of the losers should some sort of dilemma challenge the new state they ran.

2. An economic non-dilemma

And yet, despite the vulnerability of the plutocratic wing of the ruling class, the economy was not the source of the dilemma that provided the energy for the fascist process.

During the run toward takeoff, the urban industrial sector was, after all, not big enough to cause much trouble in its own right. As during late Tokugawa, agricultural riots were the biggest form of economic trouble during early and mid Meiji times, but such riots could easily be isolated thanks to their rural location. (After all, even now, can you imagine seething unrest in Dogpatch tripping off a revolution in the District of Columbia?)

During the ensuing run from full industrial takeoff to maturation that began during the first decade of this century, the men of the market could finesse just about all of the troubles they encountered or caused. The strikes caused by increasing strength of labor unions in 1919 were no insoluble problem. Such strikes could be broken with only a modest degree of help from the state. The situation was not nice, but it was also not a dilemma.

Worries about the most highly skilled workers becoming alienated from their employers were resolvable too. The minority of skilled men could be co-opted by offers of lifetime employment. Such offers began to be made in significant numbers just after World War I.

At less critical skill levels, subcontractors and their laborers caused no

⁷ That, by the way, is a good statistical test for distinguishing groups of aristocrats from groups of either meritocrats or plutocrats. Aristocrats' sons have a three out of four or better chance to get ruling class jobs in each successive generation than do meritocrat or plutocrat sons.

problem either. They were not united, and the transitional sector they worked in was always vulnerable to the large firms who subcontracted much of their work to family-run small workshops. Under this modern version of the “putting out” process, because of their large numbers and interchangability, the family workshops’ prices and wages had to remain flexible downward whenever any downturn in the business cycle rendered that necessary.

Even political problems with the ever more important China market could also be finessed. As Chinese industrialization progressed during the first decades of this century, all that was necessary was to change the product mix within the Japanese economy in a complementary fashion. Since Japan’s economy was also progressing, that was relatively easy to do.

Japan could shift to goods that were complementary to rather than competitive with the crude industrial products China was turning out in increasing quantity. Japanese manufacturers could and did also invest in Chinese branch plants producing the cruder stuff.

If some contemporary academic Marxist now calls that practice “indirect imperialism,” or imperialist-induced “dependency,” we can give the fellow a Bronx cheer, and go ahead and enjoy ourselves watching the Japanese “forcing” investment capital down the throats of the Chinese during the ‘20s, and otherwise engaging in capitalist acts with ever larger numbers of consenting Chinese adults.

In principle, what the Japanese did in China during the teens and ‘20s (when China proper was mostly not a colony), they could also have done with Korea, Manchuria and Taiwan if these places had never become Japanese colonies.

But for Japan’s creation of its empire, the economic problems associated with Japan’s industrialization would not have contributed even indirectly to creating the dilemma that led toward fascism. Absent the empire, more investment would likely have remained within Japan, thereby speeding its transition to a mature industrial economy.

3. The real dilemma: empire

The real dilemma manifested itself not at the economic but at the political and military levels. The creation of the empire by the Satcho Clique and the seeming necessity on the part of their successors to

maintain that empire, appeared to create a necessity to expand what Japan already had no matter how much trouble that caused for both imperializer and imperializee. In other words, one damned thing led to another. (See chapter 20 for details.)

This inexorable escalation led Japan from war with China in 1894 to war with Russia in 1904, then to swallowing Korea, then to taking over a sphere of influence in Manchuria to buffer Korea, and then to heroic attempts to buffer that buffer by expanding that sphere from Manchuria into China proper with the takeover of Germany’s possessions in China and the Twenty-one Demands made of China in 1915. There followed the unfortunately only temporary recession back from some of these demands during the short-lived era of good times and good feelings after 1919.

Then, as Chinese nationalism spread north to challenge Japan’s power in Manchuria during the late ‘20s, the Japanese persuaded themselves they had to convert the Manchurian sphere of influence into a puppet state separate from China, and then to start expanding the Japanese sphere of influence deeply into north China so as to protect that Manchurian puppet state.

That in turn soon seemed to require expanding up the Yangzi Valley into east and central China, then expansion into Indo-China to outflank South China. Since that threatened the Americans’ Philippine colony, inexorable drift into total war with both the Chinese and the Americans followed.

This seemingly unstoppable drift of events—of “one d— thing leading to another”—drove the dilemma on the horns of which Japan’s foreign policy and then the whole Japanese nation became impaled as Japan in reaction drifted in the direction of a fascist process at home.

The empire seemed innocent enough at first (or at least it seemed no worse than the only slightly older new imperialism era empires of the Western powers). The hiatus during the 1920s made it seem that Japan could keep what it already had without needing either to expand or contract. Nevertheless, the dilemma was potentially there all along.

We now know from seeing how nicely things turned out after 1945, that Japan did not really need an empire. Up until late 1945, however, Japan had every rea-

son to believe that it did need one.

Only the big loser of World War I, the Germans, had given up their empire. But that was involuntary, and the Germans did not seem to be doing very well in the ‘20s without an empire. The Americans began to *talk* of giving up their Philippine Empire soon after the second Mrs. Wilson wheeled Woodrow out of the White House in 1921. But though Presidents Harding, Coolidge and Hoover made vague promises to pull out, it was not until 1934 that Franklin Roosevelt ended the American protectorate over Cuba and 1936 when he promised to give the Philippines their independence, but only a decade later, in 1946.

As the last major power but one to acquire an empire, Japan had to settle for the most developed and least digestible set of colonies and spheres of influence. It was never easy to sit upon the heads of the Koreans. It was never possible to sit upon the collective pates of the Chinese with any comfort at all.

Hence Japan was always faced with pressures for it to become the first undefeated empire to go out of the colonization business, but it had no current model to reassure it that an empire could be abandoned without harm to the imperialist.

It was, therefore, reasonable for Japan to not touch the decolonization horn of the dilemma, and for it to treat retention of empire as a necessity. By refusing to give up empire, it never found out that the other horn was made of papier maché. It had to create and then grasp the other all too sharp horn of the dilemma—the horn of imperial escalation.

There may have been something more fundamental that lay behind this foreign policy aspect of the dilemma. The Japanese felt profoundly insecure in their new identity of Western-style great power. Giving up empire may have been even harder because empire ratified that hard-won but insecure new identity.

F. The Japanese Fascists & Their Fellow Travelers

1. The losers and the engine of loserdom

The Japanese fascists recruited among the losers—those people from the lower

ranks of the old aristocracy who did not make the cut from the ruling class during one generation or another after 1868 and so failed to gain entry into one or another of the meritocracies. They also drew new blood from among all of those upwardly mobile people who could not climb the ladder of merit high enough and fast enough to make it into the ruling class. Both of these groups of potential and actual losers tended to rest at the level of shabby gentility between the ruling class and the ruled classes that the desworded samurai had occupied during Tokugawa and early Meiji times.

All of these people, whether downwardly mobile or insufficiently upward mobile, became either losers or potential losers once they began to blame modernity rather than themselves or the incompleteness of their modernization for their loserhood.

It was inevitable that such losers exist. Given the limits on taxation resources at any stage of development, there would always be fewer jobs in the meritocracy than the number of somewhat qualified potential meritocrats. Templates of merit would have to be used to select that limited number who could be hired from the larger pool of candidate meritocrats.

Given the perverse economic effects of public (as opposed to private) schooling, there was bound to be a larger supply of potential meritocrats than this limited demand could absorb. The reason for having public schools was ostensibly to supplement the limited educational opportunities provided by the private schools.

The private schools of Tokugawa Japan only produced around 50% male literacy. Why so few? Tokugawa period private schools, like other early modern schools in China and Europe, operated within an early industrial market. People bought their schooling in the marketplace, just as they bought various other services, and they only bought as much schooling as they deemed necessary. It was mostly urban people and those nearby rural people who regularly traded with the towns who needed to be literate and numerate. These only amounted to about half the males.

As urbanization and early industrialization intensified into full industrialization, presumably more people would have bought schooling for their children. But the market mechanism would have pre-

vented a chronic oversupply of educated (or worse, half educated) people from piling up, unhired.

When the Meiji state imposed public schools on the Japanese from the 1870s on, an oversupply of educated and half-educated people inevitably resulted. There were not only half-educated journalists and school teachers and would-be school-teachers—the two main components of the shabby genteel intelligentsia—there were even half-educated gangsters! Kodama Yoshio, who became almost the archetype of the civilian fascist, provides a perfect example of the latter.

2. Civilian fascists and fellow travelers

a. Kodama Yoshio

Kodama Yoshio had an extraordinary career. He started off life early in the century as an orphan living amongst the lowest of the lower classes. He was so poorly off that he was brought up in a family of Korean gangsters. (Koreans played a role in 20th century Japan analogous and even inferior to the Sicilians in turn of the century America, or the Algerians in late 20th century France.)

Naturally, he too grew up a gangster. He did get a public school primary education. From it and from the ethos of his gangster peer group, he came to share the Neo-Shintoist values of the general public. Like the early Tokugawa conspirator Yui Shosetsu, he even believed his ancestors had once been samurai.

Because he was a gangster with patriotic ambitions, by the late '20s Kodama became a courier between the Manchurian army, the Japanese secret service in Shanghai, and the central secret service and high military bureaucrats in Tokyo. He continued to play this role through the mid '40s. This quintessential loser at last rose to success and respectability as a fascist.

After this prewar and wartime career as a bag man for the fascists and their fellow travelers, during the postwar era Kodama became a bag man for the more corrupt plutocratic elements of the ruling conservative political factions within the Liberal Democratic Party. In part this was because he needed the money. In part this was because some of his patrons sympathized with the long-since purged genuine fascists.

Kodama eventually gained notoriety as the bagman for Prime Minister Tanaka in the Lockheed scandal of the early 1970s. Kodama supposedly carried an enormous sum in cash between Lockheed's representatives and the prime minister to pay for the latter's approval of a contract for Lockheed to provide a number of antisubmarine airplanes for the Japanese Self Defense Force. Though indicted, he fell ill and died in the mid 1970s without being convicted. So ended one of the classic "gutter fascist" careers in modern Japan.

Of course there were other more genteel civilian fascists at rather higher levels. Like Kodama, they all shared belief in the utopia of Neo-Shintoism which they had absorbed in the schools, thanks to the Imperial Rescript on Education. They believed, or said they believed, in Japan's mythic past and in the sacred god-like nature of the emperors. The emperor was now, however, to be served loyally not just by the new and old elites, but more democratically by the masses of the Japanese—even by people like Yoshio Kodama, risen up from the fetid slums of industrializing Japan.

This mass of imperial servants would arm themselves with the best weapons the industrial revolution could produce. At first, though, they might have to use these modern weapons to assassinate wicked plutocratic politicians who failed to advance the sacred cause of Japan.

More often such weapons would have to be applied to the recalcitrant lesser breeds outside the law—those colonial subjects of the new Japanese empire who rejected Japanese offers to lift them up to higher (and characteristically Japanese) levels of civilization. The Koreans and Chinese would, however, eventually learn obedience and become enlightened.

b. Kita Ikki & Okawa Shumei

During the '20s and the first part of the '30s, the journalist and writer Kita Ikki was writing journalism to this effect. In a genteel way he was justifying the acts being carried out by people like Kodama Yoshio's gangster assassin friends.

Kita's most recent American biographer, George M. Wilson, has characterized him as merely a "populist nationalist." But even if one does not accept this as a pretty fair short definition of fascism, at the very least Kita was part of the cheering section for something resemb-

ling fascism, and the government thought enough of his connection with the junior military officers who carried out an abortive coup in 1936 to hang him along with them.

People who could be more plausibly characterized as fellow travelers of fascism came from the ranks of those more successful than Kita within the ranks of the teaching, journalism and bureaucratic and political professions.

Scholars like Okawa Shumei look more like fellow travelers than Kita did, though Okawa was more faithful to the cause than some who paid with their lives for their allegiance to generic Japanese fascism. During the '30s, the Japanese government never found it necessary to execute or imprison or even give official dirty looks to Okawa. After 1945, the American Occupiers attempted to try him as a war criminal, and were only prevented from doing so when the psychiatrists declared Okawa clinically insane.

Men like Okawa, like most of the non-fellow travelers running the government, shared the Neo-Shintoist values of the fascists, including at least a vague attachment to the armed, archaized utopia the fascists had conjured up.

Though not all who nominally venerated the fascist tract *Kokutai no hongii* ("The Essence of National Polity"), which embodied Japanese fascism's exaggerated cult of the state, were even serious fellow travelers of fascism, Okawa Shumei, who helped write it, seems to have been a sincere (and not yet certifiably insane) full-blown fascist.

As the foreign policy dilemma reheated after the late '20s, even these more successful men had to keep looking over their shoulders to make sure the dilemma did not threaten their own jobs, should Japan lose its empire.

c. Matsuoka Yosuke & Prince Konoye

Foreign Minister (1940-41) Matsuoka Yosuke, though a seemingly American-style politician educated as a lawyer at the University of Oregon, built his career as an official in the colonial government of Manchuria and took a strong pro-German and pro-Italian stance when he took office as foreign minister. During the '30s he served as President of the South Manchurian Railway Company. Ambassador Grew quotes him as saying "Fascism will develop in Japan through the people's will. It will come out of love for the Em-

peror."⁸ The Americans wanted to try him as a war criminal, but were foiled by his death, of natural causes, in 1946 before the Americans got fully under way with their trials of the big time war criminals (charged with making aggressive war, not with specific criminal acts.)



Foreign Minister Matsuoka and Ambassador Grew at Tokyo luncheon, December 12, 1940. (John H. Boyle, *Modern Japan: The American Nexus*, p. 207.)



Foreign Minister Matsuoka celebrates the Japanese-German-Italian treaty of alliance in October 1940. *Mainichi Shinbun, Fifty Years of Light and Dark* (1975)

Eventually even people from the old aristocracy, like Prince Konoye, became fascist fellow travelers. The Konoye were one of the five main branches of the Fujiwara clan. They could trace their ancestry back virtually to Amaterasu the Sun Goddess herself by way of their Nakatomi *uji* forbears. They had been playing major roles in politics long before the Taika Reform of AD 645.

As prime minister from 1937 to 1940 and again in 1941, Prince Konoye, despite his aristocratic background and serious philosophical interests, wound up running what amounted to a fascist popular front government. (He was a thoughtful disciple of the great Zen philosopher and sympathetic student of Christianity, Nishida Kitaro, who thought him more a victim of than a sympathizer of the fascists.⁹) Konoye committed suicide in 1945 before

the Americans could put him on trial as a war criminal.

3. Military fascists

Fascist ranks were swelled after World War I by men demobilized from the army, particularly junior officers and noncoms from the Manchurian garrison. Some of these men became ROTC instructors in the secondary schools, where they could influence and bully other teachers into at least fellow traveler status.

Not too far above these demobilized soldiers were the junior officers who managed to remain on active duty, but with their status insecure and their future uncertain. Particularly vulnerable were those in the Kwantung Army, nominally the railway police on the Japanese-owned railroads in Manchuria. These supposed "Pinkertons" were really Japan's army of occupation. Their job was to police and promote Japan's imperial sphere of influence in Manchuria. Many of them became at least fellow travelers of fascism. Some joined fascist secret societies in the '20s.

Once the crisis heated up again in the late '20s, many of these junior officers moved beyond fellow travelerdom and joined formally organized conspiratorial groups to realize the archaic Japanese utopia through empire.

The senior officers of the Kwantung Army tended to become fellow travelers of their own now fascist juniors, susceptible to manipulation from below by their subordinates. Eventually, even the prize students from the Tokyo Imperial Military Academy, who had grown up to become the officers of the General Staff—men like the Chief of Staff, General Tojo Hideo—became sucked into the ranks of the fellow travelers of fascism.

G. Japan's Fascist Process Stalls But Hits Disaster Anyway

1. 1927-1931

a. Zhang Zuolin turns his coat

By 1927 the liberal '20s were coming to an end. The foreign policy dilemma was heating up again. The Chinese Nationalist government (the Kuomintang or KMT) in 1926 mounted its Northern Ex-

⁸ Grew to Secretary of State, 606, July 21, 1940, 5 pm.

⁹ Cf. my colleague Yusa Michiko's paper "Nishida and Totalitarianism: A Philosopher's Resistance," in *Rude Awakenings*, ed. James W. Heisig & John C. Maraldo (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), 107-131.

pedition from Canton into the mid- and lower Yangzi Valley. After 1927 it began to extend its power further north into subzones B1, B2, A2 and A3 by making deals with the “warlord” regional potentates of those areas.

During 1927-28, the Kuomintang was in the process of making such a deal with a hitherto reliably corrupt puppet of Japan, the warlord of Manchuria, Zhang Zuolin. Zhang had been in Japan’s hip pocket ever since World War I. The Japanese had winked at his corruption so long as he helped them preserve their Manchurian sphere of influence. This sphere radiated out from the railroads to the Manchurian agricultural land controlled by the Japanese land development companies, and to the new urban industries established by Japanese capital.

Now, however, Zhang was behaving like what Tammany Hall in New York would have called a “dishonest politician.” Having been bought, he declined to stay bought. I will go into the details of the rise of the KMT in chapter 29. For now we can note that Zhang’s motives were a mixture of genuine idealism and corruption.

At the very least, Zhang sensed that he could no longer maintain the old, cozy relationship with Japan anyway. The new nationalism had caught the imaginations of the several dozen million Chinese migrants who had moved into Manchuria during the preceding half century. Zhang understood that he would not be able to stay in power at all if he did not appease their patriotic sentiments.

What were the Japanese to do about this? The logical and prudent thing (we now know) would have been to start backing out of Manchuria, and then (if and when necessary) to back out of Korea as well. If necessary, Japan should have been ready to give up all political-military power on the continent, and settle for growing rich through trade with these areas.

At the time, however, that course seemed both imprudent and unpatriotic. The loss of empire seemed more likely to create additional losers within those segments of the Japanese ruling class and its adjuncts who earned their keep running the empire. That trade and manufacture could provide much higher wages for most people, including many of these losers and potential losers, was literally inconceivable to anyone trying to live

through the worst years of the Great Depression, except for a few Austrian School economists.

b. an age of assassinations

The local Japanese secret service in Manchuria decided what it would have to do to head off Zhang Zuolin’s turn toward Chinese nationalism. In 1928, it put some dynamite under a bridge Zhang would have to cross on his way back to Manchuria, blew up his train and killed him outright.

That did not end Chinese nationalism, even in Manchuria. Still worse, the murder of Zhang Zuolin made it all but impossible for any Chinese nationalist to even consider making a deal with Japan, however rational it might be to do so.

The assassination also set a precedent for the appearance of a new generation of *shishi* in Japan. These fascistic losers were prepared to rise up against their fate by modeling themselves on the *shishi* (righteous knights) of the 1850s and 1860s—the fellows who killed Tokugawa officials who dared to make the kind of deals with foreigners and opposed restoring the emperor’s full sovereignty.

These latter day *shishi* launched a new wave of assassinations, not only of plutocrats but of several bureaucratically oriented prime ministers and cabinet ministers during the late ‘20s and early ‘30s.

c. fascistic secret societies

These assassinations were not, as their equivalents in Europe would have been, carried out in the name of some mass movement, but by individual *shishi*, usually belonging to one or another of a congeries of tiny secret societies. Some of these had links to the military. Others were barely (if at all) above the level of criminal gangs, except that they had a slightly more pseudo-feudal aura about them than was normal for the average Japanese criminal mob.

Literal translation of the names of such gangs makes them appear even kinkier than they actually were: the Blood Brotherhood, the Holy War Execution League, the Federation of Radical Patriotic Workers (notice the Marxist touch to that name, reminiscent of “National Socialists”), the Capital Rise Asia Academy.

One of the most important and respectable of these fascist clubs might more reasonably have its name translated as the “Amur Society,” rather than as

“Black Dragon Society,” as it is usually rendered. It was a club for officers of the Kwantung Army in Manchuria, and their alumni and fellow travelers in Japan.

The Amur River was the northern boundary between Manchuria and what had become Russia’s Eastern Siberian province. “Amur” (Chinese Heilong) is the Manchu word for “Black Dragon.” Hence this club can be made to seem even more ominous than it was by translating its name as “Black Dragon Society.” This makes it appear to have been as weird as the above gangsterish organizations.

Its members were actually mostly prize student junior military meritocrats serving in Manchuria. Given the results of its members’ machinations during the next stage, it may not be too much of a distortion after all to call it by the Fu Manchuish label, Black Dragon Society.

We have here a fascism comprising only a congeries of crazy sounding secret societies. No mass movement ever grew out of these organizations. Some scholars would say this alone disqualifies them for receiving the label fascist.

Why in Japan were there no big public organizations of men wearing black shirts or brown shirts like Hitler’s and Mussolini’s fascist party private armies? These beshirted thugs rampaged openly through the German and Italian societies, marching down the avenues in serried ranks, kicking their feet up above their hips like so many Rockettes in reverse drag, and terrorizing people everywhere.

Japan had only these anachronistic *shishi* hanging out in the lower class pubs and brothels of Japan’s urban slums, and plotting how to imitate the *shishi* of the 1850s, who in turn had imitated the Forty-seven Ronin of the early 18th century.

The latter had conspired to murder an Edo courtier whose machinations had forced their master to commit suicide. Losing their master turned them into ronin. After spending months hanging out in saloons and whorehouses to fool their target, the Forty-seven took their vengeance, killed the courtier and then peacefully surrendered to the authorities, who eventually allowed them to commit suicide rather than execute them. Most Deceivers, TV versions of these stirring events still draw large audiences in Japan. For those who still prefer “Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer” for Christmas viewing, this is one more indicator of how much Japanese culture still differs from

ours.

d. a passive mass movement

The respectable losers and their fellow-travelers shared the popular admiration for the Forty-seven Ronin. So a kind of mass movement did come out of this, but it was a passive mass movement: Masses of Japanese at least admired this behavior. It fit the Neo-Shintoist model for military aristocratic behavior that everyone had absorbed in public school.

The public viewed these gangsters and political murderers through historical spectacles that made them look like noble samurai of old. At least passively, many if not most, people accepted the righteousness of what these latter day *shishi* said they were doing.

This gave the Japanese fascists most of the advantages of a mass movement without the trouble and inconvenience to traffic of having to outfit mobs of people in uniformly colored shirts and march them constantly through the streets singing some Japanese equivalent of the Horst Wessel song. (Actually, the Japanese national anthem has a lovely tune, and, unlike the Star Spangled Banner, is very easy for a mob to sing in tune.)

On the other hand, fascist fellow-traveling political parties never got more than a small percentage of the vote during the several parliamentary elections of the early to mid-1930s. One or another of the plutocratic parties always dominated the vote. But then the Nazis in Germany were not overwhelmingly popular either.

2. 1931-1936

The foreign policy dilemma only got worse. By 1931 it became evident that the murder of Zhang Zuolin had not intimidated the Chinese. His son, Zhang Xue-liang, turned out to be a more sincere nationalist than the father. He also had the most filial pietistic of reasons to hate the Japanese.

The lower rank fascists within the Kwantung Army did not back down either. Having gotten themselves into a hole, they kept digging it deeper. They bullied their superiors into launching a preemptive coup in Manchuria. Apparently without consulting the civilian authorities in Tokyo, they hoked up a "Mukden Incident," took over the provincial governments of Manchuria from their Chinese administrators, and threw the

Chinese authorities out.

To fill the vacuum they had created, they set up something they called "Manchukuo" (literally, in Chinese, the Manchu State) as a puppet state, nominally under the last Manchu emperor of China.

This had several effects. First, thereafter no Chinese politician ever dared to even mention making a deal with the Japanese. The establishment of Manchukuo, especially under a Manchu monarch (though the Manchus' Qing Dynasty was overthrown in 1912 its last child emperor was now grown up and available for such work) was an unforgivable sin against Chinese nationalism. Anyone who wanted to rule as a Chinese nationalist thereafter had to be a sworn enemy of Japan.

Second, all of the wishy-washy do-gooders of the League of Nations, and even outside the League (including that early-day Rockefeller Republican, President Herbert Hoover), moved to isolate Japan from respectable world opinion for having done this dastardly deed. This was the equivalent of our now obsolete contemporary litmus test for liberals—coming out for sanctions against South Africa. Similar sanctions were also proposed against Japan in the early '30s.

Unfortunately, then (as now) nobody could come up with a sanction that actually had the intended effect. All the sanctions did was further isolate and endanger the Japanese plutocratic-meritocratic liberals, the men who had run a genuinely liberal Japan during the '20s. Now these people were being forced to the wall from abroad as well as at home. Some were even assassinated by *shishi*, as was Prime Minister Inukai, shot by one of these new *shishi* in May of 1932.

The plutocratic-meritocratic political parties became demoralized. They "got no respect" from either the foreign liberal parties or more nativist Japanese politicians. The veto over cabinet formation exercised by the upper military meritocracy was perceived by them as ever more onerous. As a consequence, some of the party leaders defected, reasoning they might just as well become live fellow travelers of the fascists rather than dead liberals.

The old respectable and principled party men in Japanese politics were appalled at these defections. The principled party men were led by Prince Saionji, the "last of the Genro." The Genro was an advisory committee of "elders" or sur-

living men of 1868. Actually, Saionji belonged to the next generation, though he started public life as Prince Ito's private secretary. Saionji's group ended party government to raise their own influence and halt this drift toward fellow traveling with fascism. This sounds perverse, but that is what they intended. Of course to liberal foreigners they seemed to be fellow traveling with the fascists themselves.



Prince Saionji. (*Encyclopedia of World Biography*.)

The old leaders of 1868 were long since dead by the early '30s. Even the last of the half-generation younger men of 1868 had disappeared by the end of World War I. As these founding fathers died or entered at least partial retirement they had formed the Genro, or council of elders.

Though the original Genro were now dead, a similar council of ex-prime ministers tried to assume at least some of their powers. The revolutionary magic had, however, died with the last of the men of 1868. Even Prince Saionji enjoyed almost no success with these non-party anti-fascist governments during the '30s, and died in 1940 a broken hearted old man.

In the aftermath of the assassinations, this council took over the prerogative of appointing the prime minister from the palsied hands of the majority parties in the Diet. They tried appointing men from their own ranks, or even elderly and hence tame generals or admirals to head non-party or supra-party governments in the hope of heading off the drift toward fellow traveling with fascist policies.

All this did, however, was further delegitimize the parties (since it was obvious the majority in the Diet was no longer in charge), without halting the government's drift toward a popular front em-

bracing the fascist policies, if not the fascists themselves.

This drift continued until February of 1936, when the military fascists in the lower ranks of the Tokyo garrison, egged on by their civilian ideologue fellow travelers, launched a coup attempt.

A portion of the Tokyo garrison ran amuck, killed several civilian politicians, and took over the center of the city for a day. Fortunately, most local military units and the ex-prize student military meritocrats running the general staff remained loyal to the government. They promptly put down the coup. Some of the leaders of the coup committed suicide in the traditional manner (sticking the short sword in their own bellies, followed by decapitation at the hands of a helpful friend), thereby proving their "sincerity," and shaming before the general public those who put down the coup.



Rebel soldiers march past the Diet building on February 26, 1936. (Varley, pp. p. 16.)

The rest, like the Forty-seven Ronin of old, submitted to arrest. In their ensuing trials, they put their accusers on trial before the bar of public opinion. Many were proud of them, gaining Japanese fascism the results of a mass movement's mass mobilization without it quite having gone through the formality of having organized such a mobilization. Kita Ikki was amongst those hung after having been found guilty in one of these trials.

3. 1937-1941

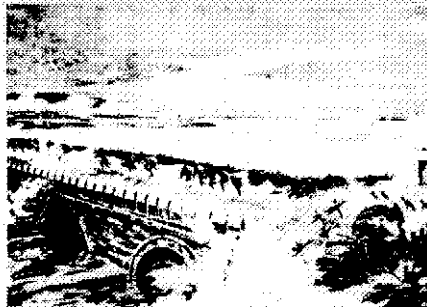
The activist fascists in the lower ranks of the army, in the bureaucracy and in the intellectual world were mostly purged during the year after February 1936. Even many of their fellow travelers were either purged or bullied into silence.

The surprising thing is what happened next. So far from fascism receding, the policies encouraging the drift toward war continued. Why? Mainly it was because the dilemma was still there, and was get-

ting worse. Some of the non-fellow travelers were forced by this drift into becoming virtual fellow travelers of the people whom they had just finished purging. (In computer jargon, I suppose that left the purges virtual fascists.)

By 1937 the eminently respectable Fujiwara aristocrat Prince Konoye mobilized a non-party government. But despite (or was it because of) his respectability, within the year he had drifted (and carried the emperor and country with him) into the beginnings of direct war with China via the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of July 7, 1937.

On that date a Japanese patrol moving south of Peking supposedly was fired upon by a Chinese Nationalist unit near the bridge dimly associated with the Yuan Dynasty visitor from the West. This was made by the Japanese into a cause for war.



The Marco Polo Bridge Incident. (From an idealized Chinese Nationalist oil painting.)

What no one in Japan would have accepted from a collection of guttersnipe fascists before, all would apparently accept when a government headed by a fellow traveler aristocrat speaking for the emperor caved in to the pressure exerted by these same fascists from the gutter or even from the scaffold and the grave.

The strategic logic of the ensuing undeclared war in north China suggested flanking the Chinese Nationalist resistance with a campaign against its headquarters in the lower Yangzi. There followed, as the Japanese armies moved up the Yangzi, what has ever since been referred to as the "Nanking Massacre."¹⁰ Writers like the late David Bergamini and (more recently) James Webb in his excellent novel, *The Emperor's General*,

¹⁰ Recently some Japanese historians have tried to revise the historiography of that event by suggesting that only 50,000 rather than 400,000 Chinese civilians were killed by the Japanese army in and around Nanking (Nanjing). About the only thing that can be said for this revisionism—which may well have some factual basis—is that it may give apoplexy to some Chinese Communist historian who deserves to drop dead for other reasons.

have argued that the atrocities committed in Nanjing were deliberately ordered by the highest authority so as to bully the Chinese into cutting a deal. The only question remaining is to what degree the emperor, hitherto on the side of the Anglophile liberals, fell into the position of a fellow traveler of fascism in Japan.

After the Nanking Incident, Japan attempted to end through further escalation what it persisted in calling the China "Incident." This merely extended and deepened what the Chinese from the beginning called the Great Defensive War. The Japanese invasion of east China had to expand into central China as the Chinese refused to give up resistance. The China Incident escalated inexorably toward becoming part of the China-Burma-India theater of operations of World War II.

Prime Minister Konoye continued to believe that he could make a deal with President Roosevelt. Both men, after all, were aristocrats. If Roosevelt had his Monroe Doctrine, he should understand Japan's requirement for its analogous Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

But of course Franklin Delano Roosevelt did not and could not understand this. Through his China-trade Delano grandfather he thought of himself as an hereditary friend of China, as did the New England Christian missionaries and their secular epigoni in government, the Ivy League universities and journalism who were among his closer political allies.

Furthermore, for legitimate reasons of state, Roosevelt desired to enter the imminent European war soon enough to prevent a victory by Hitler's Germany. After 1937 it seemed ever more plausible to enter the European war indirectly, by goading Japan into starting hostilities in Asia. The Japanese cooperated in this. They occupied French Indo-China during 1940-41, thereby threatening the flank of America's Philippine colony. This gave the Americans a legitimate excuse for challenging Japan's expansionism more directly.

Roosevelt's diplomacy during 1940-41 cut Japan off both from American strategic goods (steel and scrap iron, and California oil) and from Dutch-controlled Southeast Asian oil. By the summer of 1941, Japan had only an eighteen-month reserve of oil remaining.

4. 1941-1945

The Japanese unwittingly followed Roosevelt's war plan. Under Roosevelt's escalating pressure, and following the perverse logic of Japan's own policies, the Japanese fellow travelers of fascism in power became hard fellow travelers. When Prince Konoye proved insufficiently hard, he was replaced as premier in the summer of 1941 by General Tojo, the man who had saved Japan from fascism in February 1936. With his eyes wide open, Tojo launched the attack on Pearl Harbor that December.

Three and a half years later, even after two atomic bombs had each destroyed a city, some of the Japanese fellow travelers

of fascism had become so hardened by events that they had become virtually identical with the fascists they had purged nearly a decade before. Some of them were actually prepared to launch a coup against the Emperor himself to keep him from broadcasting the surrender message that the rest of the government had agreed to after the two atomic bombs had been dropped.

This grim story shows that you can have a fascist process continue without actual fascists actually taking control over the state. A ruling class can even purge its fascist members, and replace them with prize-student military meritocrats and old aristocrats, and yet still drift into a nearly total war. The pressures of the dilemma can turn these men into fellow travelers of

fascism, and then virtually into outright fascists.

Some historians of World War II's European front claim that if only the respectable Prussian army generals and colonels had gotten rid of Hitler in the mid- or late '30s, all would have been well between Germany and the world. I am afraid, however, that the Japanese precedent suggests there would probably have been war between Germany and the Western allies anyway. It would even still have been a war conducted along fascist lines, including some atrocities, but committed by prize-student non-fascists and fellow-travelers of fascism, who were drawn by the dilemma of their situation into acting as though they were fascists.

EHK