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KENKOKU UNIVERSITY, 1938–1945:
INTERROGATING THE PRAXIS OF PAN-ASIANIST IDEOLOGY
IN JAPANESE OCCUPIED MANCHURIA

by

Yuka Hiruma Kishida

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Doctor of
Philosophy degree in History
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

December 2013

Thesis Supervisor: Professor Stephen Vlastos

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Graduate College
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

PH.D. THESIS

This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis of

Yuka Hiruma Kishida

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for the thesis requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy
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To the light of hope

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ABSTRACT

Kenkoku University (Nation-Building University, abbreviated as Kendai) was the university founded in 1938 by the Kwantung Army, the Japanese army of occupation of the northeastern provinces of China commonly designated Manchuria. Sheared off from China by the Kwantung Army in March 1932 and declared an independent country, Manchukuo existed as a client state of Japan on the margins of the international order, recognized by a handful of nations. Kendai was the only institution of higher learning administered directly by the Manchukuo's governing authority, the State Council, which was dominated by Japanese officers. Kendai recruited male students of Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Taiwanese, Mongolian, and Russian backgrounds, and aimed to nurture a generation of leaders who would actualize the Pan-Asianist goal of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo," one of the founding principles of Manchukuo.

Wartime relations between Japanese and non-Japanese are often framed in terms of binary narratives of resistance to or collaboration with Japanese imperialism. Assuming that national consciousness had firmly taken root in people's minds, most historians simply dismiss Japan's wartime discourse of Pan-Asianism as just another empty rationale for the domination of subject peoples by an imperial power, akin to the Anglo-American 'white man's burden.' Recent scholarship, however, has complicated the picture by identifying multiple and competing articulations of Pan-Asianism, while re-examining its effects on policy making and its reception by subject populations. My dissertation extends this effort by investigating actual practices of Pan-Asianism as experienced by Japanese and Asian students enrolled at a unique institution whose ideal

was Asian unity on the basis of equality. Taking Kendai as a case study and uncovering the interactions that shaped relations below the level of the state, I attempt to demonstrate that the idealistic and egalitarian version of Pan-Asianism exercised considerable appeal even late into World War II.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCP	Chinese Communist Party
GMD	Guomindang or Chinese Nationalist Party
ISNSC	The Institute for the Study of the National Spirit and Culture (<i>kokumin seishin bunka kenkyūjo</i>)
JTB	Japan Tourist Bureau
Kendai	Kenkoku University (Nation Building University)
KURI	Kenkoku University Research Institute
KURIMJ	Kenkoku University Research Institute Monthly Journal
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROK	Republic of Korea
SCAP	Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers
SMR	South Manchuria Railway

INTRODUCTION

Kenkoku University (Nation-Building University, abbreviated as Kendai) was the university founded in 1938 by the Kwantung Army, the Japanese Army of occupation of the northeastern provinces of China commonly designated Manchuria. After the Manchurian Incident (1931), the Kwantung Army established Manchukuo (1932), which proclaimed itself as an independent state. The state's founding principles, rule by the "kingly way (*ōdō*)"¹ to realize the "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo (*minzoku kyōwa*),"² ostensibly presented Manchukuo as a utopian state that would pioneer Japan's Pan-Asianist project of creating a new order in Asia. In reality, however, the establishment of Manchukuo only furthered Japan's informal colonial control of the region where Japan acquired footholds after Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–05. Being the only institution of higher learning that was administered directly by the Manchukuo's governing authority, the State Council which

¹ The "kingly way (*ōdō* or 王道)," also translated as "Way of Right," is a Confucian concept of an ideal way of governing a country by virtue. Its opposite is the "Way of Might (*hadō* or 霸道)" or "despotic way" which means ruling by authority and force. Manchukuo's adherence to the "kingly way" meant to propose an alternative to the Western ruling style characterized as the "despotic way."

² Although the principle of *minzoku kyōwa* (民族協和) can be translated as "racial harmony" or "ethnic harmony," these English translations do not convey the precise meaning of the original Japanese term. The Japanese term *minzoku* was not a purely biological concept of race. In terms of race or *jinshu*, the official discourse of wartime Japan claimed that there was only one race in East Asia. Kevin M. Doak translates *minzoku* as ethnicity, which was used in Japan by the 1920s and 1930s "as a replacement for what was widely perceived as the failure of the nineteenth-century biological concept of race." Kevin M. Doak, "Building National Identity through Ethnicity: Ethnology in Wartime Japan and After" *Journal of Japanese Studies* 27:1 (2001): 1–39, 4. While Doak's clarification of the different meanings of *minzoku* is helpful, in the context of Manchukuo, it is misleading to use "ethnicity" to translate *minzoku*. For, the English word "ethnicity" is normally used as a designation of a group that exists within an established political unit. To use "ethnicity" in the context of Manchukuo would assume that there indeed was a legitimate political unit called Manchukuo—the wartime Japanese claim which is contested by scholars. Thus, when appropriate, I purposefully avoid translating *minzoku* as "race" or "ethnicity" and use "peoples" instead.

was dominated by Japanese military and civilian officers, Kendai recruited male students of Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Taiwanese, Mongolian, Manchurian, and Russian backgrounds, and aimed to train the generation of leaders who would actualize the goal of “harmony of various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” Kendai’s commitment to this Pan-Asianist ideal was reflected in its arrangement of student residences in which students of different cultural and national backgrounds shared a living space. In addition, the recruitment of non-Japanese faculty members and the fact that the students were allowed to use non-Japanese languages outside class indicate Kendai’s commitment to the equalitarian conception of Pan-Asianism. These practices make Kendai not only unique within the Japanese Empire but also set it in sharp contrast with the brutality of the Japanese invading forces in China as seen in the Nanjing Massacre of 1937. Thus, in the midst of Japan’s expansion and war, Kendai served as a vehicle of Pan-Asianism, a rare space for the transnational exchange of ideas, and for historians today, an institutional site removed from armed conflict to evaluate the successes and failures of Pan-Asianism as an imperial ideology.

The dissertation examines the perceptions of Pan-Asianism that were expressed by diverse groups in the university: the Kendai administration, faculty members, and most importantly, by students—both Japanese and non-Japanese. Assuming that national consciousness had firmly taken root in people’s minds, most historians simply dismiss Japan’s wartime discourse of Pan-Asianism as just another empty rationale for the domination of subject peoples by an imperial power, akin to the Anglo-American ‘white man’s burden.’ Taking Kendai as a case study, my findings complicate this picture. Some perceived Pan-Asianism as a popular movement in reaction to western imperialism

in Asia and envision collaboration of equal peoples. Others saw it as a hierarchical relationship in which the Japanese imposed their values and customs on the others. Moreover, the dissertation shows that the idealistic and egalitarian version of Pan-Asianism exercised considerable appeal even late into World War II.

Background and Historiography

In studying colonial empires, historians have drawn distinctions between formal and informal empire. Formal empire represents a type of colonial rule in which a foreign colonial state replaces an indigenous ruling body and establishes a direct subordinating relationship with the metropol, or the center of the colonial empire. While the same dominant relationship exists in informal empire, “[t]he weaker state remains intact as an independent polity with its own political system” as Jurgen Osterhammel defines.³ Japan as a colonial empire possessed both formal and informal colonies. Its formal empire consisted of Taiwan (1895), Korea (1910), Karafuto (southern Sakhalin, 1905), the Kwantung Leased Territory (1905), and the Nan’yō (Micronesia, 1920).⁴ Japanese imperialism in northeast China falls under informal empire. Unlike in formal colonies, Japanese encroachment in China proper before 1937 and in northeast China until 1945 had no formal colonial political structure. Nor did these regions maintain direct

³ Jurgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, trans. Shelley L. Frisch (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1995, 1997), 20.

⁴ I follow a definition of Japan’s formal empire as presented in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945*, ed. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

administrative relationships with the metropolitan Tokyo government.⁵ Also included in this informal empire of Japan was Manchukuo, a geographical focus of my research.

Manchuria and Manchukuo: Background

Japan had established informal colonial control in southern Manchuria through two footholds gained as a result of victory in the Russo–Japanese War in 1905. First, Japan occupied and administered the Liaodong peninsula, which Japan designated the Kwantung Leased Territory. Second, Japan had acquired the Russian built South Manchuria Railway which ran from Harbin to Lushun (Port Arthur) and its adjacent areas called the South Manchuria Railway Zone. This railway and the SMR zone were administered by the South Manchuria Railway Company, a semi-public Japanese corporation. Although the Japanese government encouraged its citizens to emigrate to Manchuria and settle in this region to strengthen Japanese control, Japanese residents remained a small minority.⁶ By the late 1920s, the Japanese community in Manchuria faced two threats: the Soviet Union’s re-assertion of power in the Far East and the

⁵ The first major English-language study about Japan’s informal colonialism in China is *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895–1937*, ed. Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, c1989). The anthology focuses on Japan’s imperialism in China before the outbreak of the Second Sino–Japanese War in 1937. The authors define Japan’s attitude toward China during this period as “informal imperialism” that was based on the unequal treaty system and illuminate the economic dimensions, institutions, and the involvements of the Japanese elite group such as the Kwantung Army officials, China experts in Army and Foreign Ministry, and entrepreneurs. They seem to agree that Japanese informal empire in China was driven by economic interests and the growing economic interdependence between the two countries.

⁶ According to historian Shin’ichi Yamamuro, the Chinese population in Manchuria reached 30,000,000 by 1930, while the Japanese population was at most 240,000, including those residing in the Kwantung Leased Territory. Shin’ichi Yamamuro, *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*, trans. Joshua A. Fogel (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 10.

growing nationalism of the Chinese people who made up the majority of the population in Manchuria.

It was at this crucial time that Ishiwara Kanji, one of the protagonists in my dissertation, arrived in Manchuria as Operations Officer of the Kwantung Army. Later, I will discuss his involvement in Kendai as the initiator of its foundation; here, Ishiwara comes into focus for his prominent role in the expansion of Japanese interest in Manchuria. Believing secure control of Manchuria to be essential to Japan's preparation for the coming war with the United States, which he believed was imminent, Ishiwara orchestrated military actions that led to Japan's occupation of the whole of Manchuria in late 1931. Meticulous planning started in March 1929. He not only travelled throughout Manchuria to study the topography and deployment of Chinese military forces, but also secretly negotiated with the Imperial Army Korea Command for support in case of military conflict in Manchuria.⁷ By the summer of 1931, Ishiwara felt that the time was ripe for military action as no single foreign power seemed prepared to challenge Japan in a land war in northeast Asia. The Soviet Union was in the middle of its five-year plan; the United States and Western Europe had not yet recovered from economic depression; and Nationalist China was struggling to consolidate its control south of the Great Wall.⁸ What followed was the Manchurian Incident of September 18, 1931, in which Kwantung Army officers blew up a section of the South Manchuria Railway in Mukden, blamed it on the Chinese, and used it as a pretext for launching a general military offensive against

⁷ Since Japan annexed Korea in 1910, the Korea Army, a branch of Japanese Army, stationed in Korea.

⁸ Mark R. Peattie, *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan's Confrontation with the West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 110–114.

Chinese forces. Although Ishiwara's specific role in this incident is unknown, he had initiated the long-term planning for direct military action. Moreover, following the initial incident, Ishiwara engineered the ensuing expansion of military operations, repeatedly defying orders from the cabinet and central command in Tokyo, as well as the Kwantung Army Commander, General Honjō Shigeru, not to advance. By 1932 the Kwantung Army had occupied the whole of Manchuria, which the Tokyo government ultimately accepted as a *fait accompli* and the Japanese public celebrated wildly.

Concurrently with planning for military action, ever since his arrival in Manchuria in 1928 Ishiwara was involved in the Kwantung Army's state-building initiatives. The idea of separating Manchuria from China proper originated in the interactions between the former Qing royalists and the Kwantung Army.⁹ Wishing to restore Manchu rule by gaining regional autonomy in the Three Eastern Provinces (Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang), Qing royalists had maintained connections with the Kwantung Army after the 1911 revolution that deposed the Qing Dynasty and formally established China as a republic. In August and September 1927, and again in August 1929, attendants of the last Qing emperor, Puyi, visited Kwantung Army officials to recommend the enthronement of Puyi in Manchuria. Ishiwara and Itagaki Seishirō, Senior Staff Officer, seized on this idea as the perfect opportunity to sever Manchuria from China proper on the pretext of acting on behalf of an oppressed minority—ethnic Manchus—seeking national self-determination. In addition, the enthronement of Puyi proved effective in incorporating the Inner Mongolian independence movement activists in the Kwantung Army's state-building operation. Historic ties between the Qing court and Mongolian leaders predating

⁹ My summary of this state-building operation of the Kwantung Army is based on Yamamuro's book.

the Qing conquest of China brought the two peoples closer in opposition to Han Chinese control.¹⁰ On March 1, 1932, Kwantung army officials proclaimed the founding of a new, putatively independent state, Manchukuo. Incorporating the four northeastern Chinese provinces of Fengtian, Jilin, Heilongjiang, and Rehe, the new state declared independence from China proper and established a federation of the “people of Manchuria and Mongolia,” or more commonly called Manchukuo.¹¹

Declaration of Manchukuo’s independence on March 1, 1932 was, thus, by and large, a result of Japan’s accumulated interest in Manchuria, a resource-rich area in China’s northeast. The League of Nations did not recognize Manchukuo as a legitimate state; instead, the international community supported the Chinese Nationalist government’s view that Manchukuo was a puppet-state established by Japanese. Historians have agreed that Manchukuo was indeed a part of Japan’s bigger imperial and expansionist project. What made it different from Japan’s formal colonies such as Taiwan and Korea was that being an informal colony and nominally a sovereign state, Manchukuo provided a unique political space to put into practice the idealistic side of Japan’s Pan-Asianism.

Lincoln Li’s study of Tachibana Shiraki, one of the Japanese intellectuals who contributed to the development of Manchukuo’s ideological construction, shows the contradiction embedded in the principle of the rule by “kingly way.” Serving as a paid researcher in the Research Department of the SMR Company since 1925, Tachibana wrote articles on Chinese nationalism and advocated Japan’s role to support Chinese

¹⁰ Yamamuro, 97–98.

¹¹ “Proclamation on the Establishment of the Manchoukuo [*sic*]” March 1, 1932.

nationalist efforts to transform the society from within.¹² Unlike his contemporary Japanese sinologists, whose thoughts were confined to Japan's national interests and disdain for China, Tachibana found potential in the Chinese peasants. Tachibana argued that Japan had better "win friends" among the rural Chinese, whose cooperation was essential for bringing about a social reform in China.¹³ His positive belief in the Chinese rural masses led Tachibana to advocate Japanese rule by the "kingly way" that would replace the authoritative, feudalistic, and militaristic control of warlords. His advocacy of this principle stemmed from his sympathy toward Sun Yat-sen's anti-imperialist view of Pan-Asianism.¹⁴ Sun's famous speech in Kobe, Japan, in 1924 urged Japanese to choose whether to become "a cat's-paw of the West's Despotic Way (*seihō hadō*) or a bastion of the East's Kingly Way (*tōhō ōdō*)."¹⁵ Though these Confucian terms "kingly way" and "despotic way" had been used by many, Sun's speech made them famous among Japanese contemporary thinkers. Drawing the term "kingly way" from an ancient Chinese philosopher Mengzi, Sun promoted the principle of governance by virtue based on Eastern, or more specifically Confucian, tradition, which presented a direct contrast to Western "despotic way" or governance through force.¹⁶ Concurring with Sun and framing his argument in this East–West opposition, Tachibana advised Japan to remain in the

¹² Lincoln Li, *The China Factor in Modern Japanese Thought: The Case of Tachibana Shiraki, 1881–1945* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996), 36–37.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 93.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 37–38.

¹⁵ Takeshi Komagome, "Manshūkoku ni okeru jukyō no shisō: daidō, ōdō, kōdō," (*Shiso* 841, July 1994), 61. quoted in Roger H. Brown, "Visions of a virtuous manifest destiny: Yasuoka Masahiro and Japan's Kingly Way" in Sven Saaler and J. Victor Koschmann ed. *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, Regionalism and Borders*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 133–50.

¹⁶ Brown, 133–34. A Chinese philosopher Mengzi (372-289 AD) is believed to be the creator of the terms 'ōdō' and 'hadō.'

continent (by which he probably meant Manchuria as a foothold to China as a whole) and help the Chinese transform their oppressed country in order to create a utopian Asia in the glory to the Japanese Emperor.¹⁷ Thus, Tachibana's idealistic call for applying "kingly way" to Japan's policy in Manchuria also served the ideological purpose of legitimizing Japanese presence and more active role in Manchuria.

Once employed by the Manchukuo government in 1932, the contradiction between the idealistic principle of "kingly way" and the state's pragmatic use of it became more evident. "The State-Founding Proclamation of Manchukuo" stated that the "[g]overnment will be based on the Way, and the Way is rooted in heaven. The principle for the creation of the new state is uniformly to lay emphasis on following the Way of heaven and bringing peace to the people."¹⁸ On the surface, the declaration appeared consistent with Sun's conception of the "kingly way," as an Asian theory of governance that could lead Asia to regional solidarity against Western imperialism. Nevertheless, the statement left the word "the Way" undefined, and, as the non-Japanese Manchukuo population later learned to their disappointment, this open-ended term meant Japanese 'imperial way' (*kōdō*) in actuality. On the one hand, as historian Yamamuro Shin'ichi points out, the principle of the "kingly way" often appeared in the government's rhetoric and was "sublimated into a term symbolizing a revolutionary romantic passion concerned with the construction of paradise" in Manchuria.¹⁹ On the other hand, this rhetorical use

¹⁷ Li, 37–38.

¹⁸ "Manshūkoku kenkoku sengen [State-founding proclamation of Manchukuo]," in Kobayashi Tatsuo, Shimada Toshihiko, and Inaba Masao, *Gendai shi shiryō, 11: Zoku Manshū jihen [Materials on contemporary history, volume 11: The Manchurian Incident, continued]*. (Tokyo: Misuzu shobo, 1965), 524. English translation is cited in Yamamuro, 88.

¹⁹ Yamamuro, 80.

of the term omitted the essence of Sun's original idea by ignoring his emphasis on internationalism and Pan-Asianism. Indeed, the non-Japanese Manchukuo population never enjoyed the same rights as Japanese and came to view Japanese rule of Manchukuo as similar to the Western "despotic way." In the end, the principle of "kingly way" betrayed its original meaning and would lose much of its idealistic appeal.

The principle of "harmony of various peoples who resided in Manchukuo," which is often called "harmony of five peoples (*gozoku kyōwa*)" among Han Chinese, ethnic Manchus, Mongolians, Japanese, and Koreans, did not correspond to the reality either.²⁰ The Japanese settlers in Manchuria and the Manchukuo government both utilized this idealistic concept to pursue their interests. The early discourses about the "harmony of peoples" among Japanese immigrants reveal such duplicity of the concept. The ideal of "harmony" had existed among some Japanese settlers in Manchuria prior to 1932. One of the strong advocates was the Manchurian Youth League (*Manshū seinen renmei*), a Japanese settlers' organization which was initiated by the Dairen Newspaper Company. In lobbying for Manchurian independence in the 1920s, the League's members promoted the idea of creating a multi-ethnic state. Under the slogan of building a harmonious relationship among peoples of different nationalities, they strongly opposed the anti-Japanese movement that was rampant in and around Manchuria.²¹ By 1931, the pressure on Japanese settlers was so severe that the League's manifesto clearly represented a sense of crisis.

²⁰ Which nationalities consist of the "five peoples" remains ambiguous, but it often refers to the five groups listed above, even though there were other "non-Asian" minorities such as the Russians and the Poles. The concept emphasized the unity of the five major Asian nationalities based on the Pan-Asianist founding principle of Manchukuo.

²¹ Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 287.

Our right to live in Manchuria is at present on the verge of a serious crisis, due to the systematic industrial pressure applied by the Chinese government and its illegal acts in violation of treaties.... If we just sit by and overlook the present situation, the interests of the empire will surely be destroyed, and the misfortune of national ruin will overtake our homeland.²²

This sentiment of threat was widely shared within the Japanese settler community, which represented only one per cent of the population in Manchuria.²³ Although it is not clear whether the League members imagined the harmonious relationship to be egalitarian, the above statement does indicate their perception of an urgent need to protect the Japanese settlers' rights and that they made use of the idealistic concept to protect their own interests.

Similarly, the Manchukuo government utilized the concept of "harmony of various peoples residing in Manchukuo" to justify the Japanese-led nation building project after the Kwantung Army proclaimed Manchukuo's independence in 1932. For instance, the State-Founding Proclamation stated:

the people who now reside on the terrain of the new state make no distinctions among races or between superiors and inferiors. In addition to the Han, Manchu, and Mongolian peoples who were originally from this region and the Japanese and Koreans—that is, people from other lands—those who wish to reside here in perpetuity shall enjoy equal treatment. The rights they receive shall be protected and shall not be violated in the least.²⁴

²² Manshū seinen renmei shi kankō iinkai, ed., *Manshū seinen renmeishi [A history of the Manchurian Youth League]*, (Tokyo:Hara shobo, 1968, 1933), 456 in Yamamuro, 62.

²³ Shin'ichi Yamamuro, *Kimera: Manshūkoku no shōzō [Chimera: the Portrait of Manchukuo]*, (Tokyo: Chuko shinsho, 1993), 93.

²⁴ "Manshūkoku kenkoku sengen," in Yamamuro, *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*, 89.

While appearing to promote equality and harmonious coexistence of all people, this statement was directed against the growing Chinese anti-Japanese movements and aimed to protect Japanese settlers' rights in Manchuria.

Thus, in the hands of the Kwantung Army officials, the idealistic vision of “harmony of all peoples” manifested quite differently in reality. According to historian Tsukase Susumu, the Manchukuo government did not develop any particular policy to realize the goal of harmonious relationship. Rather, the Kwantung Army-dominated government itself authorized discrimination by segregating and differentiating people based on their nationalities in education, conscription, the court, and other aspects of public life.²⁵ Hence, in a number of areas, the principle of creating “harmony of various peoples residing in Manchukuo” contradicted the reality. Yamamuro is right in asserting that the ethnocentric Kwantung Army officials were never capable of actualizing such utopia. Rather, Yamamuro argues, the idealistic vision of harmonious relationship among peoples was used as the Manchukuo government's tool to secure non-Japanese people's obedience to the Japanese.

Manchuria and Manchukuo: Historiography

In seeking to understand Manchukuo, scholars have debated the nature of the relationship between Japanese and non-Japanese residents of the region. Was it exploitative? Or were there areas of mutual benefits? Did the Japanese authorities in Manchukuo coerce the non-Japanese populations to collaborate? Or did the non-Japanese

²⁵ Susumu Tsukase, *Manshūkoku: 'minzoku kyōwa' no jitsuzō [Manchukuo: The Reality of 'Ethnic Harmony']* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Hirobumi kan, 1998), 96–138.

voluntarily collaborate with the Japanese? Among the works that address this issue, two groups can be identified. First, some scholars have examined the relationship in political and economic terms. Second, more recent works focus on the interactions on the level of people's daily life experiences. This section will first discuss the literature of the first group and then comment on the second group, which is closer to my own research focus.

The scholarship on Manchuria and Manchukuo in terms of political and economic relationships tends to highlight one-way influence of Japanese imperialism in the region. Earlier works in this school thus concentrate on Japanese actions. Ramon H. Myers's "Japanese Imperialism in Manchuria: The South Manchuria Railway Company, 1906–1933" (1989) is a brief survey of the SMR Company.²⁶ The company managed the railway zones in Manchuria that contained 105 cities as well as various properties such as bridges and tunnels. Its Research Department conducted a wide range of research that helped industrial and agricultural development in the region. Moreover, the SMR Company dominated foreign trade, with 72% of foreign investments coming from Japan. Serving the Japanese state, the SMR Company transformed the vast sparsely settled land that Japan obtained in 1905 into "a flourishing highly urbanized zone along the SMR line."²⁷ Myers thus shows this aspect of development in Japanese informal colonialism in Manchuria. It is also implied that the development in the region was for the sake of the Japanese state.

²⁶ Ramon H. Myers, "Japanese Imperialism in Manchuria: The South Manchuria Railway Company, 1906–1933," in *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895–1937*, ed. Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, c1989), 101–132.

²⁷ Myers, "Japanese Imperialism in Manchuria," 118.

In “Manchukuo and Economic Development” (1989), Nakagane Katsuji explicitly points out the self-serving motive of Japan’s development project in Manchuria after the founding of Manchukuo in 1932. He details the state-planned economy of Manchukuo led by the Kwantung Army and the Army Ministry of Japan. Using Japanese capital investments from private companies, the SMR Company, and the Japanese state, Manchukuo’s key economic institutions—the Manchukuo government, the Central Bank, and new industrial organizations—successfully developed the new country’s economy. Nakagane stresses that despite the trade deficits with Japan there was constant capital inflow from Japan to Manchukuo that supported the latter’s economic development. He states that “Japan certainly took far less from Manchukuo than it gave in return” not out of generosity but out of its national economic interest and intention to exploit Manchurian resources, which was prevented by the Pacific War that “erupted prematurely.”²⁸

While Myers and Nakagane highlight Japan’s exploitative motive behind its development project in Manchuria in economic terms, Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka’s *The Making of Japanese Manchuria, 1904–1932* (2001) examines the same subject in a more expansive scope.²⁹ Focusing on the period before the establishment of Manchukuo, he explains the motives of Japanese expansionism in the region from defense, political, and

²⁸ Katsuji Nakagane, “Manchukuo and Economic Development,” in *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895–1937*, ed. Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, c1989), 133–157. In the same anthology, Alvin D. Coox’s “The Kwantung Army Dimension” takes a similar approach to that of Myers and Nakagane. However, Coox focuses on the defense, political, and economic interests of the Kwantung Army and the Japanese state in Manchuria and Manchukuo in his narrative of the Kwantung Army from its inception as a Kwantung Military Government in 1905 to its collapse in 1945.

²⁹ Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka, *The Making of Japanese Manchuria, 1904–1932* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001).

economic perspectives. He shows that the region continued to be important in Japan's defense against Russia especially after the Boxer Expedition in 1900 and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. Economically, Manchuria's significance increased during the protracted WWI, as the Japanese political elite learned the need of achieving "wartime self-sufficiency by exploiting neighboring countries, through the voluntary cooperation of their inhabitants if possible, but through occupation and coercion if necessary."³⁰ Thus, even during the international wave of new diplomacy toward the end of WWI and the 1920s, the Tokyo government made an effort to sustain its control over Manchuria through the collaboration between warlord Zhang Zuolin and the SMR Company. When Chinese nationalism threatened Japanese business and the settler community toward the end of the 1920s, Matsusaka contends, it was not surprising that the Manchurian Incident received support not only from Japanese in Manchuria and Japan but also from Japanese politicians soon afterward. For, he argues, the expansionist move surrounding the incident was "an extension of what they had been doing for much of the decade."³¹ Thus, Matsusaka sheds light on Japan's continuous interests in Manchuria in the first three decades of the twentieth century.

Louise Young's *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (1998) provides another answer to Japan's popular support for Manchukuo by looking at various agents of Japanese imperialism.³² She argues that Manchukuo's nation-building project was arranged and promoted under the Kwantung Army's

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 216.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 387.

³² Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

leadership in a way that the Japanese could proudly participate in the “utopian and feel-good imperialism.”³³ A compelling case was the Japanese leftist intellectuals who joined the SMR Company’s Research Department after the leftist purge at home. Young shows that anti-war and anti-imperialist leftists such as Miki Kiyoshi and Tachibana Shiraki found an opportunity in Manchukuo to carry out their ideas of social revolution and “kingly way” but later found their utopian ideas utilized by expansionist Kwantung Army as a tool to legitimize Japanese imperialism. In addition, the civilizing mission proved efficient in recruiting more Japanese in the imperialist project of Manchukuo. Young states that the civilizing mission “was directed not at the Chinese subjects... but rather toward the Japanese population.”³⁴

Unlike Myers, Nakagane, and Matsusaka, who largely concentrates on the Japanese side, Shin’ichi Yamamuro’s political history of Manchukuo pays attention to the interactions between Japanese and non-Japanese political figures. *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion* (2006; a translation of Japanese work *Kimera* published in 1993) portrays the collaboration as having originated in the match of mutual political interests but ultimately benefitted only the Japanese.³⁵ Yamamuro shows that initially the local

³³ Young, 302.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 243.

Similarly, David V. Tucker’s dissertation also focuses on Japanese non-governmental actors who participated in the nation-building and the “utopian and feel-good imperialism” in Manchukuo, which Young describes. Tucker shows that the Japanese city planners—Tokyo University scholars—attempted to construct modern-style agricultural villages and urban cities to create what they as Japanese saw as a modern utopia. As a result, Manchukuo’s capital Shinkyō became a symbolic center of the state, but only to the Japanese population. Tucker thus shows that the Japanese planners regarded the region as “empty sheet of paper” and imposed their ideal vision of development on the population (9). David Vance Tucker, “Building ‘Our Manchukuo’: Japanese City Planning, Architecture, and Nation-Building in Occupied Northeast China, 1931–1945” (Ph.D. diss., The University of Iowa, 1999).

³⁵ Shin’ichi Yamamuro, *Manchuria Under Japanese Dominion*, trans. Joshua A. Fogel (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

warlords had reasons to be attracted to the Kwantung Army's scheme of establishing an independent Manchuria–Mongolia state. For instance, Xi Xia of Jilin Province, originally a Manchu bannerman and a descendant of the Qing imperial family, was an advocate of the “Jilin Monroe Doctrine,” the idea of Jilin's regional independence and the restoration of the Qing rule.³⁶ Puyi was another such person who hoped to restore the Manchu rule with the help of the Japanese. Yamamuro argues that the presence of such local leaders served to legitimize the Kwantung Army's state-building operation.

Nevertheless, as Yamamuro emphasizes, the collaboration brought benefits only to one side: the Kwantung Army. Although local leaders were initially appointed as the prime minister, the heads of ministers and various offices, or governors, many of these positions were replaced by Japanese vice-ministers, vice-governors, or assistant director-generals, on the account of “placing the right man in the right place.”³⁷ Not only did Japanese occupied 45.8% of all positions in central and local governments, they wielded the real administrative power.³⁸ Likewise, Puyi, even though he became the chief executive of Manchukuo and later ascended to become emperor, had no official business to conduct rather than affixing his name on the already completed documents. Thus, Yamamuro shows, the Qing royalists' participation in Manchukuo's nation-building, though it initially exhibited certain voluntary aspects, ended up with coercive cooperation with the Kwantung Army, when looking at the political elite circles.

³⁶ Yamamuro, 48, 96.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 116–117.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 118–119.

As seen above, these political and economic studies of Manchuria and Manchukuo primarily analyze Japanese actions at the macro level and find evidence of economic development within the exploitation model. One commonality is that these works—whether or not highlighting the aspect of development—assume the exploitative nature of relationship between the Japanese and non-Japanese populations. Even Myers and Nakagane, who focus on Japan’s economic development in the region, make sure to indicate exploitative motives. In Yamamuro’s account of the collaboration between local warlords and the Kwantung Army, it is evident that their ‘collaboration’ was not equal.

I do not intend to deny the existence of exploitative and coercive relationships in the region; rather, my research is focused on the micro level of institutional development where the day-to-day experiences of non-governmental actors, both Japanese and other nationalities, reveal another aspect of Manchukuo. My research is centered on an educational institution and community comprised of intellectuals and students of multiple national and cultural identities whose participation in the institution was voluntary. In addition, except for the school administration, Kendai faculty and students were not politically affiliated.³⁹ What my research reveals is the relationships that were not as simple as collaboration or resistance to Japanese imperialism. There were many instances of open and honest exchange of opinions among students, which show the variety of relationships between the Japanese and non-Japanese in Manchukuo even till 1945.

In that sense, my dissertation adds to a growing body of literature that looks into the experiences of people—both Japanese and non-Japanese. Prasenjit Duara’s

³⁹ Later, we learn that some Chinese students were involved in anti-Japanese activities which had some loose ties with off-campus political organizations of the Chinese Nationalist Party (Guomindang, GMD) or the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Their political affiliations with these underground anti-Japanese groups were kept secret.

Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern (2003) is a pioneering work in this school.⁴⁰ Breaking from the framework of Japanese imperialism, Duara examines the origins of Manchukuo’s ideological construction in a broader context of the emerging discourse of Asianism—both perceived by Japanese and Chinese. Among various civilizational discourses of Asia by Japanese thinkers (Okakura Tenshin, Ōkawa Shūmei, and Ishiwara Kanji), Chinese intellectuals (Sun Yat-sen, Li Dazhao, and Du Yaquan), as well as Japanese and Chinese popular societies (Ōmotokyō, Daoyuan, and Daodehui), Duara finds a common Pan-Asianist claims of anti-Westernism and call for Asian unity. It was this universalist ideal that genuinely attracted some ordinary Japanese who found mission in Manchukuo and Chinese redemptive societies that regarded the establishment of Manchukuo as their spiritual liberation given the history of persecution in China.⁴¹ At the same time, Duara notes, “nationalists among the Chinese and Japanese—who valued such ideals largely for their authorizing function—sought to seize this universalism for the national or statist project.”⁴² Thus, Duara shows that Manchukuo’s ideological constructions had its appeal not only to Japanese but also to Chinese people, and not only to governmental but also to non-governmental actors.⁴³

⁴⁰ Prasenjit Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003).

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 113.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 120.

⁴³ Mariko Asano Tamanai takes a similar approach in analyzing the racial classifications developed by Japanese ‘colonizers’ in Manchuria—by colonial officials, Minato Morisaki (a Kendai student whose diary I will discuss in Chapter II), and peasant settlers. She demonstrates that there is no such a thing as “the Japanese perspective” or “the colonizer’s perspective,” because individual Japanese participated in the construction of power through the racial classification at their own space, time, and occupation in Manchuria. Mariko Asano Tamanai, “Knowledge, Power, and Racial Classification: The ‘Japanese’ in ‘Manchuria,’” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 59. 2 (2000), 248–276.

Scholarship that focuses on non-governmental actors as subjects of study calls into question the assumption of necessary opposition and even clear-cut boundaries between the colonizer and the colonized. The foremost example of this approach is the anthology *Crossed Histories: Manchuria in the Age of Empire* (2005) edited by Mariko Asano Tamanoi.⁴⁴ Its essays' subjects vary from Japanese film production and city planning to Chinese propaganda and Polish immigrants. My research shares this approach and explores the transnational interactions among the members of the Kendai community who had diverse national and cultural identities.

The works of Norman Smith and Hyun Ok Park are two other examples of recent effort to reexamine the colonial relationships of Manchuria and Manchukuo. Smith's *Resisting Manchukuo* (2007) challenges a dichotomist characterization of the Chinese response as collaboration or resistance by demonstrating that Chinese women's literature that flourished in Manchukuo until 1943 represented two forms of resistance.⁴⁵ First, as one might expect, being nationalists, they implicitly opposed Japanese colonialism through their anti-patriarchal critiques of 'good wives and wise mothers' ideal of womanhood that Japanese colonial authorities attempted to impose on the population of Manchukuo. At the same time, influenced by May Fourth individualism, they expressed their resistance to similar Confucian-influenced ideals of womanhood espoused by social ideologies of the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek, the Republic of China.

⁴⁴ *Crossed Histories: Manchuria in the Age of Empire*, ed. Mariko Asano Tamanoi (Honolulu: Association for Asian Studies: University of Hawaii Press, c2005).

⁴⁵ Norman Smith, *Resisting Manchukuo: Chinese Women Writers and the Japanese Occupation* (Vancouver: UBC Press, c2007).

Problematizing a dichotomy of collaboration versus exploitation, Hyun Ok Park suggests a more complicated picture of colonial relationships in Manchuria and Manchukuo in *Two Dreams in One Bed* (2005).⁴⁶ She does this by examining the social relations of Korean migrants in the region. For instance, Korean migrants' politics in the Kando region (located in northeast of Korean peninsula over which Japanese and Chinese competed) was shaped mainly by the private property system and not by national consciousness. Some supported Japanese consuls because of their promise of landownership; and others worked with the Chinese administration and advocated self-rule in exchange for the Chinese approval of land purchase or loan. Hence, Korean migrants took advantage of the two powers' competition and pursued their interests of becoming landowners.⁴⁷

My analysis of the memoirs written by Kendai's former Chinese students likewise complicates their responses to Kendai's Pan-Asianist education and Japan's rule in Manchuria. Those students spontaneously attended Kendai. Some felt compelled to conform to the imposed Japanese value system at Kendai, while others opposed it often behind the scenes but occasionally in public. Chapter IV on Chinese students' experiences at Kendai reveals that ironically these students constructed their Chinese national identity while enrolled in Kendai. These students' backgrounds were similar to

⁴⁶ Hyun Ok Park, *Two Dreams in One Bed: Empire, Social Life, and the Origins of the North Korean Revolution in Manchuria* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

⁴⁷ Park, Chapter 3. Some recent research about colonial Korea shares Hyun Ok Park's and Norman Smith's revisionist approach to the relationships between the colonizer and the colonized. Jun Uchida studies pragmatic "class-based collaboration" among Japanese settler businessmen and the Korean elite to promote Korean economic development rather than serving the metropolitan economy (168). Jun Uchida, "Brokers of Empire: Japanese and Korean Business Elites in Colonial Korea," in *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century: Projects, Practices, Legacies*, ed. Caroline Elkins and Susan Pederson (New York: Routledge, 2005), 153-170. Another book of this kind is *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, ed. Gi-Wook Chin and Michael Robinson (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999).

that of the female authors that Smith studies; they were born and or raised in Manchukuo. Chinese Kendai students' experiences and reflections of the school show a wide range of responses to Japanese ideal of Pan-Asianism in Manchukuo.

My research shares Park's interest about the relationships among various peoples in Manchuria and Manchukuo. One difference between Korean migrants of Park's study and the non-Japanese Kendai students is that the former group was engaged in social and economic relations while the latter experienced colonialism in a school setting. My analysis of Kendai students' writings show that while nationality did play an important role in shaping the experiences of the Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese students at Kendai, one cannot take it for granted the extent and elements of their consciousness of nationality as reflected their ethnic origins.

My study also shares the recent interest in historical memory about Manchukuo within the field. Mariko Asano Tamanoi's *Memory Maps: the State and Manchuria in Postwar Japan* (2009) is an ethnographic research about the ways in which former Japanese agrarian emigrants to Manchuria remember their experiences.⁴⁸ She treats their historical memories both as sources of "empirical information" and "constructions of (and often for) the present."⁴⁹ Lori Watt's *When Empire Comes Home: Repatriation and Reintegration in Postwar Japan* (2009) takes the same approach to historical memory of Manchukuo, except that she concentrates on how it was used in the postwar Japanese society.⁵⁰ Watt argues that the image of *hikiagesha*, or repatriates from former colonies,

⁴⁸ Mariko Asano Tamanoi, *Memory Maps: the State and Manchuria in Postwar Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009).

⁴⁹ Tamanoi, *Memory Maps*, 5. The emphasis within the quote is the author's.

⁵⁰ Lori Watt, *When Empire Comes Home: Repatriation and Reintegration in Postwar Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

“served as a convenient domestic ‘other,’” which the Japanese public used as a tool to reconstruct the Japanese identity in the aftermath of the devastating defeat.⁵¹ In investigating the former Kendai students’ memoirs, I will also regard them as both historical records and constructed historical memory. Not only Japanese but also Chinese and Korean former students have published their memoirs. In addition, Kendai’s Alumni Association, which is based in Japan, has arranged meetings and trips to encourage interactions across national borders. Such activities and the act of writing memoirs about Kendai represent the former students’ continuing contemplation of their experiences at Kendai. In Afterword, I will show that the legacy of Kendai lies in their ongoing exchange of ideas about Pan-Asia.

As shown above, building on the political and economic histories, the recent literature that examines people’s daily life experiences has enhanced the field’s knowledge about the relationship between Japanese and non-Japanese populations in Manchuria and Manchukuo. While the former group tends to concentrate on the Japanese policies and the political circles and assume an exploitative and coercive relationship, the latter incorporates non-Japanese and non-governmental actors into focus and suggests a more complicated picture of relationships. My dissertation does the same. It shows that at Kendai, the only university that was directly administered by Manchukuo’s State Council, faculty’s and students’ perceptions and practice of Pan-Asianism had a wide variety. Some diverged substantially from Japan’s official version of Pan-Asianism—the perception of Asian unity with Japan as a leading nation.

⁵¹ Watt, 18.

Assimilation Policy in Japan's Formal Empire

Although the geographical scope of my dissertation is limited to Manchukuo, Japan's client state over which Japan exercised both formal and informal control, I am also interested in the commonalities and differences between Japan's informal and formal empire. Moreover, the Korean and Taiwanese students who matriculated at Kendai went through the Japanese colonial rule in their home countries, which shaped their experiences at Kendai as seen in Chapter III. This section will discuss some works on Japan's assimilation policy in formal empire, specifically Korea and Taiwan, which present convergence and divergence with my research.

Unlike the British empire's model of 'indirect rule' or 'separate development' where the indigenous populations were encouraged to retain their languages and customs, the Japanese Empire adopted the assimilation policy.⁵² As in French Algeria, Japan's colonial subjects in Taiwan and Korea received—or forced to receive in many instances—Japanese language instructions and even Japanese surnames in Korea. The Japanese state recognized them as imperial subjects in theory. In Japanese, this assimilation policy had two names: *dōka* (assimilation) and *kōminka* (imperialization).

Mark R. Peattie's article (1984) presents a concise history of Japan's assimilation policy. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the *dōka* policy developed based on the assumptions of the *dōbun dōshu* (same script, same race) and the mythical view of Japanese people as "imperial people" (*kōmin*), which together presented the appeal of

⁵² Lewis H. Gann, "Western and Japanese Colonialism: Some Preliminary Comparisons," in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945*, ed. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 497–525, 516.

idealism and justification for Japan's leading role.⁵³ The shock of the March First Movement in Korea in 1919 brought a change to the assimilation policy not only in Korea but also in other colonial territories. Prime Minister Hara Kei pushed for liberalization of colonial rule. However, in the case of Korea, the continuing instability as well as the assassination of Hara soon inhibited this move. Instead, it came to mean economic development, which could serve the homeland, and strengthened efforts at Japanization. As a semi-war condition unfolded after the Manchurian Incident of 1931, colonial policy became more coercive. By 1937, more ethnocentric *kōminka* policy—accelerated Japanization and the mobilization of colonial subjects for Japan's war effort—replaced the *dōka* policy.⁵⁴ To justify such an oppressive policy, Japanese officials used Pan-Asianist language more vigorously than ever. At the same time, the Japanese elite began to attempt to distinguish their vision of co-prosperity sphere from Western colonialism, by replacing the terms 'colony' and 'homeland' with '*gaichi*' ('the outer area') and '*naichi*' ('the inner area'). Thus, Peattie shows, by the 1940s, Japanese showed an anti-colonial attitude in its thinking about the empire.⁵⁵

⁵³ Mark R. Peattie, "Japanese Attitude toward Colonialism, 1895–1945," in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945*, ed. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 80–127. Peattie also notes that Japanese colonial specialists like Nitobe Inazō spoke of Japan's colonial responsibility. Peattie cites Akira Iriye in agreement that this paternalistic feeling toward Asia was distinct from Pan-Asianism of the 1920s and 1930s, because the former called for Japan's leading role toward the modernization of Asia based on the Western model while the latter stressed anti-Western alliance among Asians, (92).

⁵⁴ Peattie, "Japanese Attitude toward Colonialism," 121.

⁵⁵ Recently, Leo T. S. Ching presented a different approach to the *dōka* and *kōminka* policies by focusing on their effects on the identity politics in Taiwan. While Peattie sees the *kōminka* policy as the extension of the *dōka* policy, Ching regards it radically different. Under the *dōka* policy, the colonial state in Taiwan ruled the ethnically-diverse population with the principle of discriminate equality. For instance, the colonial authorities initially privileged the indigenous land-owning class—largely Chinese—in order to gain their support in consolidating the colonial rule with minimum costs. Nevertheless, the *kōminka* policy, with its imposition of a series of Japanese obligations, responsibilities, and customs on *all* colonial subjects, bridged the gap among various identities—Chinese, Taiwanese, Japanese, and aboriginal—in Taiwan. All subjects now shared an all-encompassing name, *kōmin*. Hence, from the perspective of the identity

Peter Duus's *The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895–1910* (1995) finds in Japan's early colonial policy in Korea a tendency to distinguish Japanese colonialism from that of the West. Unlike Western colonial empires that tended to conquer and rule the people whose race was different from that of their own, the Japanese could not ignore the similarities between the Koreans and themselves. Under this circumstance, the Japanese developed the "common race" theory based on the physical, cultural, historical, and linguistic similarities. Duus identifies two implications of this theory. One is that Japan's relationship with Korea differed from Western colonialism. Indeed, the Japanese rarely used the term 'colony' to describe Korea; terms like 'new territory' or 'extension of the map' were used instead.⁵⁶ Another implication that Duus finds in the 'common race' theory is that the Koreans were capable of assimilation through Japanese guidance. Thus, Duus argues, the 'common race' theory advanced the belief that "the Japanese annexation of Korea was natural, rational, and perhaps inevitable" because of the commonalities between the two races.⁵⁷

The practice of the *dōka* and *kōminka* policies was less clear in Manchukuo, Japan's informal empire. In principle, Manchukuo was an independent state, with its own government, jurisdiction, and emperor. Although the Japanese used similar slogans for Japan's relationship with Korea and with Manchukuo—"naisen ittai" (Japan–Korea, one

formation in colonial Taiwan, Ching argues that the *kōminka* policy was a radical turning point. See Leo T. S. Ching, *Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

⁵⁶ Peter Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895–1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, c1995), 422.

⁵⁷ Duus, 423. Also, there are works that investigate specific practices of Japan's assimilation policy. See for instance two chapters in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945*, ed. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie: Edward I-te Chen, "The Attempt to Integrate the Empire: Legal Perspectives," 240–274; and E. Patricia Tsurumi, "Colonial Education in Korea and Taiwan," 275–311.

body) and “*nichiman ittai*” (Japan–Manchukuo, one body) respectively—the meanings of the two terms differed. The former was the slogan of Japan’s assimilation policy, emphasizing the commonalities between the two nations. By contrast, the latter term pointed to the formation of a strong diplomatic tie between the two states that would become the core of a new order in Asia. Thus, Manchukuo as an independent state did not adopt Japan’s assimilation policy in theory. Nevertheless, in reality, Japanese militarists and civilian officials dominated the Manchukuo government’s important positions, and the state’s official language was Japanese, although non-Japanese populations were not drafted as Japanese soldiers as happened in other formal colonies.⁵⁸ In that sense, the *dōka* policy that was carried out in Japan’s formal empire has some overlaps with Japan-dominated governance of Manchukuo, although Manchukuo had no element of the *kōminka* policy toward its non-Japanese populations.

My research on Kendai addresses this ambiguous attitude toward the assimilation policy in Manchukuo. Kendai, with its commitment to the goal of creating harmonious relationship among peoples of different national identities, clearly diverged from Japan’s assimilation policy. This divergence was not in words only. Kendai encouraged honest dialogue and the use of native languages outside class. Although the school administration tended to impose Japanese customs and rituals on all students, students and faculty members enjoyed relative freedom. For instance, as discussed in Chapter IV, when Vice President Sakuta Sōichi visited prison to see several Chinese Kendai students who had been arrested for their anti-Japanese activities, Sakuta commended them for

⁵⁸ Formal conscription began in 1943 in Korea and 1945 in Taiwan, although these soldiers were never sent to battlefield before the war ended. Before the formal conscription started, the Japanese Military recruited volunteer soldiers in these colonies.

their action. For him, the Chinese students' patriotism for China and anti-Japanese sentiment were the signs of brave willingness to sacrifice their lives for a greater cause. This incident and others show that Kendai had radically different attitude toward the relationship between the Japanese and the non-Japanese, compared with the official policies of *dōka* and *kōminka* in formal empire.

Japan's Prewar Education System

In both Japan proper and formal colonies, higher education was reserved for a competitively selected minority. In Japan, a series of school edicts issued by the Meiji and Taisho governments established a two-tier school system—one aiming to foster elite and the other to produce skilled workers. Henry DeWitt Smith's *Japan's First Student Radicals* (1972) provides useful statistical data that shows how steep the educational ladder from elementary to higher education was. Of all male graduates of elementary schools (age six to twelve) in 1920, 34% went onto either higher elementary schools or lower vocational schools, which represented the lower-tier of the education system. On the higher-tier, middle schools accepted only 10% of the elementary school graduates who passed competitive exams. After the five-year secondary education at middle schools (age twelve to seventeen), 40% of its graduates attended three-year terminal colleges specialized on professional training such as medicine and engineering. 10% of middle school graduates were admitted to private universities (age seventeen to twenty-three) which first offered three-year college preparatory course and then three-year college-level course. Another and often the top 10% of middle school graduates attended

three-year higher schools (age seventeen to twenty) which was the public equivalent of the college preparatory course offered at private colleges. After graduation, all higher school graduates were admitted to Imperial Universities, the most prestigious of all schools in Japan.⁵⁹

Where does Kendai fit in this education system? Its first three years were intended to provide the first level of post-secondary education, equivalent of Japan's higher schools. The next three-year course of study offered more specialized training on the level of university. Kendai's applicants must have graduated from middle schools.⁶⁰ While having a similar outlook with Japan's institutions of higher education, my findings show that Kendai was intended to be radically different from those existing establishments, aiming to become an original institution of higher learning for Manchukuo.

The basic structure of Japan's prewar education system was exported to its formal colonies, Taiwan and Korea. As in Japan, the system had two tracks. However, the education system in formal colonies had its special purposes as well. Patricia E. Tsurumi in "Colonial Education in Korea and Taiwan" (1984) identifies two such purposes.⁶¹ First, the schooling for the general public—the lower-tier—intended to transform colonial subjects into literate, capable, and loyal Japanese subjects. Second, colonial education on

⁵⁹ Henry DeWitt Smith, *Japan's First Student Radicals* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), 1–4.

⁶⁰ Chapter I will discuss the required qualifications for Kendai's admissions more in detail.

⁶¹ Patricia E. Tsurumi, "Colonial Education in Korea and Taiwan," in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945*, ed. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 275–311.

the whole aimed to reinforce the hierarchical relationship between the Japanese as a ruling nation and non-Japanese as colonial subjects.⁶²

In *Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910–1945* (2009), Mark E. Caprio indicates that the Japanese colonial authorities' education policy in Korea was shaped by the assumption of Korean inferiority to the Japanese.⁶³ For instance, even the educational integration policy under *bunka seiji* (“cultural policy”) of the 1920s did not promote the integration of Japanese and Korean classrooms, although it increased the number of elementary schools for Korean children and extended and equalized the length of primary education. Korean colonial administration did establish schools for Japanese–Korean coeducation; however, the higher tuition made these schools an option only to the Korean children of wealthy families.⁶⁴ Compared to these motives behind educational policy in formal empire, Kendai administration's vision was highly idealistic. Though the Japanese students and faculty members continued to be the majority, the school recruited non-Japanese scholars and attempted to attract non-Japanese students. In an effort to recruit talented students regardless of their economic backgrounds, Kendai offered its education free of charge, which indeed encouraged many of non-Japanese students to join the school.

What about the higher education in Taiwan and Korea? Like the elementary and secondary education, the basic structure of higher education in formal empire resembled

⁶² Chapter III has a detailed discussion of the elementary and secondary education in colonial Taiwan and Korea, which the majority of Kendai students from those formal colonies had attended before matriculating at Kendai.

⁶³ Mark E. Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910–1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009).

⁶⁴ Caprio, 130–132.

that of Japan proper. Taihoku Imperial University (1928) was one of the first institutions of higher learning established in Taiwan. Besides, there were Taihoku Medical College, Taichu Agriculture and Forestry College, Tainan Commercial College, Taihoku Commercial College, Tainan Industrial College, and Private Taihoku Girl's College. These institutions of higher education in Taiwan had two purposes. First was to foster skillful workers who could serve Japan's colonial regime. Indeed, all colleges except Taihoku Imperial University focused heavily on technical training and provided courses for three or four years. Taihoku Imperial University offered a six-year course of study. The second purpose was to conduct research about not only Taiwan but also south China and the South Pacific regions—the regions of interest in Japan's imperial expansion. For this purpose, a number of Japanese scholars were hired. Taihoku Imperial University's ratio of instructors to students was three to five. These schools of higher education continued to be dominated by the Japanese.⁶⁵

Korea had a similar system, with Keijō Imperial University (1924) as the most prestigious institution of higher learning. Compared to Taiwan, there were many more schools of higher education in Korea both public and private. Many of the private colleges were founded by religious organizations but put under the administration of the Government-General of Korea. Like its counterpart in Taiwan, Keijō Imperial University was the only institution that offered six years of higher education. The similarity with Taiwan can also be found in the fact that the Japanese continued to dominate both the faculty and student enrolment at Keijō Imperial University. According to Mark Caprio,

⁶⁵ Wen-Hsing Wu, Shun-Fen Chen and Chen-Tsou Wu, "The Development of Higher Education in Taiwan," *Higher Education* 18:1 "From Dependency to Autonomy: The Development of Asian Universities (1989), 117–136; Patricia E. Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan, 1895–1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), 122–124.

76% of the faculty were Japanese in 1938, and 68% of students enrolled between 1929 and 1938 were Japanese.⁶⁶ Chapter III shows why Kendai students from Taiwan and Korea chose Kendai over these other options in their own countries.

Japan's Pan-Asianism

Like Anglo-American empires' sense of mission that was expressed as "the white man's burden" and French vision of "Algerian melting pot," Pan-Asianism was important part of the Japanese Empire.⁶⁷ Japan's Pan-Asianism took a variety of forms—the call for Japan–China collaboration, a vision of Asian unity, the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, as well as the idealistic constructions of Manchukuo. Japan's Pan-Asianism differs from the idealistic visions of Western empires, because it originated in the nation's experience of Western menace in the nineteenth century. In other words, Japan's Pan-Asianist thinking began in an effort to position the nation in the world to which it had just entered. On the other hand, Japan's Pan-Asianism is similar to the Western counterparts in a sense that the *bona fides* of its idealistic claims is in question.

Pan-Asianism emerged as an influential idea among the Japanese political elite in the early Meiji era, when the nation tried to define itself in the world to which it had just entered after more than 200 years of national seclusion. Concurring with Fukuzawa Yukichi's call for "escaping from Asia," (*datsu-a*) the Meiji leaders hurriedly built a

⁶⁶ Caprio, 200.

⁶⁷ Andrea Smith describes how this idealistic principle of creating "Algerian melting pot" out of French and other European settlers and Muslim Algerians worked. Based on former settlers' interviews, she also highlights the limits of this idealism. Andrea Smith, *Colonial Memory in Postcolonial Europe: Maltese Settlers in Algeria and France* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).

nation state following the Western model, believing that it was the only way for national survival. Pan-Asianism provided an idealistic alternative to “joining West”—“returning to Asia,” uniting with Asian neighbors, and fighting against Western encroachment. Gaining self-confidence through victories in two wars against Qing China (1894–95) and Russia (1904–05), and frustrated at the continuing Western contempt for Japan, which became especially apparent through the racial equality debate at the Paris Peace Conference (1919) and the U.S. anti-Japanese Immigration Act (1924), the Pan-Asianist call for uniting with Asian neighbors gained support in Japan. Indeed, the early twentieth century through the late 1920s observed some transnational dialogue and cooperation among Pan-Asianists throughout Asia.⁶⁸ There were also some prominent Asian nationalists who continued to put their faith in Japan-sponsored Pan-Asianism.⁶⁹ The Pan-Asianist discourse became incorporated into Japan’s foreign policy by the late 1920s and came to serve as a tool for legitimizing Japanese expansion and military aggression in Asia during the 1930s and the early 40s.

The literature on Japan’s Pan-Asianism contains three types of approach. First, earlier works on Japan’s Pan-Asianism concentrate on the elite’s perceptions of Pan-Asianism and often took a form of political biography of key ideologues. Second, there is a rising interest in non-elite and non-governmental actors’ conceptions of Pan-Asianism.

⁶⁸ One example is the Asian Solidarity Society that was established in Tokyo in 1907 under the leadership of a Chinese revolutionary activist Zhang Ji. This group was consisted of the Marxist-driven radical students of Japan, China, the Philippines, Vietnam, and India, and facilitated intellectual interactions with a common goal of uniting Asia and protecting it from Western imperialism. More on this, see Rebecca E. Karl, “Creating Asia: China in the World at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century,” in *The American Historical Review*. 103.4 (Oct. 1998): 1096–1118; and Zensaku Takeuchi, “Meiji makki ni okeru chūnichi kakumei undō no kōryū [Late Meiji interactions between Chinese and Japanese revolutionary movements],” in *Chugoku-kenkyū*. 5 (Sep. 1948): 74–95.

⁶⁹ One example of such Asian nationalists was Subhas Chandra Bose, a leader of Indian independence movement against British colonialism.

Third, the works that concern the cultural aspects of the Japanese Empire often examine Pan-Asianism and race as important subjects. These studies tend to explore Pan-Asianism in close relation to Japan's policy. Like the second type of literature, my dissertation concerns not only the governmental but also non-governmental actors' understandings of Pan-Asianism. In addition, I attempt to make two interventions in this emerging field. First, my study of Pan-Asianism includes non-Japanese members of the Kendai community, examining their responses to the ideology. Second, my research is about not only the perceptions of Pan-Asianism but also how the ideology was put into practice in an educational setting. Because this experiment was conducted in an environment that had relatively high level of cultural tolerance and with the presence of non-Japanese students and intellectuals, Kendai's experience of Pan-Asianism can illuminate the possibility and limit of this ideology. In this section, I will discuss the three types of literature on Japan's Pan-Asianism.

Treating Pan-Asianism as the Japanese elite's ideas, the first type of literature often examines Japanese Sinology. Stefan Tanaka's *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History* (1993) presents an intellectual history to explain the shifts of ideas that shaped Japan's imperialist attitude toward China.⁷⁰ China, which the Japanese had long revered as the center of civilization, came to be termed *shina*, "a mere branch," as the object of veneration shifted to the West in the late nineteenth century. When Japan grew confident and dissatisfied with the Western rejection of Japan as equal, and as post-WWI Chinese nationalism threatened Japan's interests in the continent, *shina* became the object of study as Japan's past and the country that the Japanese were destined to guide to

⁷⁰ Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History* (California: University of California Press, 1993).

modernization. Thus, Tanaka's intellectual history shows how Japan's ambiguous discourse about China—reverence for its past, condemnation for its present, and paternalistic sense of mission—originated and developed.

Three books about Japanese Sinologists, or China experts, bear directly to Chapter I about the Kendai administration and faculty. Lincoln Li's study about Tachibana Shiraki, Joshua A. Fogel's biographies of Naitō Kōnan, and Nakae Ushikichi characterize these Japanese intellectuals' Sinology. The three Sinologists all had some connections with Kendai. Tachibana was listed among the Kendai affiliated faculty, although the extent of his involvement in the school is unknown and likely minimum as no significant evidence survives. Naitō was a friend of one of Kendai faculty members, Inaba Iwakichi. Nakae was invited to join Kendai faculty but rejected the offer.

Lincoln Li's *The China Factor in Modern Japanese Thought* (1996) characterizes the Sinology of Tachibana Shiraki (1881–1945) as a philosophy that was utilized—even misused—by Japanese militarists to urge Japan's intervention in China.⁷¹ As discussed earlier, Tachibana, a leading scholar at the SMR Company's Research Department, advocated one of Manchukuo's founding principle, rule by the “kingly way.” Criticizing the general tendency of defining Tachibana's concept of the “kingly way” as either leftist idealism or rightist political rhetoric, Li presents Tachibana's intellectual biography to demonstrate that he was a nationalist scholar who intended to educate the Japanese about China and its importance in the creation of a new Asian order based on agriculture in opposition to the industrial West. Tachibana's concept of “kingly way” proposed the need of securing local Chinese support and their political participation in the Manchukuo

⁷¹ Lincoln Li, *The China Factor in Modern Japanese Thought: The Case of Tachibana Shiraki, 1881–1945* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996).

state.⁷² Hence, Li insists that Tachibana developed a new ideology that combined the leftist sympathy toward Chinese nationalism and the rightist imperialist dream of rallying Asia against the West. Tachibana's influence in the Manchukuo politics declined after 1937 as the Kwantung Army grew less tolerant toward his anti-militarist view and his sympathy toward Chinese nationalism. My findings show a contrasting case. Operating within a different setting, which posed less political constraints and pressures than the Research Department Tachibana served, some of the Japanese scholars and students at Kendai continued to express understanding and sympathy toward Chinese nationalist sentiment even during the Second Sino–Japanese War and until 1945.

Joshua A. Fogel has written biographies of two Japanese Sinologists, Naitō Kōnan (1866–1934)⁷³ and Nakae Uchikichi (1889–1942)⁷⁴, whose scholarships differed significantly. Both Naitō and Nakae studied China's past because they found contemporary significance in it. However, they chose different periods of China's past and used the histories for different purposes. Being a publicist and later a history professor at Kyoto Imperial University, Naitō focused mainly on the Qing dynasty to examine the contemporary problems in China and supported Japan's intervention in China's reform.⁷⁵ Fogel points out two characteristics in Naitō's scholarship. First,

⁷² Li, 62.

⁷³ Joshua A. Fogel, *Politics and Sinology: The Case of Naitō Kōnan, 1866-1934* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984).

⁷⁴ Joshua A. Fogel, *Nakae Uchikichi in China: The Mourning of Spirit* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989).

⁷⁵ As Fogel shows, Naitō contended that China's 'modernity' originated in the Song dynasty (960–1279), particularly in its *xiangtuan*, or the autonomous organizations in rural areas, which, Naitō perceived to be the origin of Chinese republicanism (Chapter 5). However, the stagnant Qing imperial court as well as the incapable reformers before and after the 1911 revolution prevented China's 'modernity,' which Naitō sees as superior to Western modernity based on industrialization, from fully materializing in the current

Naitō's Sinological research was based on his early training in *jitsugaku* ('real learning') that emphasized the practicality of the knowledge acquired.⁷⁶ Second, Fogel argues, Naitō was a nationalist whose main concern in research was what roles Japan could and should play in China's reform. Hence, Naitō used his Sinological research to push for Japanese intervention in China.

In contrast, Nakae Ushikichi, another Sinologist that Fogel studies, concentrated on the ancient political systems in China to illuminate the oppressive nature of the institutions and people's suffering under them. In doing so, Fogel points out, Nakae made an allusion to the contemporary Japanese militarism and criticized Japan's foreign and domestic policies. Fogel considers Nakae as a rare example of individual Japanese who could retain his value system during the war. Nakae's position as an expatriate in Beijing certainly facilitated him doing so.⁷⁷ Nakae repeatedly rejected all offers and requests to get involved in the official politics. Among many offers that he turned down was a request by Kendai to join its faculty.⁷⁸ Thus, by refusing to become a public figure, Nakae maintained autonomy over his scholarship. At the same time, he expressed his

state. Thus, Naitō opined by the early 1920s that Japanese intervention was necessary in bringing reforms to China (225). Fogel, *Politics and Sinology*.

⁷⁶ Fogel, *Politics and Sinology*, xix.

⁷⁷ Fogel, *Nakae Ushikichi in China*, Chapter 1 and 149–51. As for the reasons for Nakae's refuge in Beijing, Fogel lists the following. The disharmony with his sister, his disappointment at the military-dominated politics, and his dislike of the inactive intellectuals who had been domesticated by the authorities as the emperor worshippers—all these factors made Nakae decide to live in China.

⁷⁸ Fogel, *Nakae Ushikichi in China*, 197–98. He also rejected the requests from the Kwantung Army and the SMR Company's Research Department. He even turned down the offers to publish his books and articles, except for just one article that he published in 1930. The first and only article that he published was "Shina no hōken seido ni tsuite (On the feudal system in China)" (Chapter 5).

uncoated oppositions and criticisms of Japanese policies in his conversations with and letters to friends and his letters to Imada Shintarō of the Kwantung Army.⁷⁹

Among the three Japanese Sinologists whom Li and Fogel introduce, Tachibana and Naitō were working within the political circles and sought to influence the official politics. Li and Fogel thus regard the two Sinologists as nationalists. Their Pan-Asianist perceptions were centered on the importance of Japan's role in China's reform. By contrast, Nakae consciously stayed away from politics and expressed his criticisms of the Japanese state as an expatriate. Unlike Tachibana and Naitō, Nakae did not propose solutions to the contemporary conditions in China. Nor did he advocate a new political order in Asia. Nakae's sole concern was, as Fogel points out, the people's sufferings under the oppression of the authorities. Thus, these three biographical works show a broad spectrum of views. My analysis of some of the Japanese Kendai faculty's writings shows that, while not as divergent as these three Sinologists, their views of Asia and Japan's relationship with it varied.

Besides these works on Japanese Sinologists, the first type of literature about Japan's Pan-Asianism also includes a biography of a prominent militarist thinker Ishiwara Kanji by Mark R. Peattie, published in 1975.⁸⁰ In it, Peattie highlights the fundamental contradiction of Ishiwara's Pan-Asianism. The author shows that Ishiwara's Pan-Asianism emerged from his reflection on Japan's victory in the Russo–Japanese War in 1905. It was a mixture of his anti-Western nationalism and his realistic view that Japan must prepare itself for the “final war” between the West led by the U.S. and Asia led by

⁷⁹ Fogel, *Nakae Ushikichi in China*, 160–71.

⁸⁰ Mark R. Peattie, *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan's Confrontation with the West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

Japan. At the same time, he nurtured his idealism of Asian brotherhood as he thought about the problems that Asian countries faced—Western encroachment, the need of reforms, and the question of Japan’s position.⁸¹ The result of these ideas was a radical Pan-Asianism that led Ishiwara to become the main instigator of the Manchurian Incident (1931) and the subsequent conquest of Manchuria and the founding of Manchukuo. Peattie concludes that Ishiwara’s Pan-Asianism—the mixture of anti-Western nationalism, pragmatism, and idealism—could not solve the fundamental contradictions of Pan-Asianism of his time.

Ishiwara Kanji is an important figure in my research about Kendai, as he proposed and initiated the founding of this university, which Peattie does not mention in his book. My primary sources show a sign that Ishiwara in the late 1930s possessed a more egalitarian perception of Pan-Asianism at least in terms of his vision for an ideal education to actualize the goal of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” For instance, Kendai’s arrangement of students of different national backgrounds to share dorm rooms and the permission to use native languages outside class were Ishiwara’s ideas. He hoped to create an environment in which students could engage in honest dialogue regardless of their national and cultural differences. Chapter I will investigate this idealistic dimension of Ishiwara’s Pan-Asianism and how it was translated into Kendai’s curriculum.

In addition, scholars have produced research on Japanese intellectuals whose works reflected Pan-Asianist ideas. Among those intellectuals are a leading member of the Shōwa Research Association, Miki Kiyoshi, a philosopher of the Kyoto School of

⁸¹ Peattie, *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan’s confrontation with the West*, Chapter II.

Philosophy, Tanabe Hajime,⁸² a rightist Pan-Asianist, Mitsukawa Kametarō,⁸³ and a Confucian scholar, Yasuoka Masahiro.⁸⁴ While these works show a wide spectrum of Pan-Asianist perceptions, these Japan-based Pan-Asianists seem to have shared a common experience: political constraints and pressure especially after the 1930s. For instance, Miki's major reason for joining the Shōwa Research Association, a government's think tank that produced the ideological constructions of the Japanese Empire, was the fact that its members were granted immunity from censorship. Kendai faculty's publications reflect their conceptions of Pan-Asianism as well. While my analysis of some of their academic writings shows their common inclination to situate Japan at the center of the envisioned Asian unity, they explained that position differently. In addition, while not producing written records by themselves, some Japanese faculty members, like Professor Fujita Matsuji of Agriculture and Agricultural Training, apparently embraced egalitarian conceptions of Pan-Asianism, which quite a few Kendai students favorably wrote in their accounts.

The second type of approach to Japan's Pan-Asianism focuses on the people who had been excluded from the earlier studies of Pan-Asianism. Michael A. Schneider's article (2007) concerns a Japanese feminist Inoue Hideko who became Pan-Asianist

⁸² Susan C. Townsend, *Miki Kiyoshi (1897–1945): Japan's Itinerant Philosopher* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2009); and John Namjun Kim, "The Temporality of Empire: The Imperial Cosmopolitanism of Miki Kiyoshi and Tanabe Hajime," in *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, Regionalism and Borders*, ed. Sven Saaler and J. Victor Koschmann (New York: Routledge, 2007), 151–167.

⁸³ Christopher W. A. Szpilman, "Between Pan-Asianism and Nationalism: Mitsukawa Kametaro and His Campaign to Reform Japan and Liberate Asia," in *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History*, 85–100.

⁸⁴ Roger H. Brown, "Visions of a Virtuous Manifest Destiny: Yasuoka Masahiro and Japan's Kingly Way," in *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History*, 133–150.

during the 1930s.⁸⁵ Schneider explains that Inoue chose this path because the ideology could help achieve her feminist goal: a greater role for women in international affairs. Working for the Greater East Asian Ministry in its educational reforms in occupied China, Inoue advocated that Japanese women and Japanese home must present a model for fellow Asians. Another example is an article written by Narangoa Li (2007). Li introduces a Japanese religious organization Ōmotokyō, whose Pan-Asianist mission activities in Manchuria were not directly expansionist but based on the ethnocentric belief in the Japanese responsibility for leading Asia and the world to peace.⁸⁶

Mariko Asano Tamanoi's article (2005) is another important example of the field's effort to incorporate various groups of people's perceptions of Pan-Asianism.⁸⁷ Tamanoi examines the transformation of Pan-Asianism of a Japanese Kendai student, Morisaki Minato, who committed suicide upon Japan's capitulation in August 1945. In *Isho [The Will]*, an edited personal diary that Morisaki kept from 1940 to 1945, Tamanoi finds a change in his conception of race and nationality. He arrived at the school with a pride as superior Japanese who must guide other Asians. However, through his interactions with his non-Japanese classmates, he came to realize that each student had his own nationalism and eventually even viewed his Chinese classmates with respect for their commitment for anti-Japanese movement. Then, Tamanoi interprets Morisaki's

⁸⁵ Michael A. Schneider, "Were Women Pan-Asianists the Worst? Internationalism and Pan-Asianism in the Careers of Inoue Hideko and Inoue Masaji," in *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History*, 115–129.

⁸⁶ Narangoa Li, "Universal Values and Pan-Asianism: The Vision of Ōmotokyō," in *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History*, 52–66.

⁸⁷ Mariko Asano Tamanoi, "Pan-Asianism in the Diary of Morisaki Minato (1924–1945), and the Suicide of Mishima Yukio (1925–1970)," in *Crossed Histories: Manchuria in the Age of Empire*, ed. Mariko Asano Tamanoi (Honolulu: Association for Asian Studies and University of Hawaii Press, 2005), 184–206.

suicide as a death for all those who had been oppressed under the Japanese state, including Chinese and other non-Japanese peoples. Thus, the author argues that before his death Morisaki had a multiethnic conception of a nation. While I also look into Morisaki's diary, I use the diaries, contemporary writings, and memoirs of many other Kendai students—both Japanese and non-Japanese—and show their conceptions of Pan-Asianism.

Reflecting a recent effort within the broader field that pays attention to cultural aspects of colonialism, the third type of literature incorporates Pan-Asianism in its analysis of Japan's national policy. Concentrating on the years of the Pacific War (1941–1945), John W. Dower's *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (1986)⁸⁸ and Gerald Horne's *Race War!: White Supremacy and the Japanese Attack on the British Empire* (2004)⁸⁹ examine the role of race in Japan's wartime policy. Although the main body of *War Without Mercy* is devoted to explain the role that race played in igniting, intensifying, and calming down the hatred in the war between Japan and Anglo-American allies, Dower also uses race to explain Japanese self-image and perceptions of the colonial subjects in Asia; and, it is in this part that one finds race-based Pan-Asianism. In analyzing the wartime reports written by governmental bureaucrats, the author identifies the concept of the "proper place" as the key to the Japanese racial view of the world. Based on the idea of racial purity of the Japanese, whose emperor descended from the Sun Goddess, the Japanese official ideology held that the Japanese were destined to

⁸⁸ John W. Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986).

⁸⁹ Gerald Horne, *Race War!: White Supremacy and the Japanese Attack on the British Empire* (New York, London: New York University Press, 2004).

dominate peoples in Asia who belonged to lower places within a new Pan-Asianist order.⁹⁰

Horne similarly highlights the vital role that race-based Pan-Asianism played in Japan's initial military success in the war against the allies. He shows how Japanese propaganda efforts utilized the local reality—Southeast Asian people's strong resentment at the white supremacist racism under Western colonial rule—to construct a Pan-Asianist message that Japan was a liberator of Asians.⁹¹ This strategy proved effective, as Japanese troops gained support from the nationalists of each country. Such race-based collaborations against white colonial regimes occurred throughout Southeast Asia—in Indochina (under French rule), Singapore, Malaya, and Burma (under British rule), Indonesia (under Dutch rule), New Guinea (under Australian rule), and the Philippines (under American rule).⁹² Thus, Horne demonstrates how Japanese policymakers were

⁹⁰ Dower, Chapter 10.

⁹¹ This idea that Japan was a liberator of Asians, or the colored peoples, gained popularity among anti-imperialist nationalists throughout Asia after Japan's triumph over Russia (considered to be the white race) in 1905. One example of the emerging Pan-Asian contacts across nations around this time was the establishment of the Asian Solidarity Society in Tokyo in 1907, which Rebecca E. Karl introduces in her article. Aiming to foster the principle of mutual assistance for national independence movements, this organization consisted of members from India, China, Japan, Korea, Indochina, Siam, the Philippines, Burma, and Malay (1111). Upholding an egalitarian version of Pan-Asianism (as opposed to the nationalist version), the society welcomed any Asians if they were anti-imperialist and were willing to fight against oppression. Rebecca E. Karl, "Creating Asia: China in the World at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century," *American Historical Review* 103.4 (1998): 1096–1118.

⁹² More on Japan's policy in Southeast Asia and the role of Pan-Asianism, see: Joyce Lebra-Chapman, *Japanese-trained Armies in Southeast Asia: Independence and Volunteer Forces in World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977); and *Southeast Asia under Japanese Occupation*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, c1980).

Lebra-Chapman introduces the volunteer armies called *giyūgun* in Malaya, Sumatra, Indochina, Borneo and the Philippines. The *Peta*, or the 'Defenders of the Homeland,' was one example of such army among the Indonesians formed in 1943 and trained under the Japanese. The Japanese also promised or even granted independence as a way to advance pan-Asian alliance against the Allies. In 1943, the Japanese proclaimed independence of Burma and the Philippines, setting up the Japanese-sponsored autonomy like that of Manchukuo, in order to represent the formation of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Furthermore, the Greater East Asia Ministry hosted the Greater East Asia Conference in the same year,

keenly aware of the Western racism and used racialized Pan-Asianist propaganda to tap into the anti-Western nationalist sentiments of people in the region.

More recently, Eri Hotta's *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931–1945* (2007) presented a strong claim that the ideology of Pan-Asianism shaped Japan's national policy throughout the Fifteen-Year War.⁹³ More specifically, she argues that Pan-Asianism functioned as “a consensus-building tool for an otherwise divided government” throughout the years between 1931 and 1945.⁹⁴ At crucial moments in Japan's war, such as the Manchurian Incident of 1931, the outbreak of the Second Sino–Japanese War in 1937, and the Pearl Harbor attack of 1941, Hotta contends that the catchall nature of Pan-Asianism brought internationalists, imperialists, bureaucrats, and the literary elite together in support of the empire.

A point of agreement among Hotta and the works on Japanese elite Pan-Asianists is that the dominant perception of Pan-Asianism by the 1930s was Japan-centered. Hotta calls this thread of idea Meishuron Pan-Asianism—*meishu*, or leader, referring to Japan. Representing this line of thinking, ultranationalist and expansionist organizations such as Kokuryūkai (Amur River Society) and Genyōsha (Dark Ocean Society) insisted that

with participation of nationalists such as Subhas Chandra Bose, Ba Maw, Wang Sh'ing-wei and Tōjō Hideki (12). As Lebra-Chapman points out, however, this policy of granting Japan-sponsored independence must have had different levels of appeal to the Burmese and the Filipinos. For, unlike the former, the latter had the words of the American promise of return and guidance for independence. The Filipino collaboration with the Japanese often meant “the desire to gain or retain political power” than the loyalty to the Japanese (144).

⁹³ Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931–1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

⁹⁴ Hotta, 226.

Japan had “an active role to play in transforming China and other Asian nations in the image of Japan.”⁹⁵

My dissertation presents a complicated picture of Pan-Asianism as policy and practice at Kendai. What I have found are multiple discourses, both overlapping with and diverging from the official conception of Pan-Asianism as studied by Hotta and others. The school’s curriculum and customs represented different conceptions of Pan-Asianism; faculty members perceived a new Asian order and Japan’s role within it differently; and some students critically evaluated Japanese official version of Pan-Asianism—Meishuron Pan-Asianism—and developed their own understandings and practices of the ideology. By examining Pan-Asianism as perceived by governmental and non-governmental actors, and as understood and practiced by Japanese and non-Japanese members of Kendai, my research will contribute a layered analysis of Pan-Asianism.

Chapter Outline

My dissertation consists of four chapters. Chapter I focuses on the origins, planning period, the curriculum, and the faculty of Kendai. The idea of founding Manchukuo’s highest educational institution came from Colonel Ishiwara Kanji, who had contributed to the ideological construction of Manchukuo as the Kwantung Army’s staff officer since 1928. He hoped to found a university to foster leaders who would actualize Manchukuo’s founding principles, especially, “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” The detailed planning was entrusted to the planning committee which

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 45.

was dominated by Japanese and led by four academics who ultimately came up with a curriculum and educational system that were quite different from Ishiwara's original idea. Chapter I first explores Ishiwara's conception of Pan-Asianism that is reflected in his vision of education. It then examines the planning committee members' visions of ideal education and the outcome of their fierce discussion: Kendai's curriculum. Among the sources I use in this chapter is *Kenkoku Daigaku nenpyō [the chronological timetable of Nation Building University]* that was compiled by one of the former Japanese students, Yuji Manzō in 1981.⁹⁶ Unlike a conventional chronology, this thick tome contains the testimonies by the planning committee members, faculty members, and students as well as Kendai's institutional records. My findings show that divergent perceptions of Pan-Asianism were incorporated into the physical plant and curriculum of Kendai and thus caused contradictions such as encouraging free discussion on one hand and imposing Japanese customs and values on the other. I hope to show these Japanese elite group's struggles to put different Pan-Asianist ideals into practice in the educational setting.

The last section of Chapter I analyzes the scholarly writings authored by Kendai's Japanese and non-Japanese faculty members. *Kenkoku daigaku kenkyūin geppō [Kenkoku University Research Institute monthly journal]* published scholarly articles of various fields. Between 1940 and 1945, 45 volumes were issued, and each volume contained a few articles. I have access to 32 volumes of this journal. There are several published articles that were used as course materials and the transcripts of lectures delivered at Kendai. My analysis of these sources reveal that while Japanese members tended to see

⁹⁶ Manzō Yuji, *Kenkoku daigaku nenpyō [The chronological timetable of Nation Building University in Manchuria]* (Tokyo: Kenkoku Daigaku Dosokai, 1981). Although it does not reflect non-Japanese students' perspectives of the institution, it certainly offers a good sense of events regarding Kendai.

Japan's role as central in forging an Asian unity, they presented distinct explanations for Japan's relationship with Asia and the motives of Asian participation in the Pan-Asian crusade against the West. Some viewed a teacher–pupil relationship emphasizing Japan's quick modernization and mission to guide others. Others took it for granted that Asian peoples would voluntarily cooperate with Japan-led project of constructing a new Asian order, highlighting the shared experience of Western menace. Meanwhile, although Kendai's non-Japanese faculty did not oppose the Japanese Empire in their writings, they subtly challenged the centrality of Japan in the ongoing Pan-Asianist endeavor. Thus, though writing in the midst of Japan's war in China and against the Allies, the Kendai faculty members expressed a variation of ideas about Pan-Asianism.

While Kendai faculty members explored and elaborated their conceptions of Pan-Asianism in their research, students experimented and contemplated Pan-Asianism in their everyday experiences at Kendai. Chapter II to IV focus on Kendai students' experiences and their perceptions of and relationships with Pan-Asianism. Chapter II concerns Japanese students, Chapter III Korean and Taiwanese students, and Chapter IV Chinese students. Although a small number of Russian and Mongolian students also enrolled at Kendai, I have limited access to their recollections. I regret that their experiences do not form a chapter. Each of these three chapters will examine students' motives for attending Kendai, their initial reactions to the school, their interactions with their fellow classmates and teachers, and their evaluations of Kendai, Manchukuo, and the Japanese Empire.

For Chapter II that analyzes the experiences of the Japanese students, I rely mostly on their contemporary writings—diaries they kept during school days. Numerous

entries are compiled in the aforementioned chronology. In addition, a few other Japanese alumni published their diaries with varying degrees of edit. What these sources reveal is that the cross-cultural interactions on the Kendai campus had two different effects on the Japanese students. Some Japanese students entered Kendai full of imperial idealism, and their encounters inside and outside the classroom led to serious critique and disillusionment. One even finds growing sympathy toward Chinese and Korean students' nationalist sentiments. For other Japanese students, their experiences solidified their sense of Japan's superiority and commitment to the hierarchical notion of Japanese as the guiding nation of Asia.

Chapter III focuses on the experiences of students from Korea and Taiwan, who as residents of Japan's formal empire possessed the dual identity of the colonized other and Japanese imperial subjects with many—though not all—rights of Japanese citizens. Japan annexed Taiwan in 1895 after winning the Sino–Japanese War, 1894–95. Korea had been Japan's protectorate since 1905 when Japan defeated Russia in the Russo–Japanese War, 1904–05, and had subsequently been annexed in 1910. The students from these formal colonies grew up under Japan's assimilation policy. Indeed, some of them had Japanese or Japanized names, and all were officially acknowledged as Japanese imperial subjects. Moreover, many of them were fluent in Japanese. I rely on their memoirs. First, *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū* [*Kankirei: collection of memoirs written by alumni in Korea*]⁹⁷ (2004) contains 21 essays written by Korean alumni residing in South Korea and were translated into Japanese. Second, one of

⁹⁷ *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū* [*Kankirei: collection of memoirs written by alumni in Korea*]. Trans. Eun-Suk Kim and Yoshikazu Kusano. (Kenkoku University Alumni Association, 2004).

the contributors to this collection also published a book-length memoir titled *Hankyore no sekai: aa nihon* [*The world of my countrymen: Ah, Japan*] in 1999.⁹⁸ Third, the only writing authored by Taiwanese alumni is Li Shuiqing's memoir *Dongbei banian huigulu* [*Memory about the eight years that I lived in Dongbei*] (2007).⁹⁹ These memoirs show that whether or not they had embraced Japan's assimilation policy in their home countries before matriculating at Kendai, these students became awakened to their national identity as Korean or Taiwanese as they interacted with other Asian students on campus. Cutting across the clear border of the collaboration and resistance, their experiences complicate the picture of Pan-Asianist education at Kendai.

The central source in Chapter IV is an anthology of former Chinese students' recollections *Huiyi weiman jianguo daxue* [*Recollections of Bogus Manchukuo Nation Building University*] (1997). This source, published in the PRC, presents problems of how to read the narratives that were produced under political constraints. In light of the authorized narrative of the Second Sino–Japanese War (1937–45) in the PRC and the risk of guilt by association with Japanese militarism, it is not surprising that the Chinese memoirs emphasize the negative aspects of their experiences of Kendai and represent Kendai as a vehicle of Japanese imperialism. There are, however, a limited number of memoirs written by former Chinese students that were published in Japanese in Japan. Reading the former texts against the latter allows for a more nuanced interpretation of the

⁹⁸ Chun-Sik Hong, *Hankyore no sekai: aa nihon* [*The world of my countrymen: Ah, Japan*] (Ansan, 1999).

⁹⁹ Shuiqing Li, *Dongbei banian huigulu* [*Memory about the eight years that I lived in Dongbei*] Trans. Kenzō Takazawa (Tokyo: Kenkoku Daigaku dōsōkai, 2007).

Chinese students' experiences. One finds subtle differences in their views of Pan-Asianism and Kendai's practice of it.

In Afterword, I describe the lives of Kendai students after the closing of Kendai in August 1945, following the capitulation of Japan and the dissolution of Manchukuo. Due to their associations with Kendai, a unique educational institution in Manchukuo, many former students had difficult time adjusting themselves to their respective societies. For instance, during the Allies' occupation of Japan, former Kendai faculty members and students were removed from public offices. Some former Chinese students were persecuted during the Cultural Revolution. Meanwhile, since its establishment in Tokyo in 1953, the Kenkoku University Alumni Association has published memoirs and other sources regarding the school, which I heavily rely in Afterword, held meetings in and outside Japan, and forged exchanges among former Kendai students across national borders. The alumni association's lively activities, which still continue today when all of its members are in their 90s and 80s, illuminate the ongoing transnational exchange of ideas about Pan-Asia.

CHAPTER I

**A DREAM OF BUILDING A UNIQUE UNIVERSITY IN MANCHURIA:
KENKOKU UNIVERSITY’S ORIGINS, PLANNING PERIOD, SCHOOL
CURRICULUM, AND FACULTY**

On July 7, 1937, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident occurred near Beijing, which triggered the Second Sino–Japanese War (1937–1945). Just as this unintended clash between Chinese and Japanese armies erupted to the south of Manchukuo, a group of twelve Japanese and three Chinese officials and academics were holding a meeting in Shinkyō, the capital of Manchukuo, to finalize plans to establish Manchukuo’s leading institution of higher learning.¹⁰⁰ As one of the participants later recalled, they reacted to the news of the fighting with a surprise and recognized that it was “a serious matter” but without any apprehension this was the opening battle of all-out war between China and Japan.¹⁰¹ The meeting proceeded as planned and approved the “Guidelines for the Establishment of Kenkoku University (*kenkoku daigaku sōsetsu yōkō*).” The document they drafted boldly declared: “This university aims to nurture a generation of talented young men who will advance and make manifest to the world the historical significance

¹⁰⁰ The Marco Polo Bridge Incident is sometimes represented as a deliberate escalation of hostilities by the Japanese Army in China. In fact, both the Japanese and Guomindang (GMD) local commanders tried to defuse tensions and reach a settlement, which seemed successful by July 11. Despite the Japanese Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro, his cabinet, and the army chief of staff in Tokyo’s sense of relief, Chiang Kai-shek, the head of the GMD, reversed his previous acquiescent attitude toward Japan and refused to accept the settlement negotiated by local commanders. For full description of the event, see James L. McClain, *Japan: A Modern History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002), 442–447; and Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), 419–422.

¹⁰¹ Kiyohiko Tsutsui, “Sōsō no koro [The pioneering days]” in *Kendaishi shiryō 2 [Sources on the history of Kendai]* (Tokyo: Kenkoku University Alumni Association, 1967), 17–19, 17; Manzō Yuji, *Kenkoku daigaku nenpyō [The chronological timetable of Nation Building University in Manchuria]* (Tokyo: Kenkoku Daigaku Dosokai, 1981), 41. “大變なこと”

of Manchukuo. This unique university, which surpasses any other existing institution of higher learning in its innovative curriculum, will embody...the spirit of (Manchukuo) nation-building...”¹⁰² The two phrases, the “historical significance of Manchukuo” and “the spirit of nation-building” were as abstract as they were grandiose, and the school’s administration, faculty, and students would subsequently define them in diverse ways. Nevertheless, as this chapter shows, the conception of the institution’s mission as conceived by the planning committee’s core members was based on a Japan-centered ideology of *kōdō*, or imperial way. This ideology’s central tenant was belief in the unbroken and sacred lineage of the Japanese emperors, which paradoxically was transposed to the “empty space” of Manchuria to actualize the state’s unique mission of creating “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.”

Just as the Kendai planning committee was feverishly finalizing its plan in Shinkyō, Major General Ishiwara Kanji was in Tokyo frantically trying to stop the military conflict that was unfolding in North China. Within central headquarters opinion sharply divided over how to respond: whether to expand or contain the conflict unfolding in North China. Ishiwara, Chief of the Operations Division of Japanese Army, argued that Japan must avoid a war with China at all costs. Although he eventually yielded to the opinion of the majority and authorized mobilization for the battle near Beijing, Ishiwara continued to advocate a policy of cooperation with China, for, in his mind, the Soviet Union was a greater menace than the strident nationalism of Chiang Kai-shek’s Nanjing government. Furthermore, he regarded the development of Manchukuo and a cooperative

¹⁰² “Kenkoku Daigaku sōsetsu yōkō [Guidelines for the Establishment of Nation Building University]” (August 5, 1937) in Yuji, 52–54, 52. “本大学ハ満洲国ノ世界史的意義ヲ拡充顕現スベキ人材養成ノ為独創的の大学ナルヲ以テ一切ノ既成概ヲ超越シ…建国精神ニ立脚シ…”

relationship among Japan, Manchukuo and China as a precondition for successful prosecution of eventual war with the United States, which he held was unavoidable.¹⁰³ It was with this vision of Pan-Asianism—strategic alliance of Japan, Manchukuo and China—that Ishiwara initiated the foundation of Manchukuo’s leading institution of higher education in the fall of 1936. He envisioned the school becoming the center of Pan-Asian unity not just among the diverse peoples residing in Manchukuo but also among all Asian nations. In the end, he did not have the final say in key decisions due to the nature of his assignments during the crucial phase of Kendai’s planning.¹⁰⁴ He did not attend the planning committee meeting in Shinkyō, which approved a plan that diverged substantially from Ishiwara’s original vision. Nevertheless, the idea of a creating a university that would be not just another overseas Japanese institution of higher learning but a radically different kind of institution with a Pan-Asianist mission, sprang from Ishiwara’s thought.

This chapter first examines the origin of Kendai in Ishiwara Kanji’s geopolitical conception of East Asia and the actual planning process as it was implemented by the committee led by four Japanese academics. By exploring Ishiwara’s initial vision and the extent of its actual realization in Kendai’s curriculum and structure, I will demonstrate that Kendai as an institution incorporated variant articulations of its unique mission. While sharing the commitment to Kendai’s idealistic mission—putting the Pan-Asianist

¹⁰³ Mark R. Peattie, *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan’s Confrontation with the West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), Chapter VIII “Against the Tide: Ishiwara and the China War.”

¹⁰⁴ As the following section shows, Ishiwara left Manchukuo in August 1932 after playing a significant role in the foundation of the state. Subsequently, his military career was mainly associated with the Japanese Army in Tokyo. Although he was appointed Vice Chief of Staff of the Kwantung Army in September 1937, by then, the basic principles and structure of Kendai had been already determined by the planning committee.

ideal of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” into practice— Ishiwara and planning committee defined the central concept differently. Ishiwara emphasized the necessity of forging a cooperative relationship between Japan and China, in which Manchukuo would play a crucial bridging role. In contrast, the four key academics on the planning committee viewed Japan as the moving force and rightful leader of Pan-Asian unity. In addition, although Ishiwara and the planning committee shared the determination to create a unique institution of higher learning very different from Japan’s imperial universities, they frequently disagreed over how to achieve this goal. Such conflicts of ideas continued to shape Kendai, which I will show by examining the school curriculum and selected academic writings of Kendai faculty, including Japanese, Chinese, and Korean. As a whole, Kendai’s administration and faculty provides valuable insight into the variety of conceptions of Pan-Asianism in circulation in the discourse on empire in Japanese-occupied Manchuria during the Second Sino–Japanese War and Japan’s war with Allies.

Forging an East Asian League

to Prepare for the Final War:

Ishiwara Kanji’s Perception of Pan-Asianism

Ishiwara Kanji (1889–1949) was a philosopher as well as a high-ranking military officer. Though excelling at school and successfully rising within the army to become part of the military elite, Ishiwara was nonetheless known for his fearless defiance of his superiors. While attending the Central Military Preparatory School and subsequently the

Military Academy in Tokyo, Ishiwara gave undivided attention to his studies. Besides delving deeply into philosophy, literature, religion and world civilization, he visited prominent thinkers such as Tokutomi Sohō, Nogi Maresuke, and Ōkuma Shigenobu, seeking guidance.¹⁰⁵

Ishiwara developed his Pan-Asianism in the early twentieth century. During this period, following Japan's victory in the Russo–Japanese War (1904–05), Pan-Asianism—especially the idea that Japan must lead an Asian crusade against the West—gained popularity not only in Japan but also in Asia.¹⁰⁶ This articulation of Pan-Asianism arose from growing confidence in Japan as a model for indigenous modernization that had rapidly advanced since the Meiji Restoration. In contrast, Ishiwara's perception of Pan-Asianism was rooted in a sober conviction that militarism was essential to the future of Japan. He developed this idea through his critical evaluation of Japan's victory over Russia. In his judgment, Japan won the war out of luck; he believed that Russia would have prevailed if the war was protracted, because Japan had no clear plan for a prolonged war.¹⁰⁷

Ishiwara's next concern was the rising U.S. power in Asia, which he thought would eventually clash with Japan. This apprehension led him to develop a theory of Final War. According to this theory, the Japan–U.S. confrontation was to be the final

¹⁰⁵ Hiroyuki Abe, "Ishiwara Kanji no shōgai [The life of Ishiwara Kanji]" in *Ishiwara Kanji to Manshū teikoku [Ishiwara Kanji and the empire of Manchukuo]* ed., Rekishi dokuhon henshūbu (Tokyo: Shin jinbutsu ōraisha, 2010), 45–109.

¹⁰⁶ For more on the popularity of Pan-Asianism in the wake of the Russo–Japanese War, see Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931–1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), Chapter 2; and Gerald Horne, *Race War!: White Supremacy and the Japanese Attack on the British Empire* (New York, London: New York University Press, 2004), Chapter 2.

¹⁰⁷ Peattie, *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan's Confrontation with the West*, 27–29.

world war that would divide the globe into two: the East led by Japan and the West led by the United States. Ishiwara's study of the Russo–Japanese War taught him that Japan must prepare for this coming conflict, which he predicted would be a prolonged war. How should Japan prepare? For Ishiwara, Pan-Asian unity was the answer. He argued that Japan must expand its control over Manchuria and China proper to strengthen its position geopolitically and to power its economic expansion.

Such strategic concern was linked to Ishiwara's genuine belief in Japan's global mission as world savior. Initially, Ishiwara could not find significance in the *kokutai* ideology that the Japanese state had used to define the nation since the Meiji Restoration. *Kokutai* ("national polity") defined Japan's polity as centered in Japan's imperial institution whose essential feature was the unbroken lineage believed to trace back to Japan's mythological founder, Sun Goddess. To Ishiwara, this definition of *kokutai* based on Japan's state religion Shintō seemed particularistic. He was not persuaded by the use of *kokutai* as the evidence of Japanese superiority and justification of Japanese mission to save the world. However, through Tanaka Chigaku's school of Nichiren Buddhism, Ishiwara was able to find broader meaning in the *kokutai* ideology. Tanaka's Nichirenism was a religious and nationalist ideology that connected Nichiren Buddhism of the thirteenth century and Japanese nationalism of the early twentieth century. Tanaka broadly interpreted Nichiren's personal commitment to save Japan, enunciated at the time of the Mongol invasions, to advocate that Japan as a nation possessed the sacred mission to save the world because of its *kokutai*. As explained by historian Mark Peattie, this was not the original teaching of Nichiren. Nevertheless, Tanaka's rendering of Nichiren

Buddhism convinced Ishiwara that Japan was destined to fulfill its sacred task of world renovation by leading Asian countries in the Final War.

As discussed in Introduction, Ishiwara as Operations Officer of the Kwantung Army played a prominent role in the expansion of Japanese interest in Manchuria through the Manchurian Incident of 1931. Concurrently, he was actively involved in the state-building scheme that culminated in the foundation of Manchukuo on March 1, 1932. While Ishiwara's involvement in both of these military and political operations flowed from his strategic calculation of the essential role Manchuria would play in Japan's Final War, his vision of Manchukuo as a national project was based on his Pan-Asianist idealism. Ishiwara believed that the period of Japanese military administration must be kept as short as possible. Once hostilities ceased and order was restored, he argued, Manchukuo must develop through the cooperative efforts by its own diverse population. In Peattie's summation of Ishiwara's vision, such cooperation involved a division of labor in which "the Japanese were to manage heavy industry and those enterprises requiring special technological abilities; the Chinese were to develop the small businesses of the region; and the Koreans in Manchuria were to devote their efforts to paddy farming."¹⁰⁸ Thus, Ishiwara's conception of Pan-Asianism was hierarchical; while respecting national and cultural differences, he viewed the Japanese as most advanced, and thus, most suitable for the leading position.

Ishiwara did not see a contradiction between a hierarchy of civilization and realization of harmonious relationships, which he enthusiastically supported. In April 1932, he encouraged Japanese residents of Manchuria to establish the Concordia

¹⁰⁸ Peattie, *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan's Confrontation with the West*, 100.

Association (Kyōwakai), a civic organization whose goal was to promote a sense of nationhood in Manchukuo and aimed to make the ideal of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” a reality.¹⁰⁹ To Ishiwara, the Concordia Association appeared to provide an alternative to the Japanese military-controlled Manchukuo government nominally headed by Emperor Puyi. He insisted that this association, with grass-root support, should assume the role of political leadership in the new state functioning as a single party dictatorship that would reflect the people’s will. Together with the association’s members, Ishiwara called for the equal pay for government employees regardless of nationality and proposed Japan’s voluntary surrender of leaseholds to Kwantung Territory and the Railway Zone to the new state.¹¹⁰

In addition, Ishiwara developed his broader vision of an East Asian League, a federation of Japan, Manchukuo, China, and other Asian nations based on cooperation in preparation for the Final War. Manchukuo would serve as the model of Ishiwara’s envisioned alliance of Asian countries. In a speech delivered in 1940 but reflecting his early conviction of the necessity of a Pan-Asian alliance against the West, he summarized four principles. First, in terms of national defense, Japan, Manchukuo, and Shina (China) will “cooperate and protect East Asia against the white race.”¹¹¹ Second, the three

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 169; Prasenjit Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003), 73–79; Louise Young, *Japan’s Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), Chapter 6.

¹¹⁰ Peattie, *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan’s Confrontation with the West*, 175. These plans never materialized as they met oppositions from the Kwantung Army officials and also because Ishiwara was soon to leave Manchukuo for a new assignment in Japan.

¹¹¹ Kanji Ishiwara, “Manshū kenkoku to shina jihen [The establishment of Manchukuo and the Shina incident]” (1940), in *Ishiwara Kanji senshū 6*, ed. Yoshiichirō Tamai (Kanagawa: Tamairaba, 1993), 161–194, 166. “白人に対して共同して東亜の天地を守る”

countries will “integrate their economies as one...to achieve co-prosperity and co-existence in a real sense.”¹¹² Third, the three nations will “maintain... their political independence and will not meddle in with each other’s internal affairs.”¹¹³ Finally, they will “form a partnership based on the spirit of kingly way (*ōdō*).”¹¹⁴

In 1940 Ishiwara’s vision appears to be a case of willful refusal to confront reality, as the speech was delivered three years into all-out war between Japan and China fought in large part over Japan’s insistence on Manchukuo’s ‘independence’ from China. Yet, prior to the Marco Polo Incident, Ishiwara’s evocation of the “spirit of kingly way,” a conception of benevolent governance that originated in Confucianism and was shared by Asian cultures, at least held out the possibility of an alliance that was not simple top-down and in which relations between member states were not dictated by military imperatives.

Ishiwara’s radical vision of an East Asian League and his strong advocacy of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” were not easily squared with the Kwantung Army’s mentality as an army of occupation. By the time Ishiwara left Manchukuo in August 1932 to take up a new assignment in Japan, he was dispirited by the direction of the new state in which he had invested so much of his energy and dreams. The Kwantung Army controlled the machinery of state administration to the exclusion of meaningful participation in governance by civilian officials representing the different nationality groups of the new state. The Concordia Association had lost much of its initial

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 166. “本当の共栄共存を目的として…経済の一体化を図って行こう”

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 166. “政治は…独立をして、内政の干渉はお互いにやらない”

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 166. “王道の精神に基づいて全く精神的に提携をして行こう”

idealism and grassroots character and increasingly functioned as a propaganda and intelligence gathering tool of the Kwantung Army. Most importantly, a sense of Manchukuo nationhood showed no signs of taking root, especially among ethnic Han Chinese who comprised the vast majority of the population.

When he returned to Manchukuo as the Vice Chief of Staff of the Kwantung Army in September 1937, Ishiwara found himself even more disappointed than he had been five years earlier. Japanese military bureaucrats dominated all aspects of the Manchukuo society.¹¹⁵ The goal of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” was far from a reality as Japanese resided in segregated urban enclaves and state salaries were based on nationality. Furthermore, the Japanese-dominated government of Manchukuo sought to integrate this new state into the Japanese Empire by adopting Japan’s political system and laws and granting the Japanese government administrative authority over military affairs and Shintō shrines.¹¹⁶ No sooner had he returned to Manchukuo than Ishiwara began criticizing the military bureaucrats who were running the country behind the scenes. He also proposed reforms—but to no avail. Ishiwara, a fearless dissident, again left Manchukuo in August 1938, utterly disappointed.

¹¹⁵ This group was known as “the two *ki*’s and the three *suke*’s” that consisted of Hoshino Naoki (Director-General for Administrative Affairs), Tōjō Hideki (Commander of the Military Police of the Kwantung Army and Chief of Staff of the Kwantung Army), Kishi Nobusuke (Vice-Minister of Industry and Vice-Director of the Office of Administrative Affairs), Ayukawa Yoshisuke (President of Manchurian Heavy Industry), and Matsuoka Yōsuke (President of the South Manchurian Railway Company). For details, see Yamamuro, *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*, 178.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 179.

**Visions of Pan-Asianist Education:
Ishiwara Kanji, Planning Committee,
and the Four Professors**

While often omitted in the narratives of Ishiwara's involvement in Manchuria, Kenkoku University was his brainchild.¹¹⁷ The impetus was his growing disillusionment with the Concordia Association. After leaving Manchukuo in August 1932, he corresponded with Kwantung Army officials and discussed with them the possibility of establishing a "governmental university (*seiji daigaku*)" that would help making the principle of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo" a reality.¹¹⁸ Initially, he called the university "Ajia daigaku," or Asia University, which reflected Ishiwara's vision that Manchukuo would become the showcase of Pan-Asian unity and a model for the political alliance, the East Asian League, of Asian nations against the West.

In the fall of 1936, Ishiwara proposed the founding of a university to Kwantung Army officials through Kwantung Army Captain Tsuji Masanobu, who lost no time in recruiting staff for a planning committee. The committee, which maintained its offices in Tokyo and Sinkyō (modern Changchun), the capital of Manchukuo, consisted of army officers (of both the Kwantung Army and Imperial Army headquarters in Tokyo), Manchukuo's government officials, and prominent Japanese academics. Membership on the committee was fluid during the planning stage, and the sources are not entirely

¹¹⁷ Peattie's biography does not mention Ishiwara's involvement in the planning of Kenkoku University. Nor did other Japanese works on Ishiwara take note of it. Even the ten-volume collection of Ishiwara's writings, *Ishiwara Kanji Senshū*, does not contain any single document related to the planning of Kendai, though his mention of the school appears in a few entries.

¹¹⁸ Kanji Ishiwara, *Kokubō seijiron [Political theory of national defense]* (1942) in Yoshiichirō Tamai ed. *Ishiwara Kanji senshū* 5, (Kanagawa: Tamairaba, 1993), 9–173, 90, 91. "政治大学"

consistent on the matter of membership, but as many as twenty-eight people were at some point involved in the planning process.¹¹⁹ Almost all were Japanese and, not surprisingly, male.

Apparently, the Japanese-dominated planning committee at least sought to represent itself as a multi-ethnic group. One of the committee members Tsutsui Kiyohiko indicates that as of July 1937 the fifteen committee members included three “*mankei*” members.¹²⁰ The term “*mankei*,” which can be translated as “of Manchurian decent,” was widely used by the Japanese in Manchukuo to refer to the Chinese speaking population. Another such term was *manjin*, or “Manchurians.” These terms in actuality included not only ethnic Manchu but also Han Chinese, Hui, and sometimes Mongolian people.¹²¹ No other source lists *mankei* persons in the Kendai’s planning committee. Nor do these three *mankei* members’ names appear in sources regarding Kendai’s planning in any significant way. One of them, Zhang Jinghui, Manchukuo’s Prime Minister, was later

¹¹⁹ Manshūkokushi hensan kankō kai [Society for compiling and publishing Manchukuo history], *Manshūkokushi sōron [General history of Manchukuo]* in Yuji, 8, lists fourteen members as of February 1937. *Kendaishi shiryō 1* (Tokyo: Kenkoku University Alumni Association, 1966) in Yuji, 12, lists seven members—three army officials and four academics—as of late May 1937. *Shashinshū Kenkoku Daigaku [Photograph Collection: Kenkoku University]*. (Tokyo: Kenkoku University Alumni Association, 1986), 3, lists twelve members including three *mankei*, as of July 1937. *Shashinshū* on page 1, however, lists twenty-five members excluding the three *mankei* to be “people who were involved in the planning.” Historian Eriko Miyazawa lists twenty-four members. Eriko Miyazawa, *Kenkoku daigaku to minzoku kyōwa [Nation Building University and the ideal of ethnic harmony]* (Tokyo: Kazama shobo, 1997), 63.

¹²⁰ Kiyohiko Tsutsui, *Hoki [supplemental memos for the Chronology]* in Yuji, 41; *Shashinshū Kenkoku Daigaku*, 3. The latter source seems to draw the information from the former. Both sources list three *mankei* members within the six committee members on site (*Manshū gawa sōritsu iin*). The other three members were Japanese persons who lived in Manchukuo and were involved in the planning of Kendai.

¹²¹ We see similarly ambiguous use of other terms like *manshū-jin* (people of Manchuria) and *mango* (Manchurian language) which actually referred to the Chinese language. When these terms are used with ambivalence, I will use the original Japanese words followed by simple English translations in parentheses. For more discussion of the ethnic categorization in Japanese occupied Manchuria, see Mariko Asano Tamanoi, “Knowledge, Power, and Racial Classifications: The ‘Japanese’ in ‘Manchuria,’” in *Journal of Asian Studies* 59.2 (May 2000), 248–276.

appointed Kendai's President; however, the actual administrative tasks were entrusted to Vice President, Sakuta Sōichi, a Japanese academic.¹²² Luo Zhenyu and Yuan Jinkai were both Chinese politicians in the Manchukuo government, but other Kendai-related sources do not mention their names. It appears that these *mankei* members did not have a meaningful role in the committee.

The planning committee entrusted the detailed planning to four Japanese academics. These men—often referred to as the “four professors (*yon hakase*)”—developed a curriculum and institutional structure that was quite different from Ishiwara's original idea. Even the name of the university changed. In spring of 1937, the planning committee changed the name from Asia University to Kenkoku University, Nation Building University, to emphasize the institution's mission to train government officials of the new state.¹²³

We know the essential features of Ishiwara's vision from a memo drafted by Major General Mishina Takayuki following Tokyo committee members' meeting with Ishiwara in May 1937.¹²⁴ According to the memo, Ishiwara insisted that the university had to be radically different from existing Japanese universities. In Ishiwara's mind,

¹²² Before appointed as the Prime Minister, Zhang Jinghui was one of the warlords who had collaborated with the Kwantung Army in an attempt at severing Manchuria and Mongolia from China proper and establish an independent state. About the Kwantung Army's appointment of Zhang as the Prime Minister, historian Shin'ichi Yamamuro cites the Japanese official at the State Council, Kamio Kazuharu, as stating: “The Guandong (Kwantung) Army probably appreciated the fact that he understands no Japanese, cannot read Chinese texts, and seems to have no say in governmental matters.” It is telling that Kendai appointed this person as its President. Yamamuro, *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*, 170.

¹²³ The exact day in which the name was changed from Asia University to Kenkoku University is not known. However, sources show that as early in March 1937, one month after the planning committee was formally established, the core planning members used the latter name. For instance, one of the committee members, Katakura Tadashi, used the name Kenkoku University in his diary on March 26, 1937. Tadashi Katakura in *Kendaishi shiryō 1* in Yuji, 9.

¹²⁴ Takayuki Mishina, “Ishiwara shōgun no Kendai ni kansuru rinen to kōsō [General Ishiwara's idea and vision of Kendai]” in *Manshūkokushi sōron* in Yuji, 18–19.

change must begin with the faculty themselves who were “not to be cut from the same old mold (of Japan’s university professors).”¹²⁵ Kendai’s educational ideal, Ishiwara insisted, would emerge through the cooperative research by Keandai students and the pioneers who had lived in Manchuria and contributed to the making of Manchukuo since its establishment.¹²⁶ In this sense, Ishiwara did not expect Kendai faculty to assume a strong directive role. Ishiwara told the planning members that after three years of study at Kendai, students “should go into the real society (of Manchukuo) and sweat blood. They should then bring back what they learned from their actual experiences (to Kendai), discuss them over and over to develop theories on politics, economics, culture, and philosophy, and teach that knowledge to (Kendai) students.”¹²⁷

According to Mishina’s notes on the meeting, Ishiwara believed that “the fundamental purpose in establishing the university was to realize the harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.”¹²⁸ In Ishiwara’s formulation, this project was not something to be limited to Manchukuo but was to be extended throughout Asia. Ishiwara told the committee: “What Asian countries, beginning with Manchukuo, need is a new culture of economics, politics and philosophy rooted in the ideal of harmonious relationship among peoples of different nationalities.”¹²⁹ Kendai, Ishiwara believed,

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 18. “... 既成の先生はあり得ない...”

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹²⁷ Mishina in *Kendaishi shiryō* 2, 6; Mishina in Yuji, 17. “...実社会に入って共に苦勞をし汗を流し血を流して体得したものを政治、経済、文化、哲学の面で持ち帰って討論を重ねて理論に仕上げ、学生の指導に当たるのです。”

¹²⁸ Mishina in Yuji, 18. “大学創設の根本的目的は民族協和の実現にある。”

¹²⁹ Mishina in *Kendaishi shiryō* 2, 5; Mishina in Yuji, 16–17. “満州国を中心としたアジアの諸国に必要なものは、民族協和の理想に基く文化であり、経済であり、政治であり、哲学でしょう。”

could be the incubator of this new Asian culture. According to another committee member, Tsutsui Kiyohiko, Ishiwara urged that this new culture would be based on *ōdō*, the spirit of the kingly way.¹³⁰ His use of this Pan-Asianist concept, which originated in Confucianism, further distinguished Ishiwara’s vision of Pan-Asianist education from existing Japanese universities. Mishina’s memo also shows that Ishiwara insisted on “the total equality for the students of different backgrounds in the content of education, means of instruction, campus life, and other aspects.”¹³¹ Ishiwara made two concrete proposals on how Kendai could promote the ideal of unity on the basis of equality: integrated student residences and recruitment of non-Japanese scholars to serve on the faculty.

Mishina’s memo vividly conveys Ishiwara’s enthusiasm about Kendai’s integrated student dormitory as follows:

Let students take their meals together, study together, and argue among themselves—in Japanese, Korean, Mongolian, or whatever language they speak. This definitely is the way to go. It shouldn’t be Japanese students attending the lectures of Japanese instructors and *mankei* students being instructed in their native language.¹³²

Only on the basis of equality among the diverse student body, Ishiwara believed, could students have the honest exchange of ideas and opinions that would ultimately lead to the harmonious relationship. This emphasis on equality and recognition of differences reveals the idealistic aspect of Ishiwara’s Pan-Asianism. He believed that students

¹³⁰ Tsutsui, *Hoki* in *Yuji*, 19–20, 19.

¹³¹ Mishina, “Ishiwara shōgun no Kendai ni kansuru rinen to koso,” in *Yuji*, 18. “…各民族の教育内容、方法、生活その他処遇は、完全なる平等を…”

¹³² Mishina in *Kendaishi shiryō* 2, 6; Mishina in *Yuji*, 17. “一緒に飯を食い、一緒に勉強をし、一緒にケンカをする、日本語でも朝鮮語でも蒙古語でも各民族語でケンカをし、その中でやっていかなきゃ絶対にダメだ。日本人は日本人の先生から論議を聞き、満人は満人でやる—というのではいけない。”

interacting as equals would eventually reconcile the difference of their national outlooks and cultural values and achieve a harmonious whole.

Ishiwara also proposed the recruitment of non-Japanese intellectuals. He urged the planning committee to invite prominent scholars from Asian countries, including revolutionary leaders from around the world. In an essay published five years later but articulating his early commitment to genuine and wide ranging intellectual inquiry, Ishiwara wrote:

... I also suggest studying the history of Japanese rule of Taiwan and Korea as well as the history of (Western) rule of India, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Outer Mongolia. This is to understand why the Taiwanese and Korean public's feelings (about Japanese rule) are still recalcitrant despite the fact that the Japanese rule since the Meiji period had brought them great improvement and happiness. Also, a comparative study of western colonial policy (and that of Japanese) can provide lessons for the politics of Manchukuo.¹³³

This passage reveals that Ishiwara somewhat naïvely believed that progress in the form of economic and social modernization under Japanese rule should have brought “happiness” to the people of Taiwan and Korea. While he recognized the failure of Japanese colonial regimes to win the hearts and minds of many Taiwanese and Koreans, he had no doubt about the validity of Japan's colonization per se. At the same time, Ishiwara appears to have recognized that learning from past mistakes was necessary to overcome the obstacles to gaining Asian people's support for Japanese-led Pan-Asian unity. To this end he suggested that Kandai invite various revolutionary leaders, including but not limited to

¹³³ Ishiwara Kanji, *Kokubō seiji ron [political theory of national defense]* (1942) in Yuji, 118. “この外に参考に台湾、朝鮮の統治史の研究をし、また、印度、安南、フィリッピン、外蒙の統治史も研究する。要するに、日本が明治時代に於て、台湾、朝鮮を統治して彼等の生活向上その他に於て非常なる幸福を与へたに拘らず、まだ民心が十分に安定していない原因を明かにする。それから西洋人の植民政策もよく見て、比較研究して、満洲国政治の参考にしようといふのであります。”

those who were involved in anti-Japanese movement in Manchukuo, and critics of Japanese expansionism.¹³⁴ In this context, we must see his idea of inviting Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Subhas Chandra Bose from India, Lev Davidovich Trotsky from Russia, and Pearl Sydenstricker Buck from the United States not as the sign of his cosmopolitanism but derived from his attempt at reforming the Japanese Empire.¹³⁵

The planning committee members shared Ishiwara's determination to create a brand new university and in general his commitment to the ideal of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo." However, they had different ideas of how to realize these goals. The four professors, as the key members in the planning committee, were responsible for much of the detailed planning, and one of them was later selected as Kendai Vice President. Not surprisingly, these four Japanese academics' visions had a great influence on the institution's foundation.

When ordered by Ishiwara to form the Kendai planning committee, Kwantung Army Captain Tsuji Masanobu first contacted a renowned history professor at Tokyo Imperial University, Hiraizumi Kiyoshi.¹³⁶ He was a chief theorist of *kōkoku shikan*, a view of history based on a Shintōistic belief in the unbroken sacred lineage of the Japanese imperial family.¹³⁷ Hiraizumi had close connections with Japanese state and military officials through his involvement in the Institute for the Study of the National

¹³⁴ Mishina in *Kendaishi shiryō* 2, 6; Mishina in Yuji, 17.

¹³⁵ Miyazawa, 34–35.

¹³⁶ Tsutsui in *Kendaishi shiryō* 1, 5; Tsutsui in Yuji, 7.

¹³⁷ Miyazawa, 59.

Spirit and Culture (*kokumin seishin bunka kenkyūjo*; ISNSC).¹³⁸ The ISNSC was established by the Education Ministry in August 1932 in an effort to counter the influence of radical student movements both leftist and rightist.¹³⁹ Promoting *kōdō*, or the imperial way, as the central principle, this statist organ criticized Japanese universities for engaging in Western-style abstraction rather than practical research. Historian Miyazawa rightly argues that the Japan-centered ideology of the ISNSC influenced the planning of Kendai because the four professors were all from this institute. Hiraizumi believed that Kendai should establish its own academic program that was distinct from existing Japanese universities, which, he lamented, had received too much influence from the West. In Hiraizumi's words, the new academic culture at Kendai should "depart from the Western influence, base itself on Asian—particularly Japanese—philosophy and learning, and contribute to the development of scholarship and culture of the world."¹⁴⁰

Based on this belief, Hiraizumi recommended three other ISNSC scholars: Kakei Katsuhiko (professor of constitutional law at Tokyo Imperial University), Sakuta Sōichi (professor of economics at Kyoto Imperial University), and Nishi Shin'ichirō (professor of philosophy at Hiroshima Bunri University).¹⁴¹ All three fit Hiraizumi's criteria. Within their respective fields of studies, Kakei and Sakuta focused on Shintōism and *kōdō*, and Nishi sought to establish a practical philosophy by combining Kantianism and Eastern

¹³⁸ My summary of the Institute for the Study of the National Spirit and Culture (ISNSC) is based on Eriko Miyazawa's description of it. Miyazawa, 57–59.

¹³⁹ According to Miyazawa, the leftist movement became prevalent on Japanese university campuses since the end of WWI, and the rightist movement since the beginning of Shōwa era (1926).

¹⁴⁰ Kiyoshi Hiraizumi in *Kendaishi shiryō* 1, 5; Hiraizumi in Yuji, 13. “それ（欧米の学問）から離れて、アジアはアジア、とくに日本独自の思想、学問というものが建てられて、世界の学問、文化に寄与するものとして新しいものが出てこなければならない。”

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 13–14.

philosophies such as Confucianism and Daoism.¹⁴² The scholarship of these four professors was infused with Japanese values such as Shintōism and *kōdō*, though Nishi's emphatic emphasis on Eastern values was the exception. This strong element of Shintō-based imperial ideology within the scholarship of the four professors demonstrates a problem that existed from the early stage of Kendai planning: although planning began with the commitment to create a university based on an expansive conception of Pan-Asianism, the core planning members' perceptions of Pan-Asianism were in fact Japan-centered.

Difference between Ishiwara's and the four professors' visions appeared as early in February 1937 when the four professors joined the planning committee. One of the committee members Tsutsui Kiyohiko recalls that Ishiwara's emphasis on the principle of kingly way and the Japan-centered ideology of the four professors were incommensurable from the beginning.¹⁴³ It all comes down to the difference between the principles of the kingly way, *ōdō*, and imperial way, *kōdō*. For Ishiwara, who regarded Manchukuo as the driving force of an East Asian League, the spirit of the kingly way ought to be the guiding principle for achieving cross-cultural cooperation. He believed that unlike the Confucian concept of the kingly way, Japan's imperial way was too particularistic for this purpose. In contrast, the four professors saw the imperial way as the fundamental philosophy because they believed that Japan, not Manchukuo, must lead the Pan-Asian cooperation. These differing ideas about Pan-Asianism led to distinct expectations for the university that they planned to build in Manchukuo. Ishiwara

¹⁴² Miyazawa, 59–60.

¹⁴³ Tsutsui, *Hoki* in Yuji, 18–19.

envisioned it to be Asia University that would train leaders not only for Manchukuo but also for an alliance of Asian countries aligned against the West, his ideal of an East Asian League. The four professors, on the other hand, sought to foster talented individuals who would contribute to the nation building of Manchukuo, thus calling the school Kenkoku (Nation Building) University. They believed that Japan would be a more appropriate place to build a type of school that Ishiwara called Asia University because Japan, as the rightful leader of Asia, was responsible for forging unity among Asian nations. In April 20, 1937, the planning committee decided that the new university will be called Kenkoku University.¹⁴⁴

Just as the four professors began detailed planning of Kendai in Tokyo, the planning committee in Shinkyō was searching for a site for the Kendai campus. Kida Kiyoshi, Nemoto Ryūtarō, and Tsuji Masanobu opened a map of Shinkyō City and selected a tract of vacant land on the outskirts of the city.¹⁴⁵ It was approximately 2.15 square kilometers on a hill and several kilometers south of Shinkyō's city center. Named Kankirei in Japanese, it had political significance as the starting point for the geological survey of Manchukuo begun in 1933 and thus regarded as an inaugural moment of the state.¹⁴⁶ Tsuji selected this location for Kendai campus, hoping that the university would similarly become the origin of Manchukuo's pioneering leaders.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ *Manshūkokushi sōron* in Yuji, 18–19.

¹⁴⁵ Kiyoshi Kida was the personnel division manager at the Management and Coordination Agency. Ryūtarō Nemoto was the personnel division assistant officer at the Management and Coordination Agency. Masanobu Tsuji was the Kwantung Army Captain.

¹⁴⁶ Miyazawa, 84. It is not clear who conducted the survey.

¹⁴⁷ *Kendaishi shiryō I*, 12; Yuji, 15; Miyazawa, 84.

The campus infrastructure reflected the political orientation of the core planning members. At Tsuji's insistence, university facilities on the vast campus were laid out to represent the concept of *hakkō ichiu*.¹⁴⁸ The concept, which first appears in the eighth century Japanese classics *Nihonshoki*, literally means "the entire world under a single roof" and was used in the twentieth century by the advocates of empire to justify territorial expansion. Needless to say, the "single roof" in the latter context signified Japan's world hegemonic position. Accordingly, Kendai's six *juku* (student residences) buildings, the cafeteria, classroom building, Research Institute, and gymnasium called *yōseidō* ('nurture justice hall') were constructed around a central plaza to form a semicircle. This highly symbolic layout had a major disadvantage when it came to steam heating which was an essential feature of construction for Manchuria's severe winter. Circulation of heated air through the central pipeline was extremely inefficient, and some *juku* buildings did not receive sufficient heat. Some students even had to wear overcoats while sleeping.¹⁴⁹ In the planning process, Tsuji insisted on this arrangement over objections of other committee members and even in the presence of a famous architect Kishida Hideto.¹⁵⁰ His tenacity on this matter reveals that Tsuji strongly believed in symbolic importance of *hakkō ichiu* as a foundational concept for Kendai's establishment. As we have seen, this articulation of the ideal of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo" and Pan-Asianism was hierarchical, with Japan exercising the leading position.

¹⁴⁸ Miyazawa, 88. *Hakkō ichiu* (八紘一宇).

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹⁵⁰ *Kendaishi shiryō* 1, 4–5; Yuji, 15.

Despite the strong influence of Japan-centered Pan-Asianism on Kendai planning, the committee developed an educational system that was distinct from existing Japanese universities. After a short period of heated discussion, the committee came up with the following structure described in “Guidelines for the Establishment of Kenkoku University (*kenkoku daigaku sōsetsu yōkō*),” which was issued on August 5, 1937. Kendai would admit approximately 150 male students each year. Although there was no stated quota system for student admission, each year’s ratio of students’ nationalities remained almost the same as in the first year. The first entering class consisted of 75 Japanese, 50 Chinese, and 25 students of Korean, Mongolian, and Russian nationalities.¹⁵¹ As seen in Figure 1, students came from virtually all prefectures of Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Karafuto (Sakhalin), the Kwantung Leased Territory, and Manchukuo. This map, showing the case of the 2nd entering class, does not even include China proper; however, there were a few students in other classes who came from China proper. Tuition and the living expenses were covered by the Manchukuo government.¹⁵² In addition, every student received a monthly spending allowance of five yen.¹⁵³ The generous financial aid system was one of the main factors that attracted a large number of applicants—in fact, 10,000 applied for the first admission.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ Miyazawa, 191. As Miyazawa discusses, these designations were ambiguous. The “Chinese students” included the ones from Taiwan as well as Chinese-speaking non-Han people. In addition, the Japanese included both those who were born and raised in Japan and those who had lived in Manchuria.

¹⁵² *Kendaishi shiryō* 2, 10.

¹⁵³ Five yen back then is equivalent of \$20.00 to \$50.00. The currency in Manchukuo had the same value as that of Japan. For the purpose of comparison, a Japanese official who worked for the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in Tokyo earned a monthly salary of 200–300 yen in 1938. Cited in Yamamuro, *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*, 170.

¹⁵⁴ Miyazawa, 182.

Figure 1. Distribution Map of Hometowns of the Students of the 2nd Entering Class



Source: “Gakusei no shusshinchi betsu bunpu no ichirei (dai 2 ki, sotsugyōji) [one example of distribution of students’ hometowns (the 2nd entering class, at the time of graduation)],” in *Shashinshū: Kenkoku daigaku* [Photo album: Kenkoku University] (Tokyo: Kenkoku University Alumni Association, 1986), 6.

The qualifications for admission differed slightly for Japanese and non-Japanese applicants. According to the “Guidelines for Applicants (*kenkoku daigaku yoka daiikki seito senbatsu yōkō an*)” issued on June 9, 1937, Japanese applicants must be twenty years old or younger and have or will have graduated from middle schools (*chūtō gakkō*),

which enrolled students of age twelve to seventeen.¹⁵⁵ “Manchu, Mongolian, and Russian” applicants must be twenty-one years old or younger, have or will have graduated from middle schools in Japan or Manchukuo (*kōkyū chūtō gakkō*), and must be single.¹⁵⁶ The requirement of graduating from Japanese or Manchukuo’s middle schools seems to indicate that the admission committee targeted the young people who had already been acculturated to the Japanese educational system. The difference in the age qualification was due to the different school systems. It is unclear, though, why only non-Japanese had to be single.¹⁵⁷ In addition, the categorization of applicants’ nationalities was ambiguous. In this document, “Manchu” seems to include both ethnic Manchus and Han Chinese. “Japanese” appears to include Koreans and Taiwanese who were under Japanese colonial control. What is unclear is whether those who had resided in Manchukuo were considered as “Manchu” or categorized according to their nationalities.

Admission was based on a written exam and an interview. Competence in Chinese, English, French, Russian, or German was required for Japanese applicants, and Japanese language was required for non-Japanese candidates. The interview weighed heavily in the admission decision, which was made by the admission committee

¹⁵⁵ The Japanese school system during the war was different from the current system. Until 1944, after six years of elementary school, the middle school for male was five years long. See Introduction for details.

¹⁵⁶ “Kenkoku daigaku yoka daiikki seito senbatsu yōkō an [the resolution of guidelines for admission of applicants for 1st entering class of the preparatory course at Nation Building University]” (June 9, 1937) in Yuji, 26–27. It appears that “Japanese” includes those who reside in Japan, Manchukuo, and Japan’s formal colonies such as Korea and Taiwan. Regarding the educational background, the admission committee made exceptions for those who did not graduate middle schools but whose academic abilities were acknowledged satisfactory by the Japanese or Manchukuo governments.

¹⁵⁷ Perhaps, the planning committee simply assumed all Japanese applicants would be unmarried based on their knowledge of the competitiveness of Japanese middle schools. Students enrolled at middle schools at that time were extremely busy studying and preparing for the entrance exams of higher schools and other schools.

consisting of the planning committee members. One of the admission committee members Kida Kiyoshi enumerated the desired personalities of candidates as “good health, a strong will, not necessarily the so-called the brainy kids, but excellent students who can translate words into action, and exercise strong leadership.”¹⁵⁸ The emphasis on the action and the strength of mind originated in Kendai’s perceived function as a training ground of the state leaders who would contribute to the nation building in Manchukuo. Given the male dominant politics both in prewar Japan and the Japanese Empire, it is not surprising that Kendai’s admission criteria emphasized such masculine traits. However, with the vision of Manchukuo as the empire’s frontier, Kendai sought for a particular type of masculinity in its prospective students. That is, the “good health” and “strong will” with which they could carry out the pioneering works in the vast land of Manchuria. In addition, this vision of student excellence derived from the admission committee’s critical review of the existing Japanese universities that prioritized the exam scores. Kida says that the admission committee had numerous heated arguments over which applicant possessed such potential. Mishina Takayuki, who also observed the interviews for the first year of admissions, recalls that the committee members seriously considered visiting some candidates’ elementary school teachers or village elders in order to better understand the candidates’ personalities.¹⁵⁹ The emphasis on personalities distinguished Kendai’s admission process from that of Japanese universities, which the planning members criticized as elitist.

¹⁵⁸ Kida in *Kendaishi shiryō* 2, 10; Kida in Yuji, 59–60. “身体が丈夫で、意思が強く頭脳もいわゆる秀才型ではなくとも優秀な者、実行力に富みたくましい指導力のある者”

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

The academic program consisted of two levels of study, and each was three years long. The courses during the first level included general education, theory of Kenkoku (nation-building) spirit, two languages, military training, labor service, and martial arts as compulsory subjects. The content of the rigorous physical training was distinctively Japanese. Kendai required training courses on *kendō*, *jūdō*, and *aikido*—all were Japanese martial arts.¹⁶⁰ Here, we see that the masculine image of strong body and mind was shaped by the Japanese model and not a Pan-Asian or multi-cultural one. Chinese language study was required for Japanese students and Japanese language for non-Japanese students. In addition, all students selected a second foreign language from among Mongolian, Russian, French, German, and English.¹⁶¹ The academic standard of the first level was the equivalent of the Japanese higher middle schools (*kōtō gakkō*), which represented the elite, pre-university track in the prewar educational system. These first three years were to prepare students for the second level that offered university-level courses such as law and politics, economics, ethics, philosophy, and history, in addition to military training and labor service. Except for the language courses, all courses were taught in Japanese. Overall, Kendai’s curriculum was based on the principle of “*chikō gōitsu*,” or “oneness of knowledge and practice,” and emphasized the equal importance of learning, military training, and labor service.¹⁶² The fact that Kendai education did not require written exams reveals the institution’s emphasis on practical learning and

¹⁶⁰ Other physical training courses included *sumō* wrestling, *kyūdō*, *jūkendō*, and *kidō*. More on Kendai’s physical education through martial arts, see Fumiaki Shishida, *Budō no kyōikuryoku: manshūkoku kenkoku daigaku ni okeru budō kyōiku [The educational value of Japanese budō (martial arts): the budō training at Kenkoku University in Manchukuo]* (Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Senta, 2005).

¹⁶¹ Miyazawa, 118.

¹⁶² “Chikō gōitsu (知行合一)” is an academic theory by a Chinese Confucian thinker Wang Yangming from the Ming Dynasty.

cultivation of the mind rather than memorization of facts. After completing six years of education at Kendai, students were strongly encouraged to engage in more specialized research at its affiliated graduate school.¹⁶³

While the above-mentioned academic curriculum was enough to distinguish Kendai from Japanese universities, its high level of commitment to the principle of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” made the institution unique. This aspect of Kendai was conspicuous especially in the context of Manchukuo’s society, where the ideal of harmonious relationships contradicted the reality of people’s life. Outside of the Kendai campus, discrimination and tensions among different nationalities prevailed, and Japanese and non-Japanese residents generally did not intermingle. By contrast, Kendai’s integrated *juku* or dormitory system signified the school’s dedication to making “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” a reality. It required all students to live in on-campus dorms together with other students and faculty members, who were called *jukutō* or headmasters. The planning members expected *juku* to be a place for students to share all aspects of life with students of different national and cultural backgrounds and grow into capable leaders through friendly competition. Students were allowed to speak their own languages in *juku* buildings, and this tolerance was remarkable when contrasted with Japan’s compulsory assimilation policy in Korea and Taiwan. Mishina Takayuki later commented that although many of Ishiwara’s ideas were not actualized in the end, the inter-cultural interactions through dormitory life did

¹⁶³ “Kenkoku Daigaku sōsetsu yōkō [Guidelines for the Establishment of Nation Building University]” (August 5, 1937) in Yuji, 52.

become a reality to a certain degree, and this aspect was the most remarkable and unique feature of Kendai education.¹⁶⁴

Unlike other Japanese universities that called their dorms “*ryō*” or dormitory, Kendai referred to it as “*juku*” or private academy. Kendai’s *juku* was a place not only for residing but also for learning. The university had six *juku* on campus, and each consisted of about 25 students and one *jukutō*, the headmaster. Each *juku* building had study rooms and a recreation room in which students enjoyed board games, music, and so on.¹⁶⁵ It is not clear how many students shared bedrooms, but it appears that a large number of students slept in a big Japanese style room with tatami mats. The *juku* life was highly regimented. Students woke up at 5:30 a.m. and gathered at the athletic field for the morning meeting before they went to class. Before going to bed at 9:30 p.m., each *juku* held a close of the school day meeting where the *jukutō* gave guidance to students. Besides, students spontaneously held roundtable discussion meetings (*zadankai*) and freely exchanged ideas. Thus, *juku* education offered a place for life-based discipline as well as interactions among students of diverse backgrounds.¹⁶⁶

Despite the national and cultural diversity of *juku* members, the required life style incorporated numerous Japanese customs and rituals. At the morning meeting, in addition to light physical exercise and recitation of Manchukuo’s founding principles, students had a daily flag raising ceremony where they hoisted not only the Manchukuo flag but

¹⁶⁴ Mishina in *Kendaishi shiryō* 2, 6; Mishina in Yuji, 17.

¹⁶⁵ The second-entering class student Nishimura Jūrō frequently refers to a recreation room in *juku* building in his diary. Jūrō Nishimura, *Rakugaki: manshū kenkoku daigaku waga gakusei jidai no omoide [Scribbles: recollection of my student life at Nation Building University in Manchuria]* (Kobe-shi: Tosho Shuppan Marōdosha, 1991).

¹⁶⁶ Miyazawa, 199.

also the Japanese flag. Moreover, students were required to bow deeply facing east—the direction of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo—to show respect for the Japanese Emperor. Before breakfast, students had to recite an ancient Japanese poem that expressed gratitude to *Amaterasu* or the Shintō Sun Goddess. At the meeting at the close of the school day, students were expected to sit on the floor in the distinctively Japanese style, which many non-Japanese students found painful.¹⁶⁷ These Japanese customs and rituals were forced on all students regardless of their national, cultural, and ideological differences.

Besides the national composition of the student body and the *juku*-centered education, the institutional commitment to the ideal of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” can also be seen in its efforts to recruit non-Japanese scholars for faculty. In the autumn of 1937, Ishiwara ordered members of the planning committee to approach Chinese and Korean scholars and invite them to teach at Kendai. This mission was entrusted to Nemoto Ryūtarō, two other Japanese academics who had resided in Manchukuo and later joined the Kendai faculty, and Gu Cixiang, a Chinese politician with a position of the Assistant Manager at Manchukuo’s Management and Coordination Agency.¹⁶⁸ Initially, Gu, who spoke both Chinese and Japanese, was to head the mission to Beijing. However, he asked Nemoto to lead the group instead, arguing that “[i]f we Chinese go to Beijing and speak to Chinese scholars, they would dismiss us as running dogs of the Japanese and discussions would go nowhere... On the other hand, If you take the lead and I serve as an interpreter, they would more likely to trust us. So, I’d like you

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 199.

¹⁶⁸ According to historian Shin’ichi Yamamuro, Gu Cixiang was a graduate of Tokyo Higher Normal School. Yamamuro, *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion*, 172.

to perform that role of front man.”¹⁶⁹ In Nemoto’s account, Gu’s advice was genuine and evidence of his desire to cooperate, and he notes that in the case of Manchukuo–Japan negotiations officials from Japan would take *mankei* Manchukuo government agents’ word more seriously than that of their Japanese counterparts. However, we cannot rule out the possibility that Gu was hoping to avoid making an official appearance as a Manchukuo government agent in Beijing.

This mission succeeded in contracting three prominent figures—Bao Mingqian and Su Yixin from China and Choe Nam-Seon from Korea.¹⁷⁰ Bao, a graduate of Qinghua University in China and Johns Hopkins University, and Su, a graduate of Columbia University, were both specialists in politics and well known political activists who played leading roles in the May Fourth Movement of 1919 and subsequent anti-Japanese activities in China. Choe, too, was known as an independence movement activist, although he received postsecondary education in Japan.¹⁷¹ Choe had been involved in the March First Independence Movement of 1919. In fact, he was one of the authors of the declaration of Korean independence from Japan that was issued in that movement.¹⁷² The three scholars were not only renowned intellectuals but also genuine nationalist movement activists. In an address to a group of Chinese scholars in Beijing,

¹⁶⁹ Ryūtarō Nemoto in *Kendaishi shiryō 1*, 8; Nemoto in Yuji, 62. “われわれ中国人が北京へ行って中国人に話したら、お前たちは白毛子（カイライ）だといって話にならない。…あなたが表面に立ち、私が通訳をした方が彼らは信用する。君、そういう役割を演じてくれ。”

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ He was enrolled at Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan, but dropped out.

¹⁷² Both the May Fourth Movement in China and the March First Movement in Korea were major anti-Japanese, national independence movements respectively in China and Korea.

Nemoto explained why Kendai wanted to invite non-Japanese intellectuals to join the faculty:

Kenkoku University is an educational and research institution whose true mission is the creation of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” Indeed, we are building the university based on this principle not as a mere theory but as a philosophy of actual practice. This is why we are inviting scholars who are veterans of real nationalist movements.¹⁷³

Bao was impressed by this speech and agreed to teach at Kendai. He then persuaded Su to join him.¹⁷⁴ Later, Choe also decided to join Kendai, believing that Manchukuo recognized Koreans as a distinct people.¹⁷⁵ Because of these intellectuals’ affiliations with nationalist movements, some of the commanders of the Japanese Army in China and Korea opposed their appointments, and Tōjō Hideki, the Kwantung Army Chief of Staff, was furious. Nevertheless, Ishiwara and Nemoto insisted and managed to overcome the opposition of these senior military officers.¹⁷⁶

Besides these three intellectuals, fourteen scholars from China, Korea, and Germany joined the Kendai faculty by 1941. However, the seventeen non-Japanese represented only a small portion in the Kendai faculty, which totaled 191 Japanese

¹⁷³ Nemoto in *Kendaishi shiryō* 1, 8; Nemoto in Yuji, 63. “建国大学は、本当の意味における民族協和の教育機関であり、同時に研究機関である。民族協和を単なる理念の問題ではなく、じつは実践の哲学として建てるのだ。その意味で、真の民族運動の経験者をも研究員として迎えたい。”

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ Fushinosuke Ehara, “Minzoku no kunō: sōsetsuki no Kenkoku Daigaku wo megutte 3 [Hardships of race: the founding period of Nation Building University 3]” (1989) in Miyazawa, 98–99.

¹⁷⁶ Nemoto in *Kendaishi shiryō* 2, 8; Nemoto in Yuji, 63.

members as of 1941, including affiliated faculty.¹⁷⁷ Sakuta, one of the four professors, explains this imbalance as follows:

Although we (the administration) recruited those Manchurian and Korean persons of erudition as Professor Emeritus, we hired predominantly Japanese for the actual teaching positions for *juku*, courses and trainings... For one reason, there were not many strong candidates. Furthermore, because Kendai aimed to carry out a new vision of education that was distinct from existing system, (we) speculated that (non-Japanese scholars) would not be suitable.¹⁷⁸

Sakuta also cited the difficulty of recruiting Chinese academics due to the tense relations between China and Japan. This passage generates more questions than it explains the rationale behind the imbalance in faculty's nationalities. If Kendai was to become a university "distinct from existing system" of Japanese higher education, and if it was committed to the Pan-Asianist ideal of harmonious relationships, one would assume non-Japanese faculty members were to play vital roles. Indeed, that was Ishiwara's intention when he proposed Kendai recruit a number of non-Japanese scholars and activists. Why did Sakuta, who was later selected to become Kendai's Vice President, think the non-

¹⁷⁷ Miyazawa, 99–101. The numbers of faculty are drawn from "Kenkoku Daigaku yōran [Directory of Kenkoku University]" (Shinkyō: Kenkoku daigaku kenkyūin, 1941). According to *Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai meibo [Kenkoku University Alumni Association Roster]* published in 1955, the total number of Kendai faculty members between 1937 and 1945, including the planning period, is 295. Approximately 45 are non-Japanese scholars. In this same period, a little more than 1,000 students were enrolled at Kendai. The ratio of the faculty member to the students was 1 to 3. These sources do not explain this improbably large ratio of the faculty. A member of the 1st entering class from Taiwan, Li Shuiqing, later testifies that there were more faculty members than students during his first year at Kendai (Shuiqing Li, 31). In *Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai meibo [Kenkoku University Alumni Association Roster]* published in 2003, the number of faculty further increases to 400. This number seems to include not only faculty in residence but also affiliated scholars and other staff members. The number of faculty in residence is not known. The incredibly large ratio, however, was not particularly unusual if we compare it with other colonial universities in the Japanese Empire. As mentioned in Introduction, the ratio at Taihoku Imperial University in Taiwan was three to five. Many scholars were hired not so much for the purpose of education but more for the purpose of research and information-gathering in service of the empire.

¹⁷⁸ Sōichi Sakuta in *Kendaishi 4* in Yuji, 64. "満洲系及び朝鮮系の鴻儒と認められた人々には名誉教授として参加して貰った。されど塾・学科・訓練の勤務に当たる教職員は日本人系に止め…それは有力なる推薦が無かったのみでなく、建大の教育方針が従来のもとの異なる新たなる計画の実行であるところから、新教学の組織に参加して貰えないと思料したからである。"

Japanese scholars were “not suitable” for the tasks of creating a new education for Kendai? He must have considered the “new vision of education” as essentially a Japanese idea. Even if non-Japanese scholars were welcomed, they were thought to play a secondary role. By extension, this seems to suggest that Sakuta regarded the project of forging Pan-Asian unity to be essentially Japan’s endeavor. Or, he may have doubted the genuineness of non-Japanese cooperation for that dream and thus wanted to keep their involvement minimum.¹⁷⁹ Even so, the presence of non-Japanese faculty—especially Bao, Su, and Choe, who were famous for their roles in nationalist movements in China and Korea—must have appealed to prospective students from these countries. Later in this chapter, I will discuss the academic works of selected Japanese and non-Japanese faculty members.

In August 10, 1937, Kendai started its student recruitment for the 1st entering class. In late September 1937 when Ishiwara returned to Manchukuo, this time as Kwantung Army Vice Chief of Staff, it was clear that many of Ishiwara’s ideas for the institution had not been implemented. Ishiwara and Sakuta had held discussions in July 1937 but failed to resolve the difference between their visions.¹⁸⁰ Immediately after Ishiwara arrived in Manchukuo, he was so dissatisfied with the current Kendai plan that he asked the administration to suspend admissions of the 1st entering class. Eventually he

¹⁷⁹ The urge to keep any colonial undertakings on the hands of the colonialists was not uncommon in empires worldwide. For instance, Fanny Colonna shows that the fear of losing the privileges and of the breakdown of colonial hierarchy played out in the restriction of Arab Algerians from higher education in French Algeria. Fanny Colonna, “Educating Conformity in French Colonial Algeria,” trans. Barbara Harshav, in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 346–370.

¹⁸⁰ Mishina, “Mishina memo” in *Kendaishi shiryō* 2, 13–16, 14; Yuji, 39–40. The content of Ishiwara–Sakuta dialogue is unknown. According to Mishina, Sakuta only commented that “Unlike many other militarists, Ishiwara is a man of philosophy and conviction,” which implied that Sakuta was unable to reach agreement with Ishiwara.

yielded to the planning committee and sought modest but symbolically significant changes, such as the recruitment of more non-Japanese scholars, which led to the recruitment of Bao, Su, and Choe discussed above. In the end, *juku*-centered education was Ishiwara's only idea that was fully actualized at Kendai.¹⁸¹

Ishiwara's discontent continued even after May 2, 1938 when Kendai opened its doors and welcomed the first class of about a hundred and fifty students. When he visited the campus on July 7 that year to deliver a lecture to commemorate the first anniversary of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, Ishiwara frankly shared his discontent with Manchukuo in front of the newly enrolled Kendai students. A student from Taiwan Li Shuiqing vividly recalls in his memoir that as soon as Ishiwara stood at the podium, he shouted to the audience: "unless people go mad, there can be no war."¹⁸² Although Ishiwara was one of the key players in the Manchurian Incident of 1931 and the creation of Manchukuo, he opposed the war between Japan and China. To him, the realization of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo" was more important than enlarging the land of occupation through war. According to Li, Ishiwara blamed the Japanese for escalating hostilities as well as for failing to make harmonious relationships a reality. He said, "...it is because the Japanese are acting from a sense of superiority and dominating the peoples of other nationalities..."¹⁸³ Then, Ishiwara asked the students: "Aren't you acting in the same way?"¹⁸⁴ Clearly, he directed this question at the Japanese

¹⁸¹ Yuji, 61–62.

¹⁸² Shuiqing Li, 16. "気が狂わなければ戦争になる筈がない"

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 16. "...日本人が優越感を持って他の民族を指図しているからである..."

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 16. "君たちもこの様ではないのか。"

students of Kendai. To this, Li's close friend in his *juku*, a Japanese student Yoneda Masatoshi, replied: "No, we're not like that!"¹⁸⁵ "It doesn't help if only one person acts differently," said Ishiwara, who apparently was relieved by Yoneda's response, and began his lecture on his theory of world's Final War, which was to be his first and last lecture at Kendai.¹⁸⁶

Li's recollection of this occasion, the only discussion of the event by Kendai's non-Japanese students, provides a glimpse into the reception of Ishiwara's lecture by the 1st entering class. At that time, there was no consensus within the Japanese Army on what to prioritize: solidifying Japan's current territorial holding in Manchukuo, preparing for the Soviet Union's possible attack, or expanding the territories into the north provinces of China. In contrast to these purely territorial and military concerns, Ishiwara emphasized strengthening Manchukuo as a state through cooperation among Manchukuo's diverse residents. Ishiwara's frank criticism of the Manchukuo and Japan's government and military must have come as a shock to Kendai students, especially of non-Japanese backgrounds. While Li does not provide further details of the content of the lecture, he writes that the talk convinced Kendai students that Ishiwara "...opposed the incident of July 7 (Marco Polo Bridge Incident) and its expansion into the war."¹⁸⁷ Moreover, Ishiwara's talk showed that "the principle of 'harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo' was not a mere slogan but a goal that [Ishiwara] was determined to

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 16. "そうではありません。"

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 16. "一人だけ違っても、仕方がない。"

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 16. "...七七事変の発生拡大に反対した。"

realize.”¹⁸⁸ Li stresses that this was not just his own impression but “... was likely shared by most other students on campus.”¹⁸⁹

Based on the interviews with the members of the 1st entering class, Yamada Shōji, a Japanese student of the 8th entering class concurs with Li on the students’ impression on Ishiwara’s lecture. Regarding the impact of Ishiwara’s lecture, Yamada notes that not only Japanese but also non-Japanese students started openly discussing the concept of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.”¹⁹⁰ Li’s and Yamada’s accounts, taken together, show that the significant effect of Ishiwara’s talk was that it inspired Kendai students to develop an atmosphere of free discussion. This is remarkable considering the fact that thought control was severe in Japan, Japan was at a war with China, Korea and Taiwan were military-occupied colonies, and Manchukuo was a sovereign state in name only.

In August 1938, Ishiwara submitted a proposal for far-reaching reforms whose aim was to terminate the Kwantung Army’s control of Manchukuo politics. His proposal called for the establishment of a new university to be called Kyōwa University, which would serve as “the core of policy making” in Manchukuo.¹⁹¹ Kyōwa University would fulfill Ishiwara’s initial expectation for Kendai, which, as we have seen, was grandly ambitious: nothing less than to create new theories of culture, economics, politics, and

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 16. “民族協和が単なるスローガンだけではなく、実際に実行する決心をした。”

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 16. “...他の同窓学生の大部分が同感であったと思う。”

¹⁹⁰ Shōji Yamada, *Kōbō no arashi: manshū kenkoku daigaku hōkai no shuki [The rise and fall in storm: memoir about the dissolution of Nation Building University in Manchuria]*, (Tokyo: Kanki shuppan, 1980), 103–104.

¹⁹¹ “Kyōwa” can be translated as “harmony” or “cooperation.” Kanji Ishiwara, “Kantō-gun shireikan no manshūkoku naimen shidō tekkai ni tsuite [Proposal to stop Kwantung Army commander’s intervention in Manchukuo],” in *Ishiwara Kanji shiryō* ed. Jun Tsunoda in Yuji, 113–114, 114. “企画機関の中核”

philosophy based on the ideal of kingly way and “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” Kendai, he recommended, should be merged with Daidō Gakuin (Daidō Institute), Manchukuo’s government clerk training academy. Ishiwara emphasized that Japanese students at Kendai and Japanese government clerks at Manchukuo must be recruited from the Japanese population who resided in Manchukuo. Underlying these proposals was Ishiwara’s disappointment at the current situation of Kendai and his determination to “complete the independence of Manchukuo.”¹⁹²

Ishiwara’s proposal of August 1938 had virtually no effect on Kendai or on Manchukuo politics. As mentioned, his radical proposals encountered opposition and were rejected by the military bureaucrats who dominated Manchukuo politics. At the top of this group of military bureaucrats was Tōjō Hideki, Kwantung Army Chief of Staff and Ishiwara’s immediate supervisor. Ishiwara’s career in Manchukuo ended abruptly when he left for Japan in August 18, 1938, and resigned his position soon afterwards.¹⁹³ By January 3, 1942, Ishiwara regarded Kendai as a total failure. In his speech before members of the Association for an East Asian League (Tōa renmei kyōkai) in Tokyo, Ishiwara spoke disparagingly of the institution: “... unfortunately, Kenkoku University currently has the same system as Japanese existing universities. Moreover, though it has some admirable scholars, (Kendai) had come to resemble Japanese universities or even

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 113. “...満洲国ノ独立ヲ完成スルヲ要ス”

¹⁹³ For details of Ishiwara’s conflicting relationship with the military bureaucrats, see Peattie, *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan’s Confrontation with the West*, Chapter IX.

falling below their levels...”¹⁹⁴ The division between Ishiwara and the four professors represented in this speech would have a lasting effect on Kendai.

Indeed, disagreement was rife during Kendai’s planning period. The four professors may have united in opposition to Ishiwara, but many more disagreements occurred even among the four professors. According to Tsutsui Kiyohiko, a planning committee member, Sakuta and Kakei once had an intense argument over their different perspectives on China. Tsutsui also remembers that Nishi and Sakuta were somewhat sympathetic toward Ishiwara’s idealism, while Hiraizumi and Kakei directly opposed it.¹⁹⁵ After Kendai opened its doors to students of diverse national and cultural backgrounds, many scholars joined its faculty and introduced even more divergent perceptions of Pan-Asianism. It would not be an exaggeration to say that serious disagreements over these issues became an integral part of the intellectual life of the institution.

Kenkoku University Japanese Faculty Members’ Conceptions of Pan-Asianism

A total of 295 faculty members were employed as educators, researchers, and administrators at Kenkoku University between 1937 and 1945. Approximately 45

¹⁹⁴ Ishiwara, *Kokubō seijiron* (1942) in Yoshiichirō Tamai ed. *Ishiwara Kanji senshū* 5, 91; Yuji, 116. “...今の建国大学は遺憾ながら日本の総合大学と同じような模型であり、しかも中には立派な方もおりますが、結局日本の総合大学に類似ししかもそれより程度の低いものになってしまっているのではないかと...”

¹⁹⁵ Kiyohiko Tsutsui provided this information to Yuji for the compilation of *Kenkoku Daigaku nenpyō*. In Yuji, 19–20, Tsutsui does not discuss the details of the arguments between Sakuta and Kakei.

members were non-Japanese.¹⁹⁶ Although some Kendai scholars' publications have been preserved, they represent only a small portion of the whole faculty's output. Most of what has been preserved is research reports and articles that were published by Kenkoku University Research Institute (*Kenkoku daigaku kenkyūin*; KURI). Below I examine seven Japanese Kendai faculty members' publications from the early 1940s, in order to understand their perceptions of Pan-Asianism and its relationship with Manchukuo.

Japanese Kendai faculty members' perceptions of Pan-Asianism varied among individuals and yet shared the general characteristics of the contemporary Japanese Pan-Asianism in the early 1940s. On one hand, writing in the late 1930s and early 1940s in Manchukuo, the cornerstone of the Japanese imperial project at that time, Japanese Kendai intellectuals appeared to have been influenced by Japan's increasingly aggressive foreign policy in Asia. On the other hand, through their involvement in the idealistic endeavor of Kendai, these intellectuals' writings reflected some universalistic aspects of Pan-Asianism. Contrary to Ishiwara's emphasis on the need for equality on campus and in Manchukuo, many Japanese scholars imagined Asian unity to be a hierarchical order led by Japan and insisted that Asian peoples must cooperate under Japanese leadership. Other scholars clung to the egalitarian idealism and envisioned a communal order in Asia in which Asian peoples' participation in the creation of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere would be voluntary. As shown below, the Japanese faculty's writings exhibit various conceptions of Pan-Asianism, while also conforming to the general trend of Japanese Pan-Asianism in the early 1940s.

¹⁹⁶ These numbers are from *Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai meibo* [*Kenkoku University Alumni Association Roster*] published in 1955.

Strong criticisms of the West drove historian Mori Katsumi to develop a hierarchical conception of Asian unity under Japanese leadership in an article published in 1942. Mori, Associate Professor of History, described the long history of Western imperialism in Asia, from the fifteenth century Portuguese arrival in India, the sixteenth century Spanish conquest of the Philippines, and the subsequent interventions of the Netherlands, Great Britain, France, and the U.S. He also cited the Russian expansion southward since the sixteenth century. In terms of Western aggression against China, Mori identified Great Britain and the U.S. as the root of all evil—the British Opium Wars (1839–42 and 1856–60) laid a ground for China’s semi-colonial fate, while at the turn of the century the U.S. advanced imperialist competition over China by the Open Door policy. Mori described the contemporary situation regarding China as follows: “the U.S. and Britain, these fox and raccoon, are now wiping away their past evil deeds and eagerly backing Chiang Kai-shek, the betrayer of the Asian peoples, as if they were the saviors of the Chinese. That is what I call the comedy of the century.”¹⁹⁷ Not surprisingly, Mori did not mention Japan’s participation in this scramble for China.

Associate Professor of Economics, Matsuyama Shigejirō echoed Mori’s anti-Western theme but concentrated his critique on Western individualism and economic liberalism. In an essay published in 1942, Matsuyama argued that these two features of Western civilization formed the current world order in which Western imperialists enjoyed material wealth at the cost of other peoples’ misery. In such a world, “countries came together only for the shared interests or under the American and British plutocratic

¹⁹⁷ Katsumi Mori, *Daitōa kyōeiken no rekishisei* [*Historicity of the Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere*] 9th ed. (Shinkyō: Manshū teikoku kyōwakai, 1942), 64. “この狐と狸の米英が、舊悪の口を拭ひ、あたかも支那民族の救世主であるかの如き態度を粧つて、アジア同胞の裏切者蒋介石援助に躍起となつてゐるのである。これこそ世紀の喜劇でなくて一體何であらうか。”

authority”; Matsuyama continued, “such despotic unity of nations would... surely dissolve when national interests conflict or the subordinated countries’ economy exceeded that of the domineering states.”¹⁹⁸ Matsuyama insisted that the new order, which would replace this failing model of international relations, must apply the “principle of ‘harmony among various peoples’ based on morality and comradeship.”¹⁹⁹

Assuming that the world was shifting from one era to another, Mori and Matsuyama stressed Japan’s special mission in leading Asia’s march into the new era. The previous era, which they called ‘*kindai*,’ denoted the period when the West exercised imperialistic control over the East and other parts of the world. Highlighting the common suffering that Asian peoples had borne, Mori and Matsuyama explained that Japan was destined to become Asia’s leader because it had achieved preeminent modernization among Asian countries. Mori asserted that Japan’s triumph in the Russo–Japanese War (1904–1905) “... had revealed Japan’s historical mission of liberating Asian peoples from the shackles of the U.S., Great Britain, and Netherlands, and recuperating the viability inherent in Asia itself.”²⁰⁰ For Matsuyama, Japan’s initiative in establishing Manchukuo proved Japan’s capacity to cleave a path to a new era in which Asian peoples would live harmoniously.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ Shigejirō Matsuyama, *Daitōa kensetsu no sekaishi teki haikai* [The background of the establishment of the Great East Asia in the context of world history] 4th ed. (Shinkyō: Manshū teikoku kyōwakai, 1942), 50. “...諸国家は利害によつて相結び、或は米英の国際金權政治の壓力によつてやむなく聯合してゐた。斯く覇道的国家聯合にあつては...国家間の利害相反するとき、或は従來従属的地位にあつた国家の經濟力が支配国のそれを凌ぐに至るとき...解體するのが常であつた。”

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 51. “道義と同胞感情に基礎付けられた民族協和の理念”

²⁰⁰ Mori, *Daitōa kyōeiken no rekishisei*, 72. “...アジア諸民族を米英蘭等の桎梏より解放し、アジア自體の本来の生存力を回復すべき歴史的使命”

²⁰¹ Matsuyama, 31–32.

Mori's and Matsuyama's historical explanations for Japan's legitimate leadership led them to assume that Asian peoples would voluntarily cooperate with Japan in creating the new order. Such an assumption is evident in Matsuyama's assertion that "creating the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere is the historical mission of the billions of Asian peoples."²⁰² Because all Asians were historic victims of Western imperialism, the ongoing Pan-Asianist project was a task that was the charge of all Asians, not just of the Japanese. In addition to the shared experience of Western imperialism, Mori identified the long history of the East as a cultural bloc as an important foundation for the Co-Prosperity Sphere. He stated:

...before the sixteenth century, the East formed an independent world with a single cultural bloc.... The currently advocated 'the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere', though the term itself is new, is by no means concocted rhetoric of opportunism and sheer expediency but is grounded on the cultural bloc that emerged as a natural outcome of the shared historical experiences of Eastern peoples.²⁰³

In short, Mori's and Matsuyama's rationale was as follows—because Japan had emerged as the political center of Asia in the midst of Asian peoples' experience of Western oppression, and because Japan shared the common Eastern historical culture of other Asian countries, Japan was now in the position to provide leadership for Asia.

While Mori and Matsuyama assumed Asian peoples' voluntary cooperation in the creation of the Co-Prosperity Sphere, Nakano Sei'ichi, Professor of Law, and Ono

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 43. "大東亜共榮圏を建設することが我等十億の東亜人に課せられた歴史的任務である。"

²⁰³ Mori, *Daitōa kyōeiken no rekishisei*, 50–51. "...十六世紀以前に於ては、東方は一つの獨立した世界であり、そこには一つの文化圏が存在してゐたのである。…今日提唱されてゐる大東亜共榮圏は、言葉こそ新しいが、決して便宜主義や、御都合主義に基いて出來た捏造語ではなく、そこには長い東亜の歴史的必然の結果自然に出來上つた文化圏が存在し、この大理想の歴史的な據りどころとなつてゐるのである。"

Kazuhito, Associate Professor of History, argued that Japan could legitimately impose unity on Asians. Behind this dissimilarity were subtle differences in Pan-Asianist theorists' understandings of the origins of Japanese leadership in Asia. As seen above, Mori's and Matsuyama's rendering of world history stressed the shared historical experiences among Asian peoples, including Japanese, in validating Japan's guiding position. By contrast, Nakano and Ono, emphasizing the superiority of Japan and its long-lasting efforts to modernize and protect Asia from Western imperialism, argued that Japan was uniquely capable of leading Asia's modernization. In other words, they regarded Japan's central position in the Co-Prosperity Sphere as the historical legacy of Japan's arduous but successful march to modernity. Nakano explained that Japan endeavored since Meiji "to catch up with the West economically, culturally, and militarily so that it could eventually produce a pivotal political power (Japan) to East Asia."²⁰⁴ Ono emphasized the contrast between Japan, the first and the only Asian nation that correctly understood the Western threat, and "the various regions of East Asia that had remained asleep and dormant."²⁰⁵ Japan, Ono continued, had no choice but stand up to assure "the survival of the whole of East Asia in the midst of the Western [threat]."²⁰⁶

Assuredness about Japanese supremacy over Asia enabled Nakano and Ono to justify Japan's imposing cooperation upon Asian peoples whom they recognized as not

²⁰⁴ Sei'ichi Nakano, "Manshūkoku minzoku seisaku eno shoyōsei [Requests for ethnic policies in Manchukuo]" *Kenkyū kihō* 1(1941), 36. "経済、文化、軍事のすべてにわたって欧米の水準に追いつけようと努めた過程はやがてこの東亜における中心的政治力を誕生せしめるためであったのである。"

²⁰⁵ Kazuhito Ono, "Manshū kenkoku to nippon: nippon no taiman kōdō ni kansuru jakkan no rekishiteki kaiko [Nation building in Manchukuo and Japan: some historical reflections on Japan's attitudes toward Manchuria]." *Kenkyū kihō* 3(1942), 161. "いまだ目覚めざる東亜諸地域"

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 175. "欧州に対する東亜細亜全体ノ存立"

necessarily willing participants in the Japanese imperial project of uniting Asia. Unlike Mori and Matsuyama who assumed ‘voluntary’ participation of Asians in the Japanese-led Pan-Asianism, Ono clearly recognized other Asian peoples’ opposition to Japan’s leading role. He lamented that “the unawakened East Asian peoples had mistaken Japan as another imperialistic latecomer capitalist” even though Japan had fought for the sake of Asian survival.²⁰⁷ Among those “unawakened” peoples, Ono specifically blamed the Qing China that “... failed to understand in good faith” the true intent of Japan and the succeeding Republic of China that “continued to offer resistance in desperation at the instigation of the countries like U.S. and Great Britain.”²⁰⁸ Ono argued, however, that the leadership of Asia was a destined and inescapable mission given to Japan, the only Asian nation with the capacity to counter the West. Hence, Ono insisted that Asia must unite under Japanese leadership.

Nakano’s belief in Japan’s supremacy over Asia was reflected in his vision of a three-level hierarchy in Asia with Japan at the top. In his conception, the top place in the hierarchy belonged to those nations that possessed advanced technology and military power and thus were “in the position of guiding the others...”²⁰⁹ Second place belonged to independent Asian nations that required guidance to achieve further development. In third place were Asian peoples within East and Southeast Asia who suffered from western colonial rule. Nakano claimed that Japan was in the first position, responsible for

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 161. “目覚めざる東亜諸地域にとって日本もあたかも侵略的な後進資本主義国家のごとき面貌を帯びるに至った。”

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 176. “...誠意を以ってこれを理解することができなかった。”; 177. “米英諸国の煽動によつて自暴自棄的抗戦をつづける蒋介石”

²⁰⁹ Nakano, 34. “指導的地位にある...”

guiding the second group and freeing the third group from the shackles of Western imperialism, and establishing peace and order within the Co-Prosperity Sphere. He further stated: “each nation’s equal sovereignty must not contradict the tutoring relationship among the nations.”²¹⁰ Thus, Nakano, as a member of the guiding nation, imposed this three-level hierarchy despite “equal sovereignty” within the “tutoring relationship” on Asian peoples. In short, Nakano and Ono were more assertive about the need of guiding other Asian peoples because they regarded them ignorant, vulnerable, and inferior to Japan.

While the above mentioned four intellectuals envisioned a hierarchical Asian order with Japan at the top, Murai Tōjūrō and Sakuta Sōichi assigned the leading role to both Japan and Manchukuo. Murai, Professor of Politics, claimed that “*daitōa* (Greater East Asia) is not only objectively capable of and has good reasons for uniting as one—due to its shared world historical mission (to revolutionize the Western dominated world), and geographical, economic, and cultural reasons—but also is destined to unite due to its shared historical experiences and culture.”²¹¹ In Murai’s conception, the shared “destiny” and shared moral principles were the key to a new form of Asian unity, which must replace the Western nations’ unity which was based on each constituent nation’s “self-centered utilitarianism.”²¹² Murai believed that the Japan–Manchukuo bond must lead to new Asian unity because “Japan is the only *dōgi kokka* (ethical nation) that has embraced

²¹⁰ Nakano, 43. “各国家の平等な主権と矛盾することなく国家相互間の指導関係を…”

²¹¹ Tōjūrō, Murai, *Daitōa kyōeiken no kōiki hōchitsujo [Broad law and order in the Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere]*. 10th ed. (Shinkyō: Manshūkoku kyōwakai, 1942), 14. “大東亜は世界史的要請と地理的、経済的、文化的諸機縁とにより、一體となるべき客観的可能性と適格性を有し、また歴史的に、又文化的に運命の共同性と連一性をもつ廣域である。”

²¹² *Ibid.*, 16. “功利的、自己本位的なる…”

morality since the country's birth" and because "the Japan–Manchukuo alliance was as strong as that between blood-related brothers."²¹³ He also likened the relationship between Japan and Manchukuo to that of a parent and a child.²¹⁴ Hence, while placing both Japan and Manchukuo at the center of a new order, Murai clearly posited Japan's superiority.

Agreeing with Murai, Honorary Professor of Economics and Kendai's Vice President, Sakuta's Pan-Asianist vision was based on the concept of *hakkō ichiu* ("eight corners of the world under one roof") with Japan and Manchukuo as its center.²¹⁵ In his view, the two countries were not equal but possessed different yet equally important complementary roles in the creation of a new order. Japan was the only country capable of creating the multi-ethnic community of Asia, while Manchukuo was expected to offer a working model as an embodiment of the principle of "harmony among various peoples." Sakuta asserted:

The true purpose of the establishment of Manchukuo as an Asian country that was created under the guidance of the Heaven is to firmly establish the integrity (as a country), unite its peoples, cooperate with Japan, build the foundation of the country so its peoples will enjoy stable life, administer the state, become the continental fortress for reviving Asia, and to contribute to the global project of *hakkō ichiu* and the creation of harmony among various peoples.²¹⁶

²¹³ *Ibid.*, quoted from 24 and 16 respectively. "日本は建国即樹徳、肇国即道義の国家原理を体有する世界無双の道義国家" and "日満両国の血盟"

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 25.

²¹⁵ Sōchi Sakuta, *Manshū kenkoku no genri oyobi hongī* [*The principles and the core meanings of the founding of Manchukuo*]. ed. Tōjūrō Murai (Shinkyō: Manshū tomiyama bo, 1944), 84.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 83–84. "満州建国の本義は、神命の導きによつて創造されたるアジアの一国家として、全體性を固成し、邦族團結を遂げ、日本国と協同し、国本を確立し、以て民生を安定し、國業を經營し、更にアジア復興の大陸的據場となつて、八紘一宇・協和萬邦の世界進運に參與するにある。"

Entrusting this unique mission on Manchukuo, Sakuta placed Manchukuo in the pivotal position in the ongoing Pan-Asianist project. Unlike Nakano and Ono, Sakuta did not indicate a clear tutoring relationship among Asian peoples. Assuming that Asian peoples would cooperate with Japan and Manchukuo in freeing Asia from the West's subordination, Sakuta viewed Japan and Manchuko principally as motors of change. His explanation for the Japanese–Manchukuo leadership was similar to that of Murai. Sakuta argued that the two countries were inseparable just as Manchukuo's founding principle of the “kingly way” cannot be understood without its connection with *kōdō*, the imperial way of Japan.²¹⁷ Hence, Murai and Sakuta emphasized the need for cooperation between Japan and Manchukuo in leading Asian unity.

Honorary Professor of Philosophy Nishi Shin'ichirō's communal vision of Pan-Asianism adds variety to the conceptions of Pan-Asianism held by Kendai faculty members. Considering all peoples living in Manchukuo as “emperor's children,” Nishi emphasized the equality of all residents under the imperial family's benevolent rule.²¹⁸ In addition, drawing from Chinese classics, Nishi identified *ōdō*, Manchukuo's founding principle of governances as exemplifying the cultural similarity among Asian peoples. As seen in the following passage, Nishi argued that imperial loyalty came first.

Rather than intending to create an ideal society by harmonizing the peoples of five different nationalities, Manchukuo people must become loyal to their emperor whose benevolence impartially reaches out everyone without fail. Only then, can Manchukuo peoples of different

²¹⁷ Sōichi Sakuta, *Shūshin dōtoku [Shushin morality]* (Shinkyō: Kenkoku daigaku kenkyūin, 1941), 31.

²¹⁸ Shin'ichirō Nishi, "Kenkoku seishin to ōdō [the nation building spirit and the Kingly Way]," *Kenkyū kihō* 3(1942): 57–87, 86.

backgrounds nurture companionship and prosper together as the emperor's children.²¹⁹

In this statement, it should be noted that Nishi referred to the Manchukuo Emperor, not Japan's. In that sense, he regarded Manchukuo as an independent polity. Nevertheless, he added that the Manchukuo Emperor's sovereignty only existed when he was embraced by the Japanese imperial order. In the last analysis, although Nishi's conception of Manchukuo's harmonious relationships was communal rather than hierarchical, it ultimately hinged on the centrality of the Japanese imperial order. This tendency could be extended to his conception of Pan-Asianism because he believed Manchukuo could offer a model for the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

Despite differences, there were three overall commonalities in these seven Japanese Kendai intellectuals' conceptions of Pan-Asianism. First, they fundamentally rejected the contemporary world order of Western imperialism. Second, they assumed the history had reached a turning point away from the Western dominated '*kindai*' to a new era, '*gendai*.' Third, they concurred that Japan will play a special role in the ongoing world-wide transition. In other words, they all emphasized Japan's centrality—Japan was situated at the top of hierarchy, at the center of *hakō ichiu*, or at the special position as the home of emperor, the father of all Asian peoples. These common characteristics of Pan-Asianist thinking were reflected in their perceptions of Manchukuo as well because these scholars regarded Manchukuo as a part of the bigger project of creating the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. It followed that Manchukuo, as an integral part of Japan's imperial project, must also be led by Japan or cooperate closely with Japan.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 86. “五族が互に協和して樂土を立てようとするのではなく、一視同仁の皇帝に忠誠なることによつて等しく皇帝の赤子である所の諸族が相親しみ共に榮えんとするのである。”

Kenkoku University Non-Japanese Faculty Members' Conceptions of Pan-Asianism

Despite Ishiwara's recommendation that Kendai invite scholars and anti-colonial activists from around Asia, non-Japanese instructors constituted a small minority within the faculty. Although as many as 45 non-Japanese members were affiliated with Kendai at some point, Kenkoku University Research Institute's (KURI) monthly newsletters show that only a handful of them were actively participating in research and teaching at Kendai. Moreover, only a few documents extant today record their views of Pan-Asianism—one by a Chinese scholar Li Songwu and the other by the Korean nationalist Choe Nam-Seon mentioned earlier.

Li Songwu joined the Kendai faculty in 1938 as Research Associate and became Associate Professor in the following year. After graduating from Beijing University with a degree in History in 1933, Li worked for Beijing University's Law School as a researcher focusing on the economic history of China. He moved to Kendai by invitation but was not proficient in Japanese. All three articles he wrote for KURI's monthly newsletters were written and published in Chinese. Nonetheless, language apparently did not overly hinder collegiate relations. He wrote that he made a research trip to Japan with a few other Kendai faculty members who helped him communicate in Japanese. He also met many Japanese scholars in Kyoto and Tokyo who were fluent in Chinese.²²⁰ There was a long tradition of East Asian peoples communicating with each other through

²²⁰ Songwu Li, "Duri de jingguo yu ganxiang [the report and impressions on my trip to Japan]" in *Kenkoku daigaku kenkyūin geppō* [Kenkoku University Research Institute monthly journal] (KURIMJ) 8(April 1941): 6.

written language in the absence of a commonly spoken language.²²¹ It is notable that Li and other Chinese-speaking faculty members had the option of publishing their writing in Chinese. It may show the cultural tolerance of KURI. On another level, however, the institute valued the use of Chinese as a means of fulfilling one of its missions: producing materials for mass education in Manchukuo. In fact, KURI was undertaking a project of translating some of its research results into Chinese and publish them for the “young generation of *mankei*, especially new government clerks.”²²² The planned publication date was June 1943; however, the outcome is not certain. As seen below, Li’s pro-Japanese perspective served perfectly for such purpose.

The largest piece of Li’s contribution to KURI’s monthly newsletters was full of his praise for the Japanese Empire. Titled “Manzhou wenhua sixiang shi [cultural and intellectual history of Manchuria],” and published in December 1943, well into Japan’s war with the Allies, it reads like a polemic in giving enthusiastic support for Japan. After describing the changes in culture in Manchuria from nomadic and agricultural to the current state of civilization, Li stated that currently Manchuria’s culture was flourishing under the Manchukuo government. “Not only agriculture but also industry and business were simultaneously developing; and, both urban cities and rural villages were

²²¹ For more on this unique mode of communication, see D. R. Howland, *Borders of Chinese Civilization: Geography and History at Empire’s End* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 43–44. As an example of such communication, Howland introduces Ōkōchi Teruna, a Japanese former lord of Takasaki-han who lived in Tokyo. Ōkōchi hosted gatherings of Chinese and Japanese scholars between 1875 and 1881. Although those scholars did not speak each other’s language, they used brushes and papers to share their poetries and exchange their knowledge and opinions about current issues and so on. This mode of communication was called “brushtalking.”

²²² *KURIMJ* 26(February 1943): 4. “満系青年層特に青年官吏”

prospering.”²²³ He then praised “our beloved Japanese people... who gave us all of these things.”²²⁴ In return, he continued, “we must give our all to further develop Manchukuo’s culture as a whole and bring together the different cultures of various peoples and all of our efforts so we could definitely win the sacred war.”²²⁵

Li also defended Japan’s war effort and identified the U.S. and Great Britain as the enemies of Asia. “We must think about it. We are living comfortably behind the battle lines. Who gave this life to us? Was it the heaven? Was it something we had achieved on our own? We owe all of this happy life to our beloved imperial army (of Japan).”²²⁶ After this emotional statement, Li argued that the situation would have been disastrous at the hands of the U.S. and Great Britain and again insisted that “the imperial army was fighting the sacred war, killing enemies, and trying to drive out Americans and British from East Asia for the sake of our future, development, liberation, and survival.”²²⁷ Here, Li omitted any mention of China as the enemy of the imperial army, although China had been a crucial member of the Allies and the bulk of Japan’s army was deployed in China.

²²³ Songwu Li, “Manzhou wenhua sixiang shi [Cultural and intellectual history of Manchuria]” in *KURIMJ* 36(December 1943): 17–33, 19. “不但农业特殊发展，工商业也并时建设，都市的繁荣，地方农村并同时改造”

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, “亲邦日本人...都是他们供给我们的”

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, “我们给我们完成的，所以满洲国文化是综合构成，拿这多数民族的文化综合力量，一定可完成圣战的伟业。”

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 29. “我们看看，我们能在后方能过着安适生活，使谁给我们的呢，是上天赐的吗？是我们自己为的呢？完全是亲邦皇军给我们造成的幸福”

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, “皇军的圣战为了我们的前途，为了我们的发展，为了我们的解放，为了我们的生存，才要战争，才要杀敌，才要消灭美英在东亚的势力。”

Like Kendai's Japanese faculty members, Li viewed Japan as the central force in the ongoing Pan-Asianist project of realizing "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo" and the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. However, Li's understanding of the relationship between Manchukuo and Japan slightly differed from that of his Japanese colleagues. The central message in his article was that the peoples of Manchukuo must work hard to create a new culture. "We, the peoples of Manchukuo, relied upon our beloved nation Japan's support, guidance, and assistance to found a new country. Now, isn't it we who must change, prepare for anything, exert efforts, cultivate our minds, train ourselves, and overall, spiritually reform?"²²⁸ This passage implies that Japan had fulfilled its role by founding the Manchukuo state and that the peoples of the new independent country now had to assume responsibility for its future. While positing a mentoring relationship between Japan and Manchukuo, Li stressed the necessity of the peoples of Manchukuo taking the initiative.

What should Manchukuo's peoples do to create the new culture of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo"? In his attempt to answer this question, one notices Li's expectation that the Chinese culture and people would play an important role. For instance, throughout his article Li drew heavily from Confucius and Mencius. By copiously citing these ancient Chinese philosophers, Li appears to believe that the diverse population of Manchukuo could all learn lessons from China's past. It is also notable that when Li used the words "we" and "us," he appears to include the non-Japanese population of Manchukuo. In the passages cited above, he established a clear-cut distinction between "we," the people of Manchukuo, and the Japanese. As noted

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 27. "我们满洲国借亲邦日本的援助，领导，辅佐而创立新国家，是不是我们的国民需要改善，需要觉悟，需要努力，需要修养，需要训练，综括起来需要我们的精神。"

earlier, the majority of Manchukuo's population was Han Chinese or other Chinese-speaking minorities. If we see Li's article as targeting the Chinese-speaking population, the use of Confucius and Mencius appears unexceptional. However, publishing in KURI's newsletter, Li must have been aware of another audience: his fellow Kendai researchers including Japanese colleagues who could read Chinese. Thus, if we see this article as Li's message to his colleagues at Kendai, the use of ancient Chinese philosophers could be interpreted as his subtle way of claiming the centrality of Chinese culture in the ongoing Pan-Asianist project of creating harmonious relationships among peoples of different backgrounds.

One does not find the pro-Japanese outlook of Li's work in Choe Nam-Seon's research. As noted above, Choe was one of the three academics whom Kendai invited to join the faculty on Ishiwara's recommendation. It appears that the other two—Bao Mingqian and Su Yixin from China—did not become involved in Kendai's teaching and research in any meaningful way. Their names do not appear on the lists of instructors of courses offered on campus; nor do we find publications or any other evidence of their research activities as Kendai scholars. By contrast, Choe actively engaged in his historical research while at Kendai between 1938 and 1943. Through KURI, he published two articles on the ancient religious cultures of Manchuria and northeast Asia. Moreover, he apparently was an active participant in the institute. KURI's monthly newsletters show that Choe belonged to at least three research groups between April 1941 and August 1942—groups that focused on the issue of *minzoku*, Eastern languages, and Manchurian-

Mongolian culture. He was a leader of the last group that consisted of six other scholars, all Japanese.²²⁹

The thrust of Choe's research offers an alternative perspective on Asia. Put more directly, Choe challenged the Japan-centered view of Asia endorsed by the Kendai faculty. He accepted the premise that Asians share many things in common but provided a different idea of what those commonalities were. As seen above, for some of Kendai's Japanese scholars, it was the historic experience of the Western encroachment that Asians share and thus serves as a ground for Pan-Asian unity. By highlighting the common enemy, they sought to validate Japan's dominant position in Asia as they believed that Japan with its modernized state and military was the only capable leader. By contrast, Choe looked back to ancient religious customs to find commonalities among the societies of northeast Asia. In his 1939 piece, he examined various names of a mountain in Manchuria, contemporaneously called *chōhakusan*, or Long White Mountain. He found that this mountain had been named differently by peoples residing in the surrounding areas but equally seen as a sacred place. Among those peoples Choe introduced were the Jurchens of the Jin Dynasty (1115–1234), the Manchus of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1912), the Han Chinese of the preceding dynasties, Koreans, and Mongolians.²³⁰ Despite the differences in language, culture, and time, these societies all held great reverence for the sun, regarding it synonymous with the heaven, gods, and the sovereign, and saw the mountain as the sacred dwelling place of the sun. In tribute to one of the ancient names of Long White Mountain, Choe proposed designating northeast Asian culture “burukan”

²²⁹ *KURIMJ* 8(April 1941): 7; *KURIMJ* 19(May 1942): 8.

²³⁰ Nam-Seon Choe, *Tōhō kominzoku no shinsei kan'nen ni tsuite [Regarding the ancient eastern peoples' conception of divinity]* (Shinkyō: Kenkoku daigaku kenkyūin, 1939), 4–5.

culture.²³¹ In his view, this cultural zone covered northeast Asia centered on Manchuria. However, it is interesting to note that he did not mention the Japanese in his explanation of the shared religious worship of Long White Mountain within what he termed the “burukan” cultural zone. Indeed, the Japanese, separated by the sea, had had no contact with this mountain until the beginning of the twentieth century. Choe thus was indirectly emphasizing the non-Japanese past of the culture that existed in this region.

Choe’s thesis challenges the very foundation of *kōdō*, that Japan was a unique nation with its emperor who was the direct descendant of the sun goddess. Choe’s article shows that many societies had linked their sovereign and the sun god. His list of examples included not just the societies of the “burukan” cultural zone but also from ancient India and Rome.²³² After stating that such tendency was “...universal at a global level...,” he stressed that the reverence for the sun had been particularly strong and prevalent in northeast Asia.²³³ Choe then added that “the idea that Japan’s imperial family had descended from the sun goddess... falls into the shared tradition of this cultural zone.”²³⁴ By emphasizing the universality of this religious tradition, Choe was refuting the uniqueness of the Japanese imperial leadership with which the Japanese state legitimated its rule over Asia.

Choe’s challenge to the Japan-centered perspective appeared again in his 1941 publication in which he went so far as to highlight the Korean past of Manchuria. He

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 22.

²³² *Ibid.*, 21.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 21. “...世界的普遍性も帯びて居る...”

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 21. “日本に於て皇室の御祖先が天照大神であらせられ...この文化圏に於ける共通した範疇”

began by noting how the wind had been deified in various cultures including China, India, and Japan. After thus placing Japan's religious tradition in a broader context, he expounded on his main topic: *sui no kami*, the highest god in Goguryeo, an ancient kingdom that ruled the northern part of Korean peninsula and Manchuria. While the national identity of Goguryeo continued to spur debates, Choe assumed it was a Korean kingdom.²³⁵ He had found the mention of the god *sui no kami* in *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, a fourteenth-century Chinese historical novel about the ancient kingdoms; however, this text did not make clear what exactly *sui no kami* was. Choe's etymological investigation of the god's name led him to conclude that *sui no kami* referred to the god of the east wind that signified the arrival of spring to Manchuria.²³⁶ Moreover, he found that Manchuria's god of wind had originated from an ancient Korean kingdom. By extension, Choe, as a Korean scholar, appears to have been staking a claim to Manchuria's past.

In 1941, Choe was assigned to teach a course on the culture of Manchuria and Mongolia to the 1st entering class.²³⁷ Although no records of his course survive, there are references, which are not entirely consistent, in two Korean students' memoirs. Jin Won-Jung did not have an opportunity to attend Choe's lecture as he was a member of the 3rd entering class. But, based on what he heard from fellow Korean students, Jin writes that Choe expounded his theory of "burukan" culture. Jin implies that Choe taught the course

²³⁵ While the Korean societies have viewed Goguryeo as a Korean kingdom, the PRC holds that it was part of the larger Chinese empire.

²³⁶ Nam-Seon Choe, "Sui no kami [the god of *sui*]," *KURIMJ* 9(May 1941): 3.

²³⁷ *KURIMJ* 6(February 1941): 2.

for one year.²³⁸ A member of the 2nd entering class Hong Chun-Sik gives a different account on the length of Choe's course. According to Hong, Choe delivered a lecture only once as the Kendai administration removed him from the instructor's position after the first day of class. Hong explains that it was because Choe directly opposed the view of Manchurian history advocated by a Japanese Kendai faculty member Inaba Iwakichi. Hong writes: “[w]hile Professor Inaba taught us that Goguryeo was a kingdom of ethnic Manchus and not of Koreans, (Professor Choe) told a story that... Koreans originated in Manchuria, gradually migrated southward, and found Japan.”²³⁹ Unfortunately, there is no official record that explains what actually happened to Choe's course. What we do know from these accounts is that Choe did not hesitate to share his alternative perspective on Manchuria and Asia with his students and that the administration intervened at some point.

Choe's career at Kendai reveals that while not absolute, Kendai's academic culture was perhaps uniquely open compared to that of wartime Japan. As seen in his articles, Choe did not explicitly defy the Japanese Empire. Nevertheless, written in proficient and sophisticated Japanese, his argument comes across clearly. The implication of his thesis—that he was challenging the Japan-centered view of Asia—must have been clear to any Japanese scholars who read these pieces. The fact that Choe could publish these works and remain on the faculty shows the degree of academic freedom allowed at

²³⁸ Won-Jung Jin, “Kaiko to sekkei [Recollection and construction]” in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū [Kankirei: collection of memoirs written by alumni in Korea]*. Trans. Eun-Suk Kim and Yoshikazu Kusano. (Kenkoku University Alumni Association, 2004), 108–111, 108–109.

²³⁹ Chun-Sik Hong, *Hankyore no sekai*, 33. “稲葉氏は高句麗が満洲族で朝鮮族と別個の人種のやうな話をしたのに反して、満洲は韓人の故郷で、次第に南下した韓人が日本を建てた、というやうな事を…話した”

Kendai. Furthermore, even after publishing these articles, he was selected by the administration to teach a course in 1941. This appointment seems to indicate that the Kendai regime, at least at the beginning of 1941, was willing to expose its students to the alternative view of Asia that Choe was putting forth. Even after the administration's subsequent intervention in his course, Choe remained on the Kendai faculty. As discussed in Chapter III, he continued to hold informal "lectures" at his residence for Kendai's Korean students. Not only that, he continued to lead one of the research groups at KURI until February 1943 when he quitted the school for an unknown reason.

CHAPTER II

EXPLORING THE MEANINGS OF PAN-ASIA:

JAPANESE STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES AT KENKOKU UNIVERSITY

While the Japanese faculty at Kendai explored the meaning of Pan-Asianism in scholarly journals, Japanese students did so in their everyday experiences. In the case of students, their interactions with non-Japanese classmates were critical in realizing how difficult it was to live out the ideal of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” in real life. Observing cultural differences and non-Japanese students’ nationalistic and even anti-Japanese sentiments forced Japanese students to reflect on Japan’s policy in Asia and the meaning of “kingly way” and “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo”—Manchukuo’s founding principles. Their responses show that unlike the stereotypical image of wartime Japan’s youth as obedient and hyper patriotic, some Kendai students did contest the disconnect between the stated ideals of Kendai as an institution and proclamations of Manchukuo’s status as a sovereign nation state on the one hand and on the other, the reality that they encountered on the ground. They were able to do so in part because of the relative openness of Kendai’s educational environment and, more importantly, the unique opportunity of seeing firsthand Kendai’s non-Japanese students’ reactions to Japan’s policy in Manchukuo. Their experiences of going to Manchukuo, attending an educational institution whose purpose was to train government functionaries of the new state, and sharing their living space with non-Japanese students led the Japanese students to develop multiple understandings of Pan-Asianism. In Japanese students’ experiences, we find examples of extreme response:

from a strengthened sense of their superiority as Japanese to utter rejection of Japan's official version of Pan-Asianism that positioned Japan securely at the top of the hierarchy of Asian peoples.

The main sources of this chapter are the diaries kept by some of the Japanese students enrolled at Kendai. I will introduce those specific diaries later; here, I will briefly discuss the Japanese practice of diary keeping as part of school curriculum. Diary keeping in Japanese society is not necessarily a private practice, unlike the English word 'diary' which more often than not connotes a private document. In effect, diary keeping continues to be an integral part of the Japanese school curriculum especially in elementary schools. Often, students are required to keep a diary and occasionally submit it to the teacher who returns it with comments. Even in secondary education, each class often has a class diary in which students take turns keeping a day by day record of the group's activities along with some reflections, which is submitted to the homeroom teacher. Historian Samuel Hideo Yamashita explains that such "public" diary had a particularly important function in wartime Japanese elementary education. He states that the compulsory diary keeping "created a record of the children's thoughts, feelings, and activities for their supervisors" and also gave those children "a way to police themselves as they were being transformed into willing subjects."²⁴⁰ At Kendai, too, occasionally students were required to submit their diaries to the *jukutō*, or *juku* headmasters; hence, their diaries need to be read as documents that were produced by young adults well aware of the possible consequences of expressing 'wrong' ideas in their diaries. Nonetheless, available entries from Kendai students' 'public' diaries express a surprising degree of

²⁴⁰ Samuel Hideo Yamashita, *Leaves from an Autumn of Emergencies: Selections from the Wartime Diaries of Ordinary Japanese* (Honolulu: The University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 35.

variation in their responses to the Manchukuo, Kendai, and various perceptions of Pan-Asianism.²⁴¹

Choosing an Alternative Path and Going to the Frontier of the Japanese Empire

Although a small number of Japanese students were born and raised in Manchuria by Japanese immigrant parents, most of the Japanese students had lived their entire lives in Japan before matriculating at Kendai. For many of these Japanese youths, attending Kendai involved adventure—leaving their hometowns for the first time and going to a foreign country that had a special significance to the Japanese Empire they had known since birth. Since 1905 when Japan acquired the rights over the South Manchurian Railway, the adjacent railway zones, and the Kwantung Leased territory from Russia, the Japanese state had encouraged its farming population to emigrate to Manchuria. By 1931 the Japanese population in Manchuria was 286,952.²⁴² Many more groups—government and military clerks, entrepreneurs, and intellectuals—followed, pursuing the “Manchurian dream” of new opportunities.²⁴³ Furthermore, in the context of the war

²⁴¹ In this sense, Kendai’s Japanese students’ diaries show a stark contrast with the diaries of *tokkōtai* pilots (Special Attack Forces, also known as *kamikaze*) presented in Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney’s two books. Given the extremely strict censorship imposed on those young soldiers whose mission was to dive their planes into enemy ships, Ohnuki-Tierney focuses on the private diaries that miraculously survived. Her treatment of their ‘public’ writings such as wills and letters to families assumes that those documents were produced with authors’ awareness of their public nature. Not surprisingly, Ohnuki-Tierney finds a huge gap between *tokkōtai* pilots’ ‘public’ and ‘private’ writings. As shown below, some of the Japanese Kendai students felt at much greater liberty to express their opinions in ‘public’ diaries. It attests to the surprising level of freedom both Kendai’s faculty and students enjoyed on campus.

²⁴² Louise Young, *Japan’s Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 315.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 259.

fever that had gripped Japan since the Manchurian Incident of 1931, Manchuria became a popular site for Japan's burgeoning Asian tourism industry.²⁴⁴ As seen below, Japanese students who moved from Japan to Manchuria often exhibited a typical tourist-like reaction to Manchuria. Moreover, some were shocked to discover the extent of the divergence between the stated ideal of harmonious relationships and the reality they encountered.

The diary of Nishimura Jūrō (2nd entering class) provides evidence of the competitiveness of the application process and the allure Kendai held for many Japanese youth. When he expressed his desire to apply to Kendai in 1938, his parents initially objected. Nishimura was the eldest son in a family of six sons. It was the common expectation in prewar Japan that the eldest son would stay at home to become the next household head, which makes Nishimura's parents' objection to his going to Manchuria not surprising. However, as he later wrote, Nishimura persuaded his parents to let him take the exam by telling them that he could not possibly pass the extremely competitive entrance exam that had the acceptance rate of 1%.²⁴⁵ To his and his parents' surprise, Nishimura did pass the exam, fulfilling his dream. The news of his acceptance made his parents so proud that they reversed their early opposition and allowed him to enter Kendai. It appears that for both Nishimura and his parents, gaining admission to Kendai was an honorable alternative to attending the prestigious *kōtō gakkō* (higher schools) that

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 259–268.

²⁴⁵ Jūrō Nishimura, *Rakugaki: manshū kenkoku daigaku waga gakusei jidai no omoide [Scribbles: recollection of my student life at Nation Building University in Manchuria]* (Kobe-shi: Tosho Shuppan Marōdosha, 1991), 15. This surprisingly low acceptance rate was only partially exaggerated. *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper* reports that for the first entering class, there were over 7,000 applications from which Kendai admitted 150. In this case, the acceptance rate would be 2.14%. “Kendai gakusei shinkyō chaku [Kendai students arrive in Shinkyō]” in *Tokyo Asahi Shinbun [Tokyo Asahi Newspaper]* April 26, 1938.

guaranteed a place in Japan's Imperial Universities or attending *kōtō senmon gakkō* (higher technical colleges) in Japan.²⁴⁶

Morisaki Minato (4th entering class) chose to attend Kendai for somewhat different reasons, but like Nishimura he viewed Kendai as an attractive career path. For Morisaki, an ambitious youth raised for much of his childhood in an economically hard-pressed family, enrolling in Kendai offered obvious financial incentives. It is interesting, however, that Kendai held out other attractions, at least to Morisaki. His diary from his last year in middle school shows his deep dissatisfaction with the educational system he had encountered in Japan. In his diary entry of July 30, 1941, Morisaki vented his frustration: “Can (a middle school) fulfill its mission merely by cramming a lot of information into students’ heads?”²⁴⁷ Rather than keeping them busy preparing for the higher schools’ entrance exams, Morisaki continued, “...the most effort should go to ‘disciplining the will’ and nurturing ‘self-control.’”²⁴⁸ Kendai, which placed equal emphasis on learning and physical and spiritual cultivation, likely caught Morisaki’s attention and appealed to him as an alternative to Japan’s narrowly academic education system he so disliked.

²⁴⁶ As discussed in Introduction, *kōtō gakkō* (often translated as higher schools) served as college preparatory schools. Unlike the current high schools in Japan, pre-war *kōtō gakkō* were highly competitive and regarded as guarantying admission to Japan’s Imperial Universities whose graduates became the elite class. *Kōtō senmon gakkō* (higher vocational schools) were the institution of higher education that concentrated on professional training. See Donald Roden, *Schooldays in Imperial Japan: A Study in the Culture of a Student Elite* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); and Henry DeWitt Smith, *Japan’s First Student Radicals* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972).

²⁴⁷ Minato Morisaki, *Isho [The Will]* (Tokyo: Tosho shuppansha, 1971), 20. “ただ多くの教科をつめこむのみで能事畢れりとすべきか”

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 20. “「意思の鍛錬」「克己」にもっとも力を注がるべきと思う。” The ‘will’ Morisaki mentions here continued to have considerable significance to him. As discussed later in this chapter, Morisaki increasingly concentrated on the purity of intent rather than the actions and outcomes as he struggled to make sense of the contradiction between his Pan-Asianist ideal and his growing sympathy toward his Korean and Chinese classmates’ nationalism.

Moreover, the mere idea of traveling to Manchukuo appears to have excited Morisaki, a young idealist. As Mariko Asano Tamanoi lucidly shows, Morisaki held a firm belief in Japan's leading role in constructing Asia for Asians.²⁴⁹ On November 3, 1941, while waiting to hear whether he had been accepted at Kendai, Morisaki wrote that the cooperation between Japan and Manchukuo alone would not be enough for the grand task of "constructing eternal peace in the East," which was the proclaimed justification for Japan's war in China after 1937.²⁵⁰ For that purpose, he claimed, "on the basis of Japan–Manchukuo unity... peaceful cooperation with *shina* (a condescending term commonly used in prewar Japan to refer to China) must be achieved."²⁵¹ Hence, Morisaki regarded going to Manchukuo as only the first step in realizing his grand vision of Pan-Asianism. For him, Kendai would offer an opportunity to meet Chinese youths in person, nurture friendships, and thus put his ideal into practice. Soon afterwards, he received an acceptance letter from Kendai.

²⁴⁹ Anthropologist Mariko Asano Tamanoi has written two articles in 2000 and 2005 in which she analyzed a diary written by a Japanese student of Kendai, Morisaki Minato. Tamanoi examines Morisaki's personal diary from 1940 to 1945 and successfully shows the change in this young man's perception of Pan-Asianism. In her 2000 piece, she compares Morisaki's view of relationships among Asian peoples residing in Manchukuo with that of Japanese officials and of Japanese farmer settlers, thus expanding the category "Japanese in Manchuria," which has too often been represented either as the victimizers or victims. Tamanoi concludes that Morisaki's evolving perception of Pan-Asianism diverged substantially from Japan's official ideology that justified Japanese leadership. By showing this case as an example, Tamanoi questions the dominance of this version of Pan-Asianism in war time Japan. Nevertheless, while Tamanoi usefully expands the category "Japanese in Manchuria," there remains the question of how representative Morisaki was of Kendai students. In this chapter, I will use not only Morisaki Minato's diary but also the writings of other Japanese students to show a wide variety of experiences and relationships with Pan-Asianism. Mariko Asano Tamanoi, "Knowledge, Power, and Racial Classifications: The 'Japanese' in 'Manchuria,'" *Journal of Asian Studies* 59.2 (May 2000): 248–276; Mariko Asano Tamanoi, "Pan-Asianism in the Diary of Morisaki Minato (1924–1945) and the Suicide of Mishima Yukio (1925–1970)," in *Crossed Histories: Manchuria in the Age of Empire*, ed. Mariko Asano Tamanoi (Honolulu: Association for Asian Studies and University of Hawaii Press, 2005), 184–206.

²⁵⁰ Morisaki, 25. "東洋永遠の平和を招致する"

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, "日満一体の基礎の上に...平和的に支那との提携を実現しなければならない"

All students arriving from Japan were required to participate in a pre-matriculation orientation program. The program, which initially lasted a month, took place in several cities in Japan, Korea, and Manchukuo, as the group travelled from Tokyo to Shinkyō, Manchukuo's capital city and home to the Kendai campus.²⁵² The itinerary included visits to several Shintō shrines, museums, and tourist spots, as well as spiritual training through *misogi*, Shinto's ascetic practice that aims at the purification of body by bathing in cold streams or standing under a waterfall. Also included were meetings with dignitaries of the War Ministry and the Embassy of Manchukuo, a send-off party with Japanese political VIPs, and lectures by Kendai's professors. After Japan entered the war with the Allies in December 1941, Kendai's orientation program was modified to address the exigencies of total war by including more practical training. For instance, the program in 1942 that Morisaki participated in began with one week of military training in Toyohashi City, Aichi Prefecture, before embarking for Manchuria. Thus, the first instruction that Morisaki received as a prospective student at Kendai was how to handle a rifle. Even the orientation lectures were geared toward Japan's war effort. For instance, Morisaki noted in his diary that he attended a lecture "Training behind the Current Military Achievements of the Imperial Troops" by Captain Matsumoto Kazuo from Army News Service.²⁵³

The Japanese students' diaries reveal diverse outlooks and expectations as prospective Kendai students. Nishimura's experience resonates with that of typical Japanese visitors to the Asian continent, where Manchukuo was a popular tourist

²⁵² One exception, with regard to the location of the pre-university training, was the students who matriculated at Kendai in 1945. The orientation for this group was held on the Kendai campus. Yuji, 517.

²⁵³ Morisaki, 37. "皇軍のかくかくたる戦果の裏にひそむ訓練について"

destination.²⁵⁴ When Nishimura completed his pre-university orientation program and departed Japan from Kōbe on April 4, 1939, around thirty people, including his entire family, relatives, and friends, saw him off. It was apparently a grand, joyous occasion for his family and friends; the group accompanied Nishimura on the train, and he passed the time chatting with them while holding a young cousin on his lap.²⁵⁵ In his diary, Nishimura recorded what he observed during his trip, much as any tourist would do. He commented on the scenery in Busan, Korea, which reminded him of “the exotic atmosphere of Kōbe (his hometown).”²⁵⁶ He made a note of “strange” things such as the low platforms in train stations, double windows on trains, mountains without trees, and snow in April.²⁵⁷ His tourist-like enthusiasm momentarily abated when Nishimura encountered armed guards on the Korea–Manchukuo border, the sight of which “gave him a jolt.”²⁵⁸ When he arrived at Shinkyō, Nishimura felt at ease with the broad streets and modern buildings that reminded him of his hometown. During the few days between his arrival on campus and the start of the semester, he attended several orientation events at school and went to the downtown to check things out. One experience, however, the first agricultural training on campus, prompted him to affirm his sense of mission as a new Kendai student. “Under the direction of Mr. Fujita,” he wrote on April 10, 1938, “we

²⁵⁴ Louise Young cites Japan Tourist Bureau’s (JTB) statistics on the Japanese hotel patrons in twelve major cities in Manchukuo. From 1934 to 1939, the total number increased nearly ten-fold, from 304,012 to 2,964,296. Young, 264.

²⁵⁵ Nishimura, 25.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 26. “神戸を思い出されるエキゾチックさであった。”

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.* “異様”

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 27. “身の引き締まる思い”

worked the earth of Manchuria with shovels and tilled the soil. My mind was stirred by the idea that I am partaking in the nation-building of Manchuria.”²⁵⁹

Fujimori Kōichi, who entered Kendai in 1939, the same year as Nishimura, experienced shock when he arrived in Manchukuo. Unlike Nishimura who took comfort in seeing Japanese influence in a foreign land, Fujimori was disappointed to observe that Manchukuo cities were “...completely modeled after the Japanese style.”²⁶⁰ While this reaction appears not atypical of imperial travelers of Japanese and Western empires, which often exhibited fascination with things exotic, the following entry by Fujimori separates him from those travelers. Fujimori was struck by the separation of residential areas for Japanese and non-Japanese. He wrote:

The nice-looking areas are exclusively for Japanese residents. It looks like the Japanese have the nice places all to themselves... We can never realize genuinely harmonious relationships if we go on like this. What should I do?—I have no idea. This is something that I must ponder from now on. I’m sure that the way Japanese are behaving now isn’t at all a happy experience for *manjin* (“Manchurians”). I must do something...”²⁶¹

Here Fujimori is commenting on the contrast between the modernized city centers where the Japanese lived on one hand, and on the other, the old, exotic, noisy and chaotic Chinatown. This contrast was, in effect, celebrated and used as “a ‘before and after’ advertisement for Manchurian development” by the Japanese travel industry whose

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 28–29. “藤田先生の指導のもとに満州の大地にスコップを突き込み、土を掘り起こす訓練に、満州建設の感激が頭を占領した。”

²⁶⁰ Kōichi Fujimori, *Jukusei nisshi [Daily log of a juku student]* in Yuji, 147. “...まるで日本式である。”

²⁶¹ *Ibid.* “立派な町は全部日本人向きである。町の重要な所を日本人が占領して了ったという観がある。…これでは真の協和はできないと思う。それではどうすればよいかと言うことは俺には分からない。これは今後とも考えねばならぬ問題で、満人にとってみても、こうした日本人の手段は、嬉しくないことは勿論である。考えねばならぬ。” For more on the problems of these ethnic categories, see Chapter I.

packaged tours continued to attract Japanese customers.²⁶² Nevertheless, the same image of Manchukuo's capital city raised concerns to Fujimori.

The passage indicates that Fujimori, by the time he arrived at Shinkyō was very much aware of Manchukuo's stated ideal of creating harmonious relationships among peoples of different backgrounds and of Kendai's mission to actualize that goal. However, his use of the term *manjin* ("Manchurians") sets up a simple dichotomy between the Japanese and any other peoples who were seen as local residents of Manchuria, including Han Chinese, ethnic Manchus, and other ethnic minorities like Hui. By using this term *manjin* in his discussion of the goal of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo," Fujimori appears to have affirmed—quite inadvertently—the colonial mindset shared by the Japanese military and civilian officials in Manchukuo. The quoted passage nonetheless shows that Fujimori fully and genuinely embraced this idealism. His initial dismay at the divided and segregated society he observed in Manchukuo only strengthened his determination to work hard at Kendai to do his part in making the utopian vision of Manchukuo a reality. In other words, Fujimori became even more committed to the stated purposes of Kendai's proclaimed educational mission.

When Morisaki made his first trip to Manchuria in 1942, three years after Nishimura and Fujimori, Japan was already at war with the Allied Powers in the Pacific and Southeast Asia. During the pre-university orientation program in Tokyo, he received a letter from his father. The letter informed him that his eldest brother, who was stationed in Guangdong, China, for military service, had participated in the invasion of Singapore on February 8. His father ended the short letter with the following message: "Even if you leave Japan, you must devote your life to the country, lead Manchukuo, and become

²⁶² Young, 268.

renowned for excelling in spiritual development and practical accomplishments. Rouse yourself to make great exertions.”²⁶³ In his diary, Morisaki vowed to fulfill this expectation. This episode shows that Morisaki and his father both recognized that “lead[ing] Manchukuo” would mean “devot[ing] [one’s] life to the country,” Japan, while viewing Japan and Manchukuo as distinct entities. Confident in his worldview, Morisaki crossed Japan Sea with a high sense of mission as a Japanese subject who would help guide the newly founded state, Manchukuo.

For this young idealist whose passion was shaped by Japan’s wartime empire, Kendai’s orientation further stimulated his enthusiasm. Unlike Nishimura who recorded tourist-like excitement, or Fujimori who found problems in Japan’s policy in Manchukuo, Morisaki appears to have been moved by visits to battlefield sites commemorating some significant sites of Japan’s past battles. In Lushun (Port Arthur) he paid homage at Hakugyosan Shrine, where the ashes of Japanese war dead from the Russo–Japanese War (1904–1905) were enshrined. Morisaki vowed that he, as a Japanese male, “will never allow [their] sacrifices to be in vain.”²⁶⁴ He also excitedly noted that he had the opportunity of listening to a Japanese local staff officer’s talk on the battle of Lushun and of participating in military field training at this historically significant site. Morisaki’s enthusiasm only increased when he arrived at Kendai and was welcomed by current students and faculty members. He wrote: “The big brothers of the upper classes welcomed us with smiles and applause. They all look strong and healthy, with glowing eyes. Their clothes were dirty with sweat and dirt but their faces were suffused with vigor,

²⁶³ Morisaki, 35. “日本を去るも、一身は御国の為に捧げ、満州国を指導し、かつは偉大なる精神と実力を周知せしむるにあり。大いに発奮すべし”

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 40. “あなた方のご苦勞は決して無にはいたしません”

youthfulness, and energy—seeing them made me happy indeed. Oh, Kendai, I knew you wouldn't betray my expectation. I am grateful. These people surely are worth regarding as my big brothers, seniors, and comrades.”²⁶⁵ Thus, Morisaki appears to have started his campus life with unbridled enthusiasm and a firm commitment to Japan's imperial project.

Interestingly, the first-day experience of the Kendai campus disappointed another Japanese student, Kaede Motoo (3rd entering class). On April 10, 1940, Kaede and a group of students coming from Japan arrived at the Shinkyō Station. Someone in the group said “So, this is the ‘Mongolian wind,’” referring to the yellow sand that blows in from the continent, which stirred Kaede's “boyish imagination.”²⁶⁶ Here, he must have referred to the image of Manchuria-Mongolia that was created and advertised by the Japanese travel industry. As historian Louise Young shows, the travel industry facilitated a massive production of artworks and travel literature to promote the image of Manchurian as the mixture of the modern and the old by mobilizing Japanese novelists, journalists, and photographers of the time.²⁶⁷ The “Mongolian wind” and the “boyish imagination” in Kaede's diary entry apparently refer to the exotic image of Manchuria that he had so longed to experience in person.²⁶⁸ As soon as they arrived on the Kendai

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 42. “上級生の兄達は微笑をたたえ拍手をもって迎えてくれる。皆たくましく眼光は光っている。作業服は汗と泥に汚れている。しかしその面の力強さ、若々しさ、闊達さ、自分はそのを見て実に嬉しい。ああ建国大学はやっぱり自分の予想を裏切ってはくれなかった。ありがたい。この人達なら兄とし先輩としてあおぐにたる。同志として相率いるにたる。”

²⁶⁶ Motoo Kaede in *Kenkoku daigaku sanki sei kaishi [Bulletin of the 3rd entering class of Nation Building University]* 15, in Yuji, 215–216, 215. “これが、'蒙古風'だ…”; “少年らしい夢”

²⁶⁷ Young, 266–268.

²⁶⁸ Young also notes that during the 1930s the travel industry and the Japanese government promoted travels to the continent—Korea and Manchukuo—especially among the school children. Of the 14,141 Japanese who traveled to Manchuria in 1939 through JTB organized tours, 9,854, or the 70%, were students, mostly on their graduation trips from secondary schools. Young, 265.

campus, however, Kaede was shocked by the gap between the dream-like image of the school he had nurtured and the reality he faced. As the group walked through the broad, empty campus, about two hundred current students welcomed them with applause. To Kaede's eyes, these Kendai students appeared as "a motley crowd" and left a bizarre impression.²⁶⁹ "Some wore ragged clothes, others were in their work uniforms; they wore rain boots, leather shoes, or Chinese-style shoes made from cloth."²⁷⁰ Realizing that this was the reality of Kendai students that he had so longed for, Kaede was disenchanted. In Kaede's diary entries one sees no evidence of the ideological fervor so evident in Morisaki's diary and generally typical of newly matriculating students. Kaede's view of Manchuria appears to have been no different from that of any tourist. What both Kaede's and Morisaki's accounts reveal, however, is something akin to the experience of any study-abroad student—the excitement and shock at encountering a foreign culture.

Bearing the Same Hardships:

The Horse Barn Incident, or *Umagoya Jiken*

The 'Horse Barn Incident' reveals the depth of some of Kendai students' idealism, as well as their ignorance of Manchukuo's actual social conditions and glaring disparities. A group of seven Japanese students of the 1st entering class registered their disapproval of what they perceived as a contradicting practice of Manchukuo's founding principles at Kendai in a dramatic protest action. On September 2, 1938, only four months after the

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.* “雑多”

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.* “うすよごれた綿服の者あり、作業服の者あり、長グツをはくもの、皮靴の者、中国靴をはいた者。”

matriculation of the first class, seven Japanese students boycotted the *juku* life and moved into the university-owned horse barn on campus as a protest. In the following one and a half months, they lived in the small barn while skipping classes except agricultural training. Two factors inspired these students to carry out this protest.

First, they were influenced by their dorm headmaster (*jukutō*), Fujita Matsuji, who was also Assistant Professor of Agriculture and Agricultural Training. Fujita exhorted his students that only through the sweat and toil at agricultural labor could they hope to become genuine leaders of Manchukuo and contribute to the realization of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.”²⁷¹ His message appealed to these Japanese students who were desperate to overcome the gap between their idealistic visions of harmonious relationships and what they had heard from their non-Japanese classmates about brutal Japanese aggression in Asia.

Moreover, a school fieldtrip to northern Manchuria from August 12 to 20, 1938 had exposed the students to the poverty of local peasants. The shock at observing their poor living conditions ignited the idealism of these seven students, who vowed not to take advantage of the much better living conditions provided at Kendai. Sakuta Yoshio, one of the protesters, recalled that he was concerned that Kendai’s overly comfortable environment would only nourish empty idealism and elitism in students. He elaborated on his reasons for participating in the dorm boycott as follows: “In order to become a truly capable leader of Manchukuo and make Manchukuo my final home, I decided to

²⁷¹ Hiroshi Kawada, *Manshū Kenkoku Daigaku monogatari: jidai o hikiukeyōto shita wakamonotachi* [A story of Nation Building University in Manchuria: the youth who sought to shoulder the time]. (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 2002), 180; Shōji Yamada, *Kōbō no arashi: manshū kenkoku daigaku hōkai no shuki* [The rise and fall in storm: memoir about the dissolution of Nation Building University in Manchuria], (Tokyo: Kanki shuppan, 1980), 105. Fujita’s first name might be pronounced as “Shōji.”

leave the easy life, put myself in the same life condition as that of the peasants in Manchuria, and experience their suffering for myself.”²⁷² One of the initiators of the protest, Ochi Michiyo, later gave the following explanation:

(The Japanese and non-Japanese students) had formed a kind of cozy relationships. However, I knew this was not the genuinely harmonious relationships. Because I thought that the situation could not be changed through superficial interactions, I decided to move out.²⁷³

Reflected in these protesters’ accounts is their egalitarian conception of Pan-Asianism. Observing the poverty that typified the lives of most of the local farming population shocked the protesters to realize that rule by the “kingly way,” the Japanese authorities’ promise to guide the people by virtue, was not carried forward in reality. Moreover, they were dispirited by the “superficial interactions” among Kendai students. Their solution was to recreate in their daily lives what they perceived as the lives of peasants in Manchuria. What we also find in their accounts is a strongly felt determination to become a citizen of Manchukuo. In Sakuta’s quote above, he clearly expresses his intention to “make Manchukuo [his] final home.” The literal translation of this Japanese metaphorical expression is “to bury one’s bones in the land of Manchukuo,” meaning that one would remain in Manchukuo until the last moment. This is a commonly used expression by Kendai’s Japanese students, which reflected the prewar Japanese

²⁷² Yoshio Sakuta quoted in Yamada, 106. “満州の地に真の満州国の人材として骨を埋めるためには、現在のような甘ったれた生活、態度でなく、満州の農民たちと同じ生活環境に身をおき、自分自身の肌でその苦しみ、感じを共感せねばと、こういう思いからでした。”

²⁷³ “Zadankai: gonenkan no juku seikatsu [Talk: five years of juku life]” in Manzō Yuji, *Kenkoku daigaku nenpyō [The chronological timetable of Nation Building University in Manchuria]* (Tokyo: Kenkoku Daigaku Dosokai, 1981), 122. “一種の馴れ合いができた。こんなものは本当のものではないという反省があった。一応の上辺だけの交際でそれは打開できるものではないという気持ちで行った。”

discourse of Manchuria as the imperial frontier and the Japanese emigrants there as pioneers.

It appears that the seven students ended their protest without achieving any specific goals when they accepted Fujita's advice and returned to the *juku* one and a half month later. One student, Mimura Fumio, withdrew from the school on September 30.²⁷⁴ While Ochi and Sakuta chose to stay and continue searching for a way to realize genuinely harmonious relationships, Mimura left campus in despair. Looking back on his experience, Mimura explained his state of mind at the time.

Having witnessed Japanese imperialism and oppression of the native *manjin* ("Manchurians") in the name of "kingly way"—the reality I had never imagined before attending Kendai—I could not think any better course of action than quitting the university that was part of such exploitation. That was my way of resolving the contradiction.²⁷⁵

It appears that Mimura could not view Kendai, Manchukuo's highest educational institution, as anything other than complicit with Japanese imperialism. To his eyes, studying at Kendai meant being part of this mechanism of oppression he so abhorred.

Mimura's departure appeared to be a memorable event not only for his fellow protesters but also other students of the 1st entering class. In addition to his six fellow 'Horse Barn' protesters, seventeen students and two *jukutō* demonstrated solidarity by accompanying Mimura either to the school entrance, Shinkyō downtown, or to the Shinkyō Station. It is important to note that this group included seven Chinese and three

²⁷⁴ Yuji, 124.

²⁷⁵ Fumio Mimura, in *Kendaishi 3* in Yuji, 124–29. “日本が王道の名の下に帝国主義政策を展開し、現地満人を圧迫するという、建大に来るまでは思いがけなかった現実を見聞した以上、その搾取の一つのあらわれである大学に学んで民族問題を考える矛盾を解決する方法として、脱落者の道をとったのであった。”

Russian students.²⁷⁶ This fact indicates that these non-Japanese students at least regarded Mimura as their good friend and, very likely, shared his frustrations.

As Mimura recalled nearly three decades later, the Horse Barn Incident was only “the tip of the iceberg.”²⁷⁷ Moreover, it was the beginning of many Japanese students’ struggle to overcome the obstacles they encountered to realizing Kendai’s lofty goal of realizing “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” The contradiction between the reality of Manchukuo, student life at Kendai, and students’ idealistic visions clearly tormented some of the Japanese students although we do not know how many. The diaries suggest that the more genuinely the students were committed to the institutions’ founding principles, the more discouraged they grew over time.

School Life at Kendai:

Four Japanese Students’ Experiences

As a part of the *juku* system, Kendai students were required to keep a diary and occasionally submit it to their *jukutō*, who returned them with a few comments. While most of these diaries have been lost, fortunately a few diaries kept by Japanese students survived. I have selected the diaries of four students: Nagano Tadaomi (1st entering class), Fujimori Kōichi (2nd entering class), Nishimura Jūrō (2nd entering class), and Morisaki Minato (4th entering class). Selective entries from Nagano’s and Fujimori’s diaries were published in *Kenkoku daigaku nenpyō* [*The chronological timetable of Nation Building*

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 128.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 126.

University in Manchuria] (1981), which was compiled by a Japanese alumnus Yuji Manzō in an effort to preserve the school's history. Among several students' diary entries compiled in the timetable, I chose the entries from Nagano's and Fujimori's diaries because they appear most comprehensive and expressive of their feelings at the time. Their writings also reveal contrasting trajectories of the formation of their senses of identity. Nishimura published an edited version of his diary in 1991, under the title *Rakugaki: manshū kenkoku daigaku waga gakusei jidai no omoide* [*Scribbles: recollection of my student life at Nation Building University in Manchuria*]. Morisaki's published diary, *Isho* [*The Will*] (1971), is an exception in that it was his personal diary and not read by the *jukutō*. I focus more attention on Nishimura's and Morisaki's diaries because they are the only book-length diaries of Japanese students that cover the entire time period of their student life at Kendai and thus provide rich sources on the changes in these students' perspectives. In this section, I will describe these four students' experiences drawing on materials in their diaries. What one sees is a wide variety of responses and the emotional and intellectual conflicts they experienced as Kendai students. From these documents there emerges a complicated picture of how they perceived Manchukuo and conceptualized Pan-Asianism.

Nagano Tadaomi (1st entering class, matriculated in 1938)

In his first year at Kendai, Nagano Tadaomi experienced cultural shock. On May 3, 1938, one day after he entered Kendai as a member of the 1st entering class, Nagano wrote in his diary, "Some *manjin* must have eaten garlic. I smelt it when I entered our

dorm room.”²⁷⁸ To this entry, his *jukutō* Ehara Setsunosuke responded, “if the smell of garlic becomes an issue, we won’t be able to fulfill our mission.”²⁷⁹ Thus, Nagano’s student life started with this seemingly innocent expression of discomfort with his *manjin* classmates’ habits, for which he was chided by his *jukutō*.

Nagano’s diary records other examples of his intolerance of cultural differences. On August 10, 1938, his class was taken to the final day of the *sumō* wrestling tournament in the capital, Shinkyō. This Japanese traditional martial art had a special significance to the Japanese as a Shintō ritual. The fact that the Japanese authorities had brought this sport to Manchukuo indicates the importance with which it was regarded by the Japanese. Nagano was no exception. However, when he asked his non-Japanese classmates’ impressions on that day’s *sumō* match, he was disappointed to learn that “...only a few found fun in the gallant contest.”²⁸⁰ He further commented in his diary that they “failed to grasp the spirit imbedded in *sumō*. It seems that anything that the *yamato* (Japanese) people has created does not easily make inroads into foreign cultures... This is evident when considering the fact that the large crowd at today’s *sumō* match did not include any local residents” except those from Kendai.²⁸¹ Nagano’s response to the fact that *mankei* were indifferent to what he considered as a highly significant tradition of

²⁷⁸ Tadaomi Nagano, *Jukusei nisshi [Daily log of a juku student]* in Yuji, 97. “満人にニンニクを食べた人がいるらしく、室に入ると変な臭がした。”

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.* A comment by Setsunosuke Ehara attached to Nagano’s diary. “ニンニクの臭モ何ノ感じガナイヨウニナラネバ、我等ノ任務ヲ全ウスルコトガ出来ナイ。”

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 109. “...面白く、勇ましいというものは割合すくない。”

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 109. “精神そのものも汲み取れないのだろう。大和民族が作ったものは、中々外に出て行かない。...今日のあれだけの人で、見物人に満人は一人も見えなかったので分る。”

Japan was to fault them for their lack of cultural understanding, rather than to question his own assumptions.

The following entry dated October 26, 1938 reveals that Nagano was not alone in failing to show sensitivity toward the feelings of his non-Japanese classmates. On that day, Kendai students received the news that the Japanese Army had taken the City of Hankou in Hubei Province. It was one in a series of Japanese military victories in the early stages of the Second Sino–Japanese War (1937–1945). Nagano’s account shows that he and his Japanese friends made plans to hold a celebration party, but the *jukutō* prevented them. He wrote, “At first I did not understand why the *jukutō* stopped us. After giving some thought to this incident, however, I now assume that he did so out of consideration for the feelings of the *kanjin* (“Han Chinese”).”²⁸² Noting also that the *jukutō* advised them to hold the celebration after the war between Japan and China was over, he and his friends nevertheless silently celebrated the victory. This episode shows that these Japanese students were emotionally committed to Japan’s war in China and that they were not hesitant—at least initially—to demonstrate this to their Chinese classmates, whom Nagano referred to as *kanjin* (“Han Chinese”). Nagano’s comments on the *sumō* match and Japan’s military victory hint at his strong sense of Japanese pride verging on chauvinism, which he felt at liberty to express at Kendai, the highest learning institution of the ostensibly independent state of Manchukuo. It is nevertheless instructive that at least some of the Japanese faculty took the ideal of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” seriously. Nagano was chided by his *jukutō* to be more

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 131. “その時は、止められた理由が分らなかったが、後から色々考えて漢人としての立場を考えて止められたのでなかろうかとも思った。”

sensitive to the feelings of his classmates. These experiences led him to ponder the meaning and means to achieve harmonious relationships, as seen in the following entry.

On April 7, 1939, the day the students of the 2nd entering class arrived on the Kendai campus, Nagano expounded on his Japan-centered vision of Pan-Asianist education at Kendai.

At the present moment, Japan is the one that leads East Asia... Moreover, many of Kendai's customs and systems are something that we (Japanese) have already experienced or observed in our home country. Thus, I think that Kendai students must improve themselves with the Japanese help, cooperation, and leadership... What should we do then?... It's not enough to instruct with words. We must show examples through our attitudes. In other words, we must affirm our own identity as Japanese and guide other peoples by example—with the spirit of persevering to the bitter end.²⁸³

It is interesting to note that Nagano coped with his frustration at the cultural difference he encountered by reaffirming his Japanese identity and commitment to exercising leadership as a responsibility incumbent on him as Japanese. In that sense, his understanding of interpersonal relationships on the Kendai campus was shaped by Japan's colonial relationships with other Asian nations. Obsessed with his Japanese identity, which he believed to be superior to others, Nagano assumed it was natural that many Kendai customs took Japan as their model. In his mind, strong leadership by the Japanese students was the key to success of Kendai's education.

Nagano affirmed his belief in Japan's superiority and in the Japanese mission to guide other Asian nationals on June 1, 1939, when he visited a nearby school that trained military officials. Impressed at seeing *manshū-jin* (Manchurian people) carrying out a

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 144. “今の所、東亜を指導して行くのは日本だ。…さらに、建大内の諸形式が内地で経験したり、見たりしたことのあるものであるから、…学生は、日本人の援助、協和に、よりよい指導に進むべきものと思っている。それには、どうすればよいか。…口では駄目なのだ。態度を以て示さねばならぬ。即ち日本人たることを自覚して、身を以て実践指導をし、倒れて後やまずの気力である。”

Japanese-style military training in a professional manner, Nagano was convinced that “with spiritual training...even *manshū-jin* could master skills as perfectly as the Japanese do...”²⁸⁴ He continued:

Moving to the (Asian) continent as a Japanese, somehow I found other students’ lackadaisical and slovenly attitudes unbearable...In time, however, I began to overlook the situation, as I was repeatedly chided by my senior (Japanese) and others for having such feelings toward my non-Japanese classmates. But, after seeing the military training today, I realized that...my present attitude was wrong.²⁸⁵

This passage conveys Nagano’s assumption concerning relations among the various students enrolled at Kendai and in the Manchukuo society at large. Clearly seeing the teacher–pupil relationship between the Japanese and *manshū-jin*, or the people of Manchuria, he appears to have believed that Japanization of other Asian nationals was possible and even desirable. In the last sentence, Nagano criticized himself—and by implication all the Japanese who had persuaded him to be sensitive to different cultures—for not serving as a model to help others rise to the level of the Japanese. Thus, he decided to act on the principle of the “kingly way,” one of the founding principles of Manchukuo, in his daily life at Kendai. When he found many of his non-Japanese classmates were slacking off during morning cleanup, he attributed it to the lack of self-awareness of the Japanese students. He wrote, “Because the superior are not setting the right example, it’s inevitable that the inferior ones behave in a similar manner.”²⁸⁶ This,

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 155. “いくら満洲人も…精神訓練でもやれば、日本人に劣らぬ位できるものだ…”

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.* “自分は、日本人として大陸に渡り、大陸的な、呑気な、ずるずるした態度を見て…何となく気に喰わなかったが、先輩その他各位から、そんな気持でどうするかと言われている中に、つい気にしなくなった。しかし、今日の見学で…私の考えは間違いであることが、よく分った。”

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 157. “上にまとまりがないから、下に至るまで同様だ。”

of course, is a quintessentially Confucian concept of exercising leadership by embodying virtue.

As seen above, Nagano's assumption of Japanese superiority and guidance of the less advanced Asian peoples diverged significantly from Ishiwara Kanji's initial hope that Kendai's diverse students would interact as equals. Rather, Nagano's idea was close to that of the four professors who modeled Kendai on their conception of "Japaneseness" and of the majority of the Japanese faculty, as seen in the previous chapter. Yet, we should not overlook the fact that it was a "harmonious" relationship Nagano strove to create at Kendai even if premised on a hierarchical relationship between the Japanese and non-Japanese and the "kingly way" concept that the superiors guide inferiors by example. In this sense, his attitude was deeply paternalistic. Whenever he saw lackadaisical non-Japanese students, he blamed himself for not being able to guide them by setting the right example. Furthermore, Nagano grew disappointed at the Kendai administration and faculty, who, in his eyes, were not sufficiently committed to Pan-Asianist education. On June 4, 1940, he criticized the current curriculum at Kendai as "a weird mixture of (Japanese) higher schools and military training" and essentially "doing the same things as the universities in Japan."²⁸⁷ We do not know what type of experience Nagano had in the following three years while enrolled at Kendai because his diary for those years is lost. What the available entries show, as seen above, is that Nagano strengthened his sense of Japan's unique mission as he interacted with his non-Japanese classmates, to the degree that even went further than the Kendai administration.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 157–158. "...高等学校の様な軍隊式の如き変な中間..."; "内地の大学と同じ事を行ふ..."

Fujimori Kōichi (2nd entering class, matriculated in 1939)

Unlike Nagano, who never delved deeply into the reasons for some non-Japanese students' "lackadaisical and slovenly attitudes," Fujimori Kōichi of the 2nd entering class grew increasingly sensitive to non-Japanese students' sentiments as he interacted with them. At an informal party at his *juku*, which was held soon after Fujimori entered Kendai in May 1939, he noticed that the non-Japanese students were not only unable to understand what the Japanese students were discussing, but also unwilling to share their opinions. At that night, he wrote in diary:

It couldn't be helped. It's been only half a month since we entered this school. Even if we (Japanese) ask them to share what they really feel, they wouldn't do so because they don't know what kind of people we are. Just as Yan (a Chinese student) said, they are probably still scared of us. The history of Han Chinese and Manchuria, and all this kind of things make them feel uneasy about sharing their true feelings with us.²⁸⁸

Yet, he could not help but desire genuine dialogue with these non-Japanese students. He closed this day's diary by writing, "I must master *mango* (Manchurian language) and learn about the national and cultural differences (of Kendai students) as soon as possible, so that I'll be able to understand their viewpoints."²⁸⁹ Interestingly, Fujimori uses the word '*mango*' to refer to the Chinese language.

Longing to develop a true friendship that would transcend national and cultural boundaries, Fujimori sometimes got irritated with his fellow Japanese students who

²⁸⁸ Fujimori, in Yuji, 149. "無理もない。又本当の心持を言ってくれと言っても、まだ塾生活半月である。俺達がどういふ人間か分からないであろう。閻君が言ったように彼等は、まだ俺達を恐れているであろう。漢民族の歴史、満州の歴史、こうしたものが、彼等に自分の本当の気持を発せしめることを極度に不安に感ぜしめるのである。"

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 150. "早く満語を習い、民族の差異、風俗習慣のくい違い等を知り、彼等としての立場を了解してやらねばならぬ。"

appeared not at all willing to understand non-Japanese students' perspectives. In his diary on June 19, 1940, Fujimori criticized other Japanese students for being "stubborn" and "closed-minded."²⁹⁰ In addition, Fujimori grew frustrated at Kendai's token commitment to the equality of all students. For example, when student representatives were to be chosen for some activities, the unspoken rule was that not all the representatives should be Japanese, hence the necessity of selecting one student who was a native of Manchuria. Fujimori disliked this type of superficial practice of equality. Because he believed that all Kendai students must be united in spirit, Fujimori did not care if all the representatives were Japanese or 'Manchurian.'²⁹¹ All that mattered to him was the ability and personality of those who would represent his group.²⁹²

As he interacted further with non-Japanese students, Fujimori came to experience inner conflict between his deep respect for the Japanese Emperor and his sympathy toward his non-Japanese friends' nationalistic sentiments. Despite his increasing distrust of Japan's political leaders as well as Kwantung Army officials, Fujimori remained loyal to the Japanese Emperor, whose virtue, he believed, embraced all Asian peoples. It appears that Fujimori grew skeptical about the genuineness of the principles of kingly way and "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchuria" enunciated in the discourses of Manchukuo leaders, Kendai administration, and other people around him. However, he never questioned his loyalty to the emperor, at least in writing. Nevertheless, there is one significant diary entry which by implication suggests doubt about the

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 242.

²⁹¹ Here, it is not clear which specific nationalities Fujimori referred to by the term "Manchurian."

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 191.

righteousness of the ongoing war in China, which was being waged in the emperor's name. On June 19, 1940, Fujimori wrote about his conversation with Yao, a student of Han Chinese descent. After chatting about themselves, their friends, and the *juku* life, the conversation moved to the ongoing Sino–Japanese War. Although Fujimori did not record what Yao said, he apparently sympathized with Yao's reasons for being anti-Japanese. Fujimori wrote that “I would be the first to flock to the banner of Chiang Kai-shek (the leader of the Nationalist government of China), if I were Chinese.”²⁹³ He further contemplated the contradiction between the ideal of building a united Asia and the fact that Chinese, Koreans, and other Asian peoples were suffering from the Japanese Army's aggression. Deeply troubled by this thought that night, Fujimori could not sleep until 4 a.m. He wrote in closing: “I felt like I could even go to join Chiang Kai-shek, if I were with Yao. I wish Yao and I could have a heart-to-heart talk with the (Chinese) youth of the Nationalist Party. I must study harder.”²⁹⁴

He ended his long diary entry by telling himself to “study harder.” This final sentence, which reads like a non sequitur, is indicative of his sense of confusion and dilemma. It can be interpreted as self-reproach for entertaining thoughts that implied disloyalty to the emperor. Even though the entry is not explicit on this point, he must have been aware that “[flocking] to the banner of Chiang Kai-shek” would mean making himself an enemy of the Japanese Emperor. This feeling of guilt perhaps made him resolve that “he must study harder” to still be a loyal Japanese subject. Thus, the short

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 242. “俺がもし、中国の青年であったら、真先に蒋介石の傘下に馳せ参ずるに違いないと思う。”

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 242. “姚さんとなら蒋介石の下へでもいけるというような気がした。又、姚さんと共に国民党の青年達と心の底よりぶちまけて話してみたいような気がした。もっと勉強せねばならぬ。”

final sentence reveals the dilemma in Fujimori's mind. In the end, as later diary entries show, Fujimori reaffirmed absolute loyalty to the emperor, whose virtue, he believed, would lead all Asians to live harmoniously. However, one thing is clear: he was no longer uncritically supportive of the political leadership in Manchukuo and Japan. He believed that only through mutual understanding, could Asian peoples realize harmonious relationships.

Nishimura Jūrō (2nd entering class, matriculated in 1939)

While Nagano's and Fujimori's inner struggles arose from their relationships with other students, Nishimura Jūrō of the 2nd entering class was more obsessed with his inner self and failing health. In addition to suffering frequent minor illnesses, serious health issues forced him to take a leave from Kendai. Moreover, in June 1941, in his third year at the school, Nishimura learned that his extremely poor eyesight was incurable. His diary shows how he increasingly turned inward to find meaning in his studies and eventually developed his own brand of humanism.

As mentioned earlier, Nishimura delighted in his very first experience of Kendai's agricultural training; however, he soon found out that Kendai demanded more physical labor than his body could take. One day, the agricultural training lasted for seven hours until 8:30 p.m. Nishimura wrote angrily:

Does [Mr. Fujita] think we possess immortal physical strength? ...We need to review today's lessons and prepare for tomorrow's classes. Does he think we can go on like this? ...This is intolerable. What's more exasperating is that he never opens his mouth without mentioning the five yen (the monthly allowance for Kendai students allotted by the Manchukuo government expenditure), as if he is giving us that money...

It's downright offensive to be treated as traitors to the country when we do understand and appreciate it...²⁹⁵

Indeed, he was constantly exhausted and complained of not being able to concentrate on his studies. In addition, his frequent outings to Shinkyō's downtown for movies and drinking were undoubtedly partly responsible for his constant fatigue, which he admitted in his diary. It appears that Nishimura's initial delight at partaking in Manchukuo's nation-building did not deter him from fully enjoying college life—typical of any college freshmen. He wanted to study, and he wanted to enjoy life.

Although he does not explicitly states so, Nishimura appeared to have a detached, if not somewhat alienated attitude toward the school events that the Kendai administration regarded as highly significant. One example is the omission of any expression of enthusiasm for a special lecture by Tsuji Masanobu, Staff Officer of the Kwantung Army, in commemoration of the Navy Anniversary Day on May 27, 1939.²⁹⁶ The lecture took place at a bridge at Kiryū Park near the Kendai campus. Nishimura reported that according to Tsuji's allegory, "that bridge was the Battleship Yamato, the lake below us was the Korean Strait, and we were all Commander Tōgō..."²⁹⁷ Then he wrote, "...the lecture at the bridge lasted about one hour."²⁹⁸ Thus, this special event

²⁹⁵ Nishimura, 51–52. “先生は私等の身体を一体何と考えて居るのだろうか。…私等には今日の復習、明日の予習があるのに、これで身体が続くと思うのか。…全くたまらん。いやそれよりも、もつと腹立たしかつたのは先生の言葉だ。二言目には五円々とまるで自分が我々に金を与えているような云い方をされるが、それ位は充分わかつてあるのだ。それに国賊呼ばわりは断然憤慨であり…”

²⁹⁶ Nishimura only indicates Tsuji's last name in his diary, but it is clear that he refers to Tsuji Masanobu.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 48. “この橋が軍艦三笠で、下の南湖は朝鮮海峡であり、我々一人一人は東郷司令官なのださうで…”

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.* “…橋上の授業は約一時間であつた。”

occupies only a few lines in his diary. It seems that Tsuji spoke about one of Japan's most significant and celebrated victories, the Battle of Tsushima of 1905, where Japan won a remarkable victory over the Russian Baltic Fleet. By likening the lecture site to the battle site, Tsuji intended to create the feeling of being on a real battlefield and inspire the students to be like the heroic Commander Tōgō. Nishimura's brief and emotionless entry noticeably lacks even a single reference to a moment of inspiration or surge of patriotic feeling inspired by the lecture but rather ends with a simple, factual statement on its length as if to imply his impatience with being kept standing for so long. Rather than attending these school events, Nishimura preferred reading literature. Indeed, that day's diary entry concludes with the statement that he enjoyed reading Natsume Sōseki's *Kusamakura [Grass Pillow]*.

By 1941, his third year at Kendai, his poor health and the prospect of the expansion of the war led Nishimura to rethink the meaning of his student life. In July 1941, after learning that he could expect no cure for his failing eyesight, he describes himself indulging in "errant enjoyment of youth" by going bar crawling several days in a row.²⁹⁹ At this time, the prospect of war hit him. Upon hearing about the volatile situation on the Soviet Union–Manchukuo border and the fact that the Kwantung Army troops were on the move, Nishimura regretted his fast-living days.³⁰⁰ He closely followed the news of intensifying tension between Japan and the U.S. following Japan's expansion into southern Indochina and U.S.'s and Great Britain's freezing of Japan's assets in

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 154. "青春をはき違えている"

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 154–155.

retaliation.³⁰¹ He regretted that his fellow Kendai students merely passed their time on campus as if they were oblivious to the ever more serious conditions outside the campus. He lamented: “Is Kankirei (the name of the hill on which Kendai was located) a world of its own, apart from the outside world? [We] do not even read newspapers or listen to news. But, how long does this utopia last?—Not long.”³⁰² Clearly, these words of reproach are casted at not only his fellow Kendai students but also himself.

His unusual circumstances, namely despair over his disability, led Nishimura to become increasingly independent-minded. On August 15, 1941, after attending Vice President Sakuta’s lecture, which Nishimura commented favorably, he added a qualification to Sakuta’s call for becoming a *tairiku-jin*, or the ‘person of the continent’ (referring to Manchukuo, and Asia more broadly). Nishimura wrote:

I believe that we should not lose the aesthetic sensibility that is unique to the Japanese... I want to cherish forever the habits of composing a poem when seeing the sunset or of adorning one’s desk with wildflowers when studying. Isn’t it a drawback of today’s intelligentsia that they live their lives so rationally and mechanically? I regard those who shed tears for literature more worthy of respect than ones who buy into Marxism.³⁰³

Here we see Nishimura defining the Japaneseness as having a unique sense of beauty, which while not contradicting the ideal of Pan-Asianism, appears to suggest a turn away from the equalitarian strain of Pan-Asianism. Meanwhile, he read a wide variety of

³⁰¹ Japanese troops had stationed in northern Indochina since September 1940. In July 1941, after acquiring the consent of French colonial authority in Indochina, Japanese troops moved into southern Indochina.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 157. “歡喜嶺は俗界を離れた別天地なのか。新聞さえ読まず、ニュースも聞かぬ塾の生活であるが、いつ迄続く桃源郷なのであらうか。”

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 162–163. “日本人固有の美的観念だけは失つてはならないと私は思ふのである。... 日の沈むを見て詩をつくつたり、机に向うに当り草花を飾る気持はいつ迄も持ち続けたいものである。あまりに合理的、機械的に生きようとするのは、現代の智的層の欠陥ではあるまいか。マルクスに走る人間よりも、小説に涙する人間を私は尊いと思ふ。”

literature, both Japanese and foreign, sometimes even skipping class to read favorite books.

Nishimura's diary became more explicit about his feelings after the outbreak of the Pacific War and another sick leave that lasted until March 1942. The following entry from April 1942 shows that he had grown skeptical about the current war.

While riding a horse in the suburb (of Shinkyō), I imagined that my horse transformed into a Pegasus and we flew to the moon and surveyed the earth from there. Compared to the eternal universe, our lifetime is so ephemeral. Still, people continue fighting, saying it's for the sake of survival, or it's for one's nation. What would one feel if watching all these things on the earth from the universe?³⁰⁴

As seen in this passage, he appears to question the very purpose of all wars. At the same time, although he did not specifically state so, he also seemed to question Japan's current war, which Japan claimed to fight "for the sake of survival" and "for one's nation."

Nishimura also expressed his discontent with the Japanese education policy in Manchukuo. On December 7, 1942, when he visited a nearby *kokumin gakkō* (elementary school) on a school trip, he was shocked to see that "children, who were too young to be called citizens, were taught that to die (for the country) was the only duty of the Japanese."³⁰⁵ He angrily continued, "...it appears that there continued to be the kind of education that one could find in a concession. The office in charge of education in Manchukuo thinks only of producing Japanese subjects, flatly refusing to provide

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 200–201. “郊外を走らせつゝ、我が馬ペガサスとなりて月世界に飛び、かの世界より地球を眺めたき空想に駆られる。悠久の宇宙よりすれば、一瞬の泡沫に過ぎぬ人間の一生であるのに、やれ生活のため、やれ民族のためとて闘争ばかりを繰返すこの地球を眺めたならば、どのような想ひになるであらうか。”

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 256. “国民といふには幼なすぎる子達に、死ぬ事のみが日本人の務め等と教える”

education that fosters the subjects of Manchukuo.”³⁰⁶ Here we see Nishimura’s distress when brought face to face with the contradiction between the stated status of Manchukuo as an independent country and the actual policy that imposed Japanese-style education on its diverse population.

Nishimura eventually embraced humanism. In January 1943, he wrote, “Harboring skepticism of Marxism and resentment against Fascism, I see humanism as the most compelling answer today.”³⁰⁷ Defining the essence of humanism as the idea that “to live is to trust human beings,”³⁰⁸ Nishimura continued, “...before the war in Europe broke out...why can’t people attain the worldview in which people live in mutual trust and cooperation?”³⁰⁹ He concluded the day’s diary entry as follows: “Perhaps this kind of idea can be accepted only among ourselves, who live on this campus, forgetting about the national difference and attempting to transcend the past.”³¹⁰ This entry is interesting for two reasons. First, why did he refer to “the war in Europe” and not the Pacific War or the war between Japan and China? He was writing in January 1943, when Japan had been at war with the U.S. and Allied Powers for two years and with China for more than five years. Yet, he referred to the outbreak of war in Europe to blame people who chose war

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 256–257. “租界地におけるが如き教育が行われ続けて居るようである。在満教務部の存在は日本人教育はあつても満州国民としての教育はまかり成らぬときめて居るのであるか。”

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 268. “マルキシズムに対する疑惑とファシズムに対する忿懣を否定できぬ私は、今こそヒューマニズムの最も要求される時だと思えてならない。”

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.* “人間が生きるという事は人間を信ずる事なのである”

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 269. “欧州戦乱の前に、何故に人間が互に信じ合い、助け合いつゝ生きる世界観に到り得なかつたのであらうか。”

³¹⁰ *Ibid.* “このような思いは、民族を忘れ、歴史を超えた学窓に生きつゝある私達だけの、容れられざる考え方なのであらうか。”

over the path of mutual trust and cooperation. Does Nishimura take for granted and therefore excuse Japan's descent into war? Or did he simply not want to express opinions that could get him into trouble? In light of his emerging humanism, this entry may also imply that Nishimura simply did not care which countries were to be blamed, because he opposed all war. Second, the last line of the entry expresses an optimistic and uncritical view of interpersonal relationships on the Kendai campus. He describes the Kendai community as capable of "forgetting about the national difference," even though more than ten Chinese students, including his own classmates, had been arrested for their anti-Japanese activities, the news of which Nishimura had received with "severe shock" in November 1941.³¹¹ Then, what did he mean by "forgetting about national difference"? There are two other entries in which he used the same phrase. In both cases, he used it to describe his experiences of having fun with his fellow Kendai students after hours on a school trip³¹² and at the welcoming party for new students.³¹³ Apparently, the vision of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchuria" that he refers to in these entries is a state of sharing good times and laughter together but nothing deeper than that. As this entry reveals, Nishimura's diary tends to avoid disruptive and unpleasant truths such as the complicated and at times conflicted interpersonal relationships on campus which were shaped by Japan's colonial and imperial policy in Asia.

Nishimura experienced a bitter departure from Kendai when he was drafted in November 1943 together with the other Japanese students twenty years of age or over.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, 174. "激しいシヨツク" I will discuss more in detail the arrest of Kendai's Chinese students for their involvement in anti-Japanese activities in Chapter IV.

³¹² *Ibid.*, 168.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 198.

Surprisingly, his extremely poor eyesight did not disqualify him. His campus life at Kendai was thus cut short, though the school later granted diplomas to the students in Nishimura's class. Curiously, Nishimura's diary does not reveal much about his reactions after he received the news of student conscription on September 22, 1943.³¹⁴ Rather than continue writing about his humanism and lament over war or complaining about the conscription, Nishimura kept brief records of each day's occurrences. However, we can easily imagine how depressed he was during this time. Nishimura had made his career goal working in the film production, which he regarded as the most effective means of mass education in Manchukuo where a large number of people were illiterate and uneducated.³¹⁵ Japan's intensifying war shattered this dream. Furthermore, the conscription of Japanese students at Kendai undeniably betrayed this young Japanese who followed the state's lead and made up his mind that he would become a citizen of Manchukuo to work for this new country. Japan's student conscription got Nishimura not in Japan, but in an ostensibly independent state, Manchukuo.

Morisaki Minato (4th entering class, matriculated in 1941)

As mentioned earlier, Morisaki Minato of the 4th entering class brought with him to Kendai the Pan-Asianist dream of a community infused with harmonious relationships of peoples of different nationalities. Soon, however, Morisaki became aware of an

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 318.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 177.

unbridgeable gap between *mankei* and *nikkei* students.³¹⁶ He noticed that “the *mankei* classmates, even those who generally seemed to feel kindly toward [him], sometimes were looking at [him] suspiciously, as if to indicate... that they would never be off their guards,” which is not surprising, in light of arrests of Chinese students.³¹⁷ After this day, Morisaki began complaining about *mankei* students’ behavior, such as being too much concerned about “face-saving,” banding together against *nikkei* students, and slacking off during agricultural training.³¹⁸ On June 13, 1942, he angrily noted that only two *mankei* students came out when his class visited a nearby shrine dedicated to the soldiers who died for nation-building in Manchukuo.³¹⁹ When the whole class bowed before the shrine, those two students made only token bows while chatting with each other. Rather than trying to understand what made them act in this way before a Japanese war shrine, Morisaki posed a rhetorical question in his diary: “Do they ever think about the true

³¹⁶ The Kendai administration often used these categories. The *mankei* (“of Manchurian descent”) generally referred to those who spoke Chinese language. The *nikkei* (“of Japanese descent”) included students of Korean and Taiwanese origins. However, the daily uses of these terms by Kendai faculty and students varied significantly. For instance, some Korean students were often identified as the *senkei* (“of Korean descent”) but were grouped together with the Japanese for certain purposes. Mariko Asano Tamanoi discusses in detail the ambiguous use of these classifications of peoples on the Kendai campus and Manchukuo in general. See Tamanoi, “Knowledge, Power, and Racial Classifications”; Tamanoi, “Pan-Asianism in the Diary of Morisaki Minato,” 188–190.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 54. “満系の者と何心なくちらりと視線があうようなとき、ふだんは好意をもってくれているように自分が思っている相手でも、何か鋭い、決して油断していないといったようなものがその白い眼に感ぜられる。”

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 54–57.

³¹⁹ This shrine is named *Kenkoku chūrei byō* (Mausoleum dedicated to those who died for the nation-building) and was located in the southern end of downtown Shinkyō. It was a Manchukuo’s equivalent of Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo where the spirits of the war dead of the Japanese Empire were enshrined as gods.

essence of the Japan–Manchukuo relationship, namely, the spirit of nation-building?”³²⁰
 He had an answer in his mind: “there is no place in their minds for ‘Manchukuo.’”³²¹

The divide between *mankei* and *nikkei* in his *juku* intensified and culminated in a big quarrel. It started with the persistent efforts of a Japanese student, Yamada Shun’ichi, to establish a close relationship with a Chinese student, Zhang Yujian. The more Yamada tried, the more Zhang teased him, insulting him jokingly and sometimes kicking him. One day in June 1942, when Zhang threw water over Yamada’s back, Yamada’s patience snapped, and a tense standoff ensued. Though it did not develop into a physical fight, the tense atmosphere permeated the *juku* in the following days. Then, one night Zhang began speaking to Yamada in a combative tone, first in Japanese, and when Yamada began ignoring him, Zhang continued in Chinese. Other Chinese students joined Zhang and continued talking among themselves in Chinese until late at night. At this time, the few Japanese students who spoke good Chinese were not present at *juku*. Not knowing exactly what the Chinese students were saying, and not knowing how to respond in Chinese, Morisaki and other Japanese students hid under their blankets, swallowing their anger.³²²

This incident eventually led to a change in Morisaki’s thinking whereby he affirmed that both *mankei* and *nikkei* were “citizens of Manchukuo.”³²³ After a period of frustration and anger at the Chinese *juku*-mates, whom Morisaki referred to as either

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 56. “日満関係の真姿—つまり建国の精神などというものは、いったいどうなっているのだろうか。”

³²¹ *Ibid.* “彼らには「満州国」のことなど頭がない。”

³²² *Ibid.*, 57–59.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 61. “満州国民”

mankei or “they” sharply contrasted with “we,” *nikkei*, he had a sober moment of realization. “If we go on like this, Japan’s policy of cooperation will be a complete failure. The incident (at *juku*) could be repeated at anytime, anywhere.”³²⁴ Recognizing that the current challenge at Kendai’s integrated *juku* was a miniaturized version of the complicated relationships among peoples in Manchukuo and Asia, Morisaki made up his mind to face this challenge. The question was how he would proceed. He indicated that some Japanese on campus thought that they should strive harder to earn respect so that non-Japanese students would follow their examples—a way of thinking articulated in Nagano’s diary. However, Morisaki disliked this idea because he felt that it “appear[ed] as if Japanese are superior to others.”³²⁵ He wrote: “...we say *mankei* and *nikkei*, but, we are all citizens of Manchukuo, aren’t we?”³²⁶ Here, Morisaki’s use of the term *kokumin*, or citizens, does not imply the legal status of Kendai students. Rather, it reflects the common consciousness of Japanese Kendai students who moved to Manchukuo determined to devote themselves for the nation-building project of this newly-established state, as we saw in the account of one of the ‘Horse Barn’ protesters. Thus, Morisaki began to challenge the clear division between *mankei* and *nikkei* that dominated his mind previously.

Meanwhile, his conversation with a close friend, Bak Sam-Jong, a Korean student, further revealed to Morisaki the difficulty of realizing “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” He did not specifically record the content of the conversation

³²⁴ *Ibid.* “このままでいったら、日本の協和政策などというものは完全に失敗であり、今度の事件の二の舞をいつどこでおこなぬともかぎらぬ。”

³²⁵ *Ibid.* “日本人の方が一段高いところにいるよう”

³²⁶ *Ibid.* “...日系といい満系といっても同じ満州国民ではないか。”

with Bak, but the following entry from August 2, 1942 implies that Bak honestly shared his negative experiences of the Japanese Empire as Korean.

I had a conversation with Bak Sam-Jong. What a dreadful thing *minzoku* is! I never knew that he was thinking and struggling in anguish to this extent. It appears that people all have their own perspectives and suffering. I came to wonder if to prosper eternally means to suffer eternally. For Asia to prosper for eternity there should be eternal suffering.³²⁷

This last line must have referred to the suffering of Asian people, like Bak, under Japan's colonial rule. For, after his conversation with Bak, Morisaki renewed his resolution to study hard, in order to know "what Japan has done to the comrades in Asia, and what Japan plans to do in the future" as well as the aspirations of Chinese and Russian peoples.³²⁸ Thus, his close interaction with his non-Japanese classmates and his genuine desire for realizing harmonious relationships motivated Morisaki to expand his intellectual horizons. He developed a particular interest in Chinese Communism, which he saw as winning the hearts and minds of more and more Chinese people.

Such study and contemplation about the meaning of harmonious relationships brought Morisaki to another realization: his *mankei* classmates were in fact Chinese. Recognizing that "the more patriotic one is, the more sturdily he would see himself as 'Chinese' rather than Manchukuoan," Morisaki even came to respect those "Chinese" students who left Kendai to join anti-Japanese movement.³²⁹ In April 1943, he saw his

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 68. "朴三鐘と話をする。民族というもの。民族の血というもの。なんとおそろしいものだろう。彼がこんなにも考え、悩み、苦悶していようとは、全然気づかなかった。人にはみなそれぞれの立場と苦しみがあるものである。天壤無窮に栄えるということは、天壤無窮に苦しむということではないか。アジアが永遠に栄えるためには、永遠に苦しまねばならぬ。"

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 69. "日本がアジア同胞に対してどんなことをしてきたか、これからどうしようとしているのか。"

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, 71. "祖国愛に強い連中であればあるほど、満州国人であるよりも「中国人」なのである。"

“*mankei*” classmates—he still used this term interchangeably with “Chinese”—gathering in a recreation room and intently listening to the radio broadcast of Zhou Fohai’s talk. The speaker Zhou was an influential Chinese politician of the Japanese-supported collaborationist government in Nanjing under Wang Jingwei. Seeing the intense expressions on his classmates’ faces, Morisaki strengthened his belief that those *mankei* classmates were indeed Chinese. That day’s diary also indicates his disagreement with a Japanese instructor’s optimistic view that the merger of Japan and Manchukuo might be possible before too long. Morisaki wrote, “If it [the merger] happens, that will be the very time the land of Manchuria would become a lost territory for China. The (Chinese) residents of Manchukuo would then suffer even bigger torments.”³³⁰ He thought that even if Manchukuo were to bridge the gap between Japan and China, it would be impossible to instill Chinese people with patriotism toward Manchukuo that could surpass their love of their mother country, China.

Kendai’s summer labor service offered another opportunity for Morisaki to reflect on the ideal of constructing “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” From June 14 to July 28, 1943, about six hundred Kendai students were sent to Dongning in Heilongjiang Province to assist various construction projects.³³¹ There, Morisaki’s group of seven or eight students, which included Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, and Russians, had the opportunity of engaging in group discussion with younger Korean students who had also been recruited for labor service. Morisaki described these Korean boys as “passionate, easily agitated, rebellious, at the same time, fearless, and somewhat

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 81. “そのときこそ満州の地は中国の失地となり、在満民族の苦悩は一段と重くなるであろう。”

³³¹ Yuji, 426, 429.

giving in to despair,” then he adds he somehow felt “uncomfortable finding such characteristics in [these] Korean people.”³³² Morisaki continued:

Children are recruited for labor service; and boys are severely trained in a Japanese (military) style. While the intellectuals are distressed, discussing the issues of *minzoku* with their armchair theories, without noticing that they are aging at that very moment, harsh and practical training is being forced upon the new generation increasingly imbued with the spirit of the new age. This is all happening while the old intellectuals are discussing worriedly.³³³

This entry clearly reveals Morisaki’s criticism of the Japanese policy in Manchukuo. Furthermore, it shows that Morisaki was struck by the sharp gap between his ideal and the reality outside campus. The “intellectuals” here seems to refer to Kendai faculty members, students, and Morisaki himself, whose idealistic thinking was often confined to the small campus of Kendai.

Ironically, what further disappointed Morisaki and soured him on Kendai was a Japanese *jukutō* Manda and student adviser (an upper-class student who was assigned to supervise a *juku*) Mizushima. His diary in the summer of 1943 is full of complaints about Manda and Mizushima, who resorted to every means of controlling Morisaki’s *juku* members—they would inspect students’ personal diaries, verbally abuse them, or beat them severely. However, it is not clear why Morisaki’s *juku* became the target of such extremely tight control. Because Manda and Mizushima required students to submit diaries for inspection, we can assume that Morisaki chose not to write certain facts, which

³³² Morisaki, 89. “熱情的—ともすれば昂奮しやすく、反抗心強く、しかも放胆でいくぶん自暴自棄な朝鮮人の性格が少々気味わるい。”

³³³ *Ibid.*, 89. “勤労作業に動員せられる子供たち、猛訓練で日本的にたたきこまれる少年たち。インテリ、知識人たちが、自分の老い去ろうとするに気づかず、書齋的論議をもって民族問題を喋々し苦悩している間に、現地においては否応いわぬ峻烈な現実的な実践が強行され、新しき少国民たちは新しい時代色にぬりつぶされてどンドン育ってゆく。古いインテリたちが心配顔で論議しているうちに—”

probably explains some of the ambiguity in his diary during this time. After one of his closest friends, Nagahama, quit Kendai, Morisaki, too, began to think about leaving the school and volunteering for military service. Interestingly, one of the things that pushed him to choose this path was his remembering the “courage of the *mankei* comrades who had left campus for... Yan’an and Chongqing (the strongholds of Chinese Communists and Nationalists respectively)” to join anti-Japanese movement.³³⁴ At this point, what appeared more important to Morisaki was the sincerity and purity of intent rather than the purpose of one’s act. In other words, the action he was considering and his Chinese friends had already made were politically diametrically opposite but in his mind had equal value as long as the intent was pure. He wrote on August 11, 1943, “As long as I am resolved to carry it through, it doesn’t matter if I remain at Kendai or join the military. The essential thing is whether I am determined to carry out my intention.”³³⁵ Morisaki chose the latter option and left Kendai on October 9, 1943, deeply disappointed that his *juku* experience had been destroyed by Japanese *jukutō* and student adviser.³³⁶

While Morisaki did not directly state his reasons for his quitting Kendai, there is a story that has become a kind of legend among Kendai graduates about Morisaki’s last days at Kendai. According to the editor of Morisaki’s published diary, Izumi Santarō, Morisaki was part of a group of Kendai students who had secretly been sending student delegations to both the CCP headquarters Yan’an and the GMD wartime capital Chongqing to open Japan–China peace talks. The group had already sent two delegations,

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 97. “建大をすてて、延安重慶に走り去った満系同志たちの勇気”

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 96. “「やる決心」さえあれば建大にとどまるもよし、「やる決心」さえあれば軍隊に入るもよし。要は「決心」のみ、「やる気」のみ。”

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 122.

but none had returned campus. The third attempt, which Morisaki had planned to lead, was thwarted by the school administration. When the students' scheme was leaked, the administration sent Morisaki home with a forged doctor's note indicating he had severe heart disease. Upon visiting a doctor in his hometown and discovering that the diagnosis had been faked, Morisaki officially dropped out from Kendai.³³⁷ A Japanese historian Matsumoto Ken'ichi casts doubt about this story. Matsumoto speculates that the story of his role in the student peace initiative actually emerged out of Morisaki's close friends' and his father's desires to remember Morisaki in light of "resistance within aggression" by young Japanese.³³⁸ Surely, one can find no other reference to Morisaki's scheme except in Izumi's "Editor's Note". There is no record by the school administration that verifies Morisaki's scheme. Nonetheless, considering the highly political nature of his student activism, it is highly possible that the university deliberately did not keep a record. While the facts are uncertain on Morisaki's fanciful plans of Japan–China peace negotiations, I concur with Matsumoto on the point that one can find in Morisaki's diary signs of "resistance within aggression," as shown above. Morisaki's distress over the contradiction between his idealism and the reality of Manchukuo and his burning passion for understanding the sentiments of his non-Japanese classmates were so intense that his close friends, such as Bak Sam-Jong, would fondly remember Morisaki as an initiator of the Japan–China peace negotiation scheme. Assuming planning was actually underway, Chinese students would have taken the lead role in sending delegations to Yan'an and Chongqing. Politically naïve in the extreme, the incident nevertheless demonstrates that

³³⁷ Santarō Izumi, "Editor's Note" in Morisaki, 236–242, 237.

³³⁸ Ken'ichi Matsumoto, *Shōwa ni shisu—Morisaki Minato to Ozawa Kaisaku [Dying in the Showa era: Morisaki Minato and Ozawa Kaisaku]* (Tokyo: Shinchō-sha, 1988), 78.

Morisaki and his friends were genuinely pursuing the ideal of Pan-Asian cooperation, even if it meant risking their lives. At the same time, it attests to the fact that the Kendai administration did not welcome these students' high idealism and their remarkable energy and courage to act on the Pan-Asianist ideal.

Morisaki's enthusiasm for Pan-Asiaism did not dissipate after the failure of the peace initiative or even after his resignation from Kendai. After giving up hope he might further Japan–China reconciliation, which he regarded as the key to the Pan-Asian crusade against the West, Morisaki chose to literally devote his life to this cause through a military action. He voluntarily enlisted in the Japanese Navy's special attack corps. While Morisaki spent time at home before joining the Navy in August 1944, his perception of Pan-Asianism continued to diverge from the Japanese official version that emphasized Japan's superiority and leadership. On March 22, 1944, Morisaki compared the Meiji Restoration of 1868 and what he saw as the “Shōwa Restoration,” the current revolutionary project of creating the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. He wrote:

Just as the Meiji Restoration brought the equality of all people to Japan, the successful Shōwa Restoration should be followed by the abolishment of feudalistic system based on nationalities. Based on the principle of equality among all peoples, the Greater Asia will progress through free and vigorous competitions. ...there shall be no discrimination in Asia; Asia will be an equal world for its one billion people. Without such vision and hope, what use would there be to speak about ‘eternal peace for the East’ or ‘*hakko ichiu* (eight corners of the world under one roof)’?³³⁹

This entry reveals that Morisaki was not satisfied with the current hierarchical order that the Japanese Empire imposed on Asian peoples. Nor did he see the Japanese as inherently

³³⁹ Morisaki, 204. “昭和維新の暁は民族的封建制は打破せられ、明治維新における四民平等のごとく、全民族平等の原則の下に、闊達自由な競争により大アジア全体の向上をもたらし、…アジアにおける民族人種の別なく、十億人民平等となる。かくの如き想像と希望なくして何の「東洋永遠の平和」ぞ。何の「八紘一宇」ぞ。” As mentioned in Chapter I, the concept of *hakkō ichiu* was a term used by the Japanese government to justify its territorial expansion. See Chapter I.

superior to other Asian nations. Indeed, as Tamanoi shows, Morisaki was increasingly disillusioned with the “vulgar” Japanese.³⁴⁰ For him, the current war was only a transitional period, which must lead to “an equal world” for Asian peoples. And, he claimed, “Kendai’s mission was to foster a new generation of leaders” who would realize that new world.³⁴¹

Morisaki’s equalitarian vision of Pan-Asianism and strong commitment to the creation of a better Asia for all Asians did not allow him fully to accept Japan’s defeat. On August 16, 1945, he ended his twenty-two years of life by committing ritualistic suicide, *hara-kiri*, at the beach near the Mie Fleet Air Arm Base where he had been waiting for his mission to take off as a special attack pilot.³⁴² In a suicide note to his parents, Morisaki wrote, “I fear that if I went on living, I would destroy the peace, go against national policy, and thus cause trouble for my family and relatives.”³⁴³ Given the fact that he was genuinely committed to the realization of “an equal world” for all Asian peoples, his choice of death is not so unfathomable. For Morisaki, the tragedy of “Asian peoples” was not at all an abstraction; he had witnessed and heard in person how much the Japanese Empire tormented his Korean friend and how intensely his Chinese classmates were struggling in Manchukuo. Thus, to Morisaki, Japan’s defeat signified that all the sufferings of his friends in the name of the Pan-Asianist dream had been futile.

³⁴⁰ Tamanoi, “Knowledge, Power, and Racial Classifications,” 263; Tamanoi, “Pan-Asianism in the Diary of Morisaki Minato,” 196.

³⁴¹ Morisaki, 205. “建国大学は、その「新しき世代」を養成する淵藪であり”

³⁴² Morisaki himself dated his will August 16. However, the actual suicide took place early morning of August 17, according to the official report prepared by the Mie Fleet Air Arm.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 228. “私が生きてみたらきっと和平を破り国策に反し延いて累を眷族に及ぼすに至らん事を恐れます。”

The reference in his suicide note to “going against national policy” pointed to Morisaki’s anger toward the Japanese leaders who had imposed hardships on him and his friends in the name of Pan-Asianism and betrayed them all.

Four Students Growing into New Leaders,
in Their Own Ways

In the literature on Japan’s pre-war Pan-Asianism, the studies that focus on the elite circles, which are the majority within the field, represent the dominant perception of Pan-Asianism by the 1930s as Japan-centered. Eri Hotta calls this strain Meishuron Pan-Asianism, where *meishu*, or leader, refers to Japan.³⁴⁴ However, the diaries of four Japanese students enrolled at Kendai in the late 1930s and early 1940s show a more complicated picture of Japan’s Pan-Asianism. As seen in Chapter I, the Kendai administration and the majority of the faculty embraced Japan’s central position within the projected Pan-Asian unity, despite the school’s pledge to train a generation of new leaders who would realize the goal of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” Nevertheless, for at least some students, the life at Kendai prompted the development of thinking that did not necessarily conform to Japan’s official ideology of Pan-Asianism.

Nagano was an exception in that sense. His experience, especially his interactions with his non-Japanese classmates at Kendai, led him to embrace Meishuron Pan-Asianism. To overcome national and cultural differences, Nagano tried hard to fulfill the

³⁴⁴ For detailed discussion on this literature, see Introduction.

“Japanese” responsibility and mission of leading other peoples in Asia, conforming to the official version of Pan-Asianism that envisioned a hierarchical order with Japan at the top. It did not mean, however, that Nagano abandoned the ideal of harmonious relationships. In effect, he was more committed to it than ever. Thus, Nagano resolved his frustration with non-Japanese students’ behavior by confirming his belief in Japanese superiority and by pursuing his “Japanese” mission at Kendai and Manchukuo at large. It is instructive that Nagano, experiencing Pan-Asianist education in his daily life, eventually developed a firmer belief and attitude toward the perceived hierarchical relationship between the Japanese and the others, as shown in his discontent with Kendai’s lukewarm commitment to the ideal of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.”

Unlike Nagano, Fujimori and Morisaki came to question Meishuron Pan-Asianism and developed a more egalitarian conception of Pan-Asianism. Fujimori first made efforts to understand non-Japanese students’ perspectives, and then confronted the contradiction between his loyalty to the Japanese Emperor and his sympathy toward non-Japanese friends’ nationalistic sentiments. His emphasis on equality and the importance of mutual understanding reflected the egalitarian and communal perception of Pan-Asianism. For Morisaki, the contradiction between the ideal of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” and the reality of Manchukuo and Kendai greatly confused him at first and transformed his Japan-centered Pan-Asianism into a more egalitarian vision of Asia, for which he was ready to dedicate his life. Nishimura rarely mentioned his non-Japanese classmates or his view of Pan-Asianism in his published diary. Nor did he seem to undertake a serious and sustained examination of the meaning of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” Yet, his emerging

humanism clearly showed discontent with Japan's policy in Manchukuo and the continuing war.

One remarkable difference between Nishimura's and Morisaki's experiences, for which I have more source materials compared to Nagano and Fujimori, is the identity they developed while at Kendai. Moving to Manchukuo in 1939 when not many people anticipated the end of the Japanese Empire, Nishimura intended to settle in Manchukuo and hold important positions in the society as a future graduate of prestigious Kendai. With this plan in mind, he strove to become a Manchukuo citizen himself. Disappointed in what he saw of the school system in Manchukuo, he hoped to contribute to the betterment of education in Manchukuo through film production. In contrast, Morisaki, who was enrolled at Kendai after the outbreak of the war in Pacific, became preoccupied with the need of resolving the Japan–China conflict that impeded the ongoing Asian crusade against the West. When he realized that the nationalisms of his friends were irreconcilable with Japan's vision of Meishuron Pan-Asianism, Morisaki chose to remain Japanese. Just as his Chinese friends risked their lives for the cause of anti-Japanese nationalism, Morisaki, now as a Japanese *kamikaze* pilot, attempted to literally use his life for the Pan-Asian battle against the West. Despite the difference in their identities, both Nishimura and Morisaki tried to become the kind of Manchukuo citizen or Japanese that were different from the talent that the Japanese state attempted to foster among its youths.

Hence, the diaries of the four Japanese students show that well into the 1930s and even until the end of Japan's war, Pan-Asianism continued to take various forms. Moreover, various versions of Pan-Asianism existed on the Kendai campus not only as

theories and perceptions but also as practice in the daily experiences of students. At Kendai, these young Japanese were growing into a generation of new leaders—in their own ways.

CHAPTER III

NON-JAPANESE IMPERIAL SUBJECTS: KOREAN AND TAIWANESE

STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES AT KENKOKU UNIVERISTY

Approximately 80 Korean and 25 Taiwanese students were enrolled at Kendai between 1938 and 1945.³⁴⁵ Among the total number of over 1,000 who attended Kendai during the same period, these students from Japan's formal colonies represented a minority. Nevertheless, they could claim to be part of the majority given that the Japanese Empire recognized Koreans and Taiwanese as Japanese citizens in theory. Indeed, the Kendai administration was inconsistent in its categorization of these students from Japan's formal empire. For instance, on one hand, they were seen as *nikkei* ("of Japanese descent") in the administration's outline of applicants' qualifications. On the other hand, the administration followed the Manchukuo government's practice of applying the student mobilization laws on these students and Japanese students differently. The situation was even more complicated in daily life on campus; the students from Korea were called *nikkei* or *senkei* ("of Korean descent"), and students from Taiwan were seen as *nikkei*, *taikei* ("of Taiwanese descent"), or *kankei* ("of Han Chinese descent"). In examining the experiences of Korean and Taiwanese students at Kendai, this chapter concentrates on their sense of identity.

My materials come from mainly three different sources. First, former Korean students published an anthology of recollections in 1986. This collection has 31 essays all

³⁴⁵ The exact numbers of Korean and Taiwanese students are unknown. The approximate numbers given here are based on *Kenkoku daigaku yōran* (1941), Report memo by Masao Miyazaki (1994), and Eriko Miyazawa's *Kenkoku daigaku to minzoku kyōwa*.

written in Korean. I have access to the Japanese translation that was published in 2004 as *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū* [*Kankirei: collection of memoirs written by alumni in Korea*] (hereafter I call it a Korean collection).³⁴⁶ 21 essays were translated, and 15 of them were checked by the authors for accuracy of translation before the publication. Unlike the Chinese collection *Huiyi* whose authors uniformly write negatively about Kendai with varying degrees, this Korean collection contains both positive and negative memories and feelings about Kendai. Second, Hong Chun-Sik, a former Korean student who also contributed his essay in the aforementioned Korean collection, published a book-length memoir in Japanese as *Hankyore no sekai: aa nihon* [*The world of my countrymen: Ah, Japan*] in 1999.³⁴⁷ Third, a Taiwanese alumnus of the 1st entering class, Li Shuiqing, published a book-length memoir in 2007.³⁴⁸ This source is important because it is the only substantial writing authored by a former Kendai student from Taiwan.

I have to admit that these sources, produced decades after their actual experiences of Kendai, were shaped by the authors' postwar lives. However, while memories do not necessarily reflect how they were actually experienced in the past, these candid memoirs can give insights into the complicated circumstances in which these colonial subjects made decisions to move to Manchukuo, studied at Kendai, and interacted with other Asian youths. Moreover, by expressing a wide variety of views, these sources call into

³⁴⁶ *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū* [*Kankirei: collection of memoirs written by alumni in Korea*]. Trans. Eun-Suk Kim and Yoshikazu Kusano. (Kenkoku University Alumni Association, 2004).

³⁴⁷ Chun-Sik Hong, *Hankyore no sekai: aa nihon* [*The world of my countrymen: Ah, Japan*] (Ansan, 1999).

³⁴⁸ Shuiqing Li, *Dongbei banian huigulu* [*Memory about the eight years that I lived in Dongbei*] Trans. Kenzō Takazawa (Tokyo: Kenkoku University Alumni Association, 2007).

question the relative uniformity of memories represented in the former Chinese students' essays, which I will analyze in Chapter IV.

Assimilation Policy and Colonial Schools in Japan's Formal Colonies

Little is known about the boyhood experiences of individual Taiwanese and Korean students of Kendai. When memoir authors write about their lives before enrolling at Kendai, they usually focus on their decisions to apply for the university. Luckily, existing literature on Japan's assimilation policy and colonial schools provides a glimpse into the kind of lives that they experienced as children in Taiwan and Korea.

Unlike the British Empire's model of "indirect rule" and "separate development," the newly emerging Japanese Empire chose assimilation as a guiding principle.³⁴⁹ The policymakers examined political and cultural assimilation policies practiced by Britain, France, and Germany. When Japan acquired its overseas colonies in the late nineteenth century, the Japanese colonial authorities started with partial assimilation that sought to produce literate and efficiently-working colonial subjects while simultaneously seeking to maintain the distinction between the colonizers and the colonized.³⁵⁰ Japan's assimilation policy, called *dōka seisaku*, developed based on two assumptions. One was the theory of *dōbun dōshu* ("same script, same race") between the Japanese and other

³⁴⁹ Lewis H. Gann, "Western and Japanese Colonialism: Some Preliminary Comparisons," in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945*, ed. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 497–525, 516.

³⁵⁰ More on Japanese learning of European models of assimilation, see Mark E. Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910–1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), Chapter 1 "Western Assimilation Practices."

Asians. The other was the self-image of the Japanese people as *kōmin*, or “imperial people,” which could be extended to the colonial subjects.³⁵¹

In the implementation of assimilation policy in colonial Taiwan and Korea, schools played an important role. While acknowledging variations, Harry J. Lamley defines assimilation as the process that “entails the transformation of the languages, customs, habits and institutions of a subject people until they become more at one or merge with the nationals of the home country.”³⁵² Schools, from the colonial authorities’ perspectives, were to become a useful place to generate these transformations. Thus, in both Taiwan and Korea, education reform was one of the first tasks for the colonial authorities.

Reflecting the Japanese Empire’s gradualist attitude to assimilation in general, early Governors-General of Taiwan and Korea established education systems with the idea of segregation and inequality. Both regimes built public schools for the elite class of local population, separate from elementary schools (*shōgakkō*) for the children of Japanese nationals. The ultimate objective of the former was to foster literate and cooperative workforces. The priority of such schooling was the Japanese language instruction.

In Taiwan, the fourth Governor-General Kodama Gentarō issued the Common School Regulations of 1898 to introduce primary education for the children of Taiwanese

³⁵¹ Mark R. Peattie, “Japanese Attitude toward Colonialism, 1895–1945,” in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945*, ed. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 80–127.

³⁵² Harry J. Lamley, “Assimilation Efforts in Colonial Taiwan: The Fate of the 1914 Movement,” *Monumenta Serica*, 29 (1970–71), 496–520, 496.

gentry and wealthy merchant class.³⁵³ The six years of schooling at common schools (*kō gakkō*) started at age eight and ended at age fourteen, which was extended to include children of seven to sixteen years old in 1904. While Chinese classics was part of curriculum in an effort to win the support of Taiwanese upper-class parents, the emphasis was put on the Japanese language and ethics.³⁵⁴ Later, the Common School Regulations of 1907 and 1912 promoted more practical instruction, seeking to attract more enrolment by the children of the local elites while intending to discourage Taiwanese pupils to rise above the level of primary education.³⁵⁵ As Patricia E. Tsurumi's influential work concludes, "...the common school was definitely meant to assimilate Taiwanese but only at the bottom of the Japanese social order."³⁵⁶

Similarly, the education system in Korea under Japanese colonial rule started out with segregated schools. In fact, even before Japan formally annexed Korea in 1910, the Japanese Residency General (*tōkanfu*) had begun building public schools in Korea.³⁵⁷ Like the system in Taiwan, Japanese-run elementary schools for Korean children were operated separately from the elementary schools for Japanese children. The schools,

³⁵³ Although assimilation appeared in discussion as early as 1895 when Japan acquired Taiwan—historically called Formosa since the 16th century—as its first overseas colony, the early colonial administrations were reluctant to implement it in actual practice. Until the fourth Governor-General Kodama Gentarō assumed leadership in colonial Taiwan, the regime's priority had been to stabilize the situation rather than to upset the local population. Lamley, 500.

³⁵⁴ Patricia E. Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan, 1895–1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), 18–20.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 50.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 145.

³⁵⁷ As explained in Introduction, Korea first became Japan's protectorate after Japan pressured Korea to sign the Japan–Korea Treaty of 1905. Prior to this event, Japan defeated Russia in the Russo–Japanese War (1904–1905) and made Russia recognize Japan's special interest over Korea in the Portsmouth Treaty of 1905.

named ordinary schools (*futsū gakkō*), offered four-year primary education for Korean children between the age eight and twelve. One year after Japan annexed Korea, the first Governor-General of Korea Terauchi Masatake issued the Education Ordinance of 1911 that continued the already installed system of primary education system. One significant change was that the instruction of national language (*kokugo*), which formerly was Korean, became Japanese.³⁵⁸ Higher ordinary schools (*kōtō futsū gakkō*), four years for male and three years for female students, offered practical training for Korean pupils who graduated from common schools. The four-year elementary program of ordinary schools was two years shorter than the elementary schools for Japanese nationals. This means that the Korean pupils who aspired to continue their education had to gain extra schooling to make up for the lag.³⁵⁹ Like the Taiwanese counterpart, colonial education in Korea focused on the language instruction. As Ronald Toby points out, "...during the first years of the colony, the study of Japanese occupied over 37 percent of the curriculum time in boys' common schools" in Korea.³⁶⁰

An important change in Japan's colonial education occurred in the wake of WWI. In the context of worldwide anti-colonialism and the rising liberalism in Japan's political circle, Japanese colonial regimes in Taiwan and Korea set to work in earnest to further assimilate the colonial subjects. Moreover, a nation-wide anti-Japanese independence

³⁵⁸ Nobuko Furukawa, "Shokuminchi kindai shakai ni okeru shotō kyōiku kōzō: chōsen ni okeru higimusei to gakkō 'fukyū' mondai [Primary education system in the modern colonial society: voluntary enrolment and the problem of the popularization of schools in Korea]," in *Teikoku to gakkō [Empires and Schools]* Edited by Takeshi Komagome and Nobuya Hashimoto (Kyoto: Shōwadō, 2007), 129–164, 131–138.

³⁵⁹ Caprio, Mark E. *Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910–1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), 93, 98.

³⁶⁰ Ronald Toby, "Education in Korea under the Japanese: Attitudes and Manifestations" in *Occasional Papers on Korea* No. 1 (April 1974), 55–64, 59.

movement in Korea, the March First Movement of 1919, was shocking evidence to the colonial authorities in Korea that the colonial education thus far had failed to produce loyal subjects. For, the activists who took part in the movement included a great many graduates of Japanese-run schools.³⁶¹ By contrast, many upper-class Taiwanese, the target patron, had accepted Japan's colonial schools and even demanded for the expansion of it to achieve greater equality. In 1922, both Governments-General of Taiwan and Korea introduced integrated schools to the colonies through the Taiwan Education Ordinance of 1922 and the Second Education Ordinance in Korea. Segregation by nationalities at school was abolished on paper. Elementary schools were now open for all children who could speak Japanese. Common schools in Taiwan and ordinary schools in Korea were for those who did not speak Japanese. As a result, integration of classroom occurred only to a limited extent. For instance, the colonial authorities in Taiwan set official quota, and only 10 percent of the enrolment at formerly all-Japanese elementary schools was available for Taiwanese children.³⁶² Under this circumstance, even though post-secondary schooling was integrated in 1922, an easier path to higher education for Taiwanese pupils was to attend schools in Japan rather than in Taiwan.³⁶³ The situation was similar in Korea; although ordinary schools now had six years like Japanese elementary schools, one continued to find a great majority of Korean students who attended Japanese-run schools did so at all-Korean schools.³⁶⁴ However limited the

³⁶¹ Patricia E. Tsurumi, "Colonial Education in Korea and Taiwan" in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*, Edited by Ramon H. Myers, Mark R. Peattie, and Ching-chih Chen (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), 275–311, 302.

³⁶² Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan*, 111.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, 126.

³⁶⁴ Caprio, 130–131.

impact of the change, the reform of 1922 was significant in its introduction of integrated schools in theory, which departed from the earlier gradualist approach.

Japan's assimilation policy took another turn in the late 1930s. The Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–45) and the war with the Allies (1941–45) presented an ever increasing need of soldiers and laborers. In this new context, the earlier *dōka seisaku* was replaced by *kōminka seisaku* (“imperialization of subject people”). Assimilation was no longer a local concern for Taiwan or Korea; it became part of an empire-wide campaign to foster patriotism and loyalty toward the Japanese imperial leadership.³⁶⁵ Aiming to mobilize colonial subjects for Japan's war effort, *kōminka seisaku* took a more aggressive and often coercive attitude toward assimilation. It entailed reforms to Japanize all aspects of the colonial subjects' lives. The Japanese state religion Shinto was imposed on people; the use of languages other than Japanese was strictly prohibited at school; colonial subjects had to take up Japanese names; and they were now included in the Japanese military forces.³⁶⁶ In carrying out this imperialization campaign, the colonial administrations portrayed it to the colonial subjects as the effort to realize greater equality between the Japanese and the local population. In Korea, *naisen ittai* (“Japan and Korea as one body”) was a repeated slogan.

Imperialization was most notably characterized by the extension of military service to Taiwanese and Korean men. Takashi Fujitani's recent study convincingly explains that the Government-General of Korea as well as the media committed

³⁶⁵ Lamley, 518.

³⁶⁶ Leo T. S. Ching clearly differentiates *kōminka seisaku* from *dōka seisaku*. According to Ching, *dōka* remains a vague colonial project whereas *kōminka* imposed a series of Japanese obligations, responsibilities, and customs on the colonized. For more on the difference between the two, see Leo T. S. Ching, *Becoming “Japanese”: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), Chapter 3.

themselves both verbally and in actual deeds to the ideal of creating a multi-ethnic empire in order to fill the manpower shortage under the total war condition. For instance, the Government-General of Korea encouraged inter-racial marriage between Japanese and Koreans unlike Western colonial regimes. Fujitani also shows that some Koreans, especially those who could benefit from Japan's rule, supported and in some cases even demanded more progressive assimilation.³⁶⁷

Imperialization translated into equal instruction at classrooms in Korea but not equal access to higher education. Government-General of Korea's Third Education Ordinance of 1938 integrated elementary schools and ordinary schools, naming all schools of primary education as elementary schools (*shōgakkō*).³⁶⁸ Still, integration of classroom occurred only to a limited extent due to the higher cost of attending certain schools. The Korean enrolment at predominantly Japanese elementary schools, which cost more, increased from 5.0 percent in 1935 to 10.8 percent in 1940.³⁶⁹ Aside from this marginal change, a more notable result of the merging of the two school systems was the intensified Japanization that took place at school. National history became Japanese history; the Korean language became an elective; more emphasis was put on Japanese language and ethics; and by 1943, no school offered Korean language courses.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁷ Takashi Fujitani, *Race for Empire: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans during World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

³⁶⁸ Even at this point, primary education in Korea was not compulsory. The GGK promised it make it so within 10 years. In 1944, the GGK shortened this period, announcing that it would start compulsory primary education in 1946. Caprio, 155.

³⁶⁹ Caprio, 155. The author also notes that the GGK stopped recording statistics by nationalities after the early 1940s, which makes it difficult to know whether the situation improved.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 153.

By contrast, the education system in Taiwan did not change much during the 1930s and early 1940s; the system installed by the Taiwan Education Ordinance of 1922 remained intact with some minor changes. There continued to be common schools and elementary schools while post-secondary schools were not segregated. Patricia E. Tsurumi cites three reasons for the absence of drastic reforms during this time period. First, the Government-General was generally satisfied with the achievement of the common school system thus far. In terms of assimilation, officials thought, the next target must be Taiwanese adults and the children who were not enrolled at common schools. Second, the Government-General faced more pressing issue of defense during the war. Third, the massive increase of Japanese residents in Taiwan required building of more schools for Japanese pupils rather than improving the whole educational system.³⁷¹ Interestingly, Tsurumi finds, the result of this lack of interest in education reform in wartime Taiwan resulted in fewer ultra-nationalistic contents in school lessons at Taiwan's colonial schools compared to schools within Japan.³⁷²

Given that the admission to Kendai required Japanese language proficiency, most students who attended Kendai from Taiwan and Korea went through these Japanese-run public schools. Kendai's "Guidelines for Applicants" which was issued on June 9, 1937, stated that Japanese applicants, including those from Japan's formal colonies, must be twenty years old or younger and have graduated from middle schools.³⁷³ Thus, all

³⁷¹ Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan*, 131–132.

³⁷² Tsurumi analyzes Japanese readers and other textbooks used in Taiwan and compared them with those used in Japan. For more details, see Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan*, Chapter 6.

³⁷³ "Kenkoku daigaku yoka daiikki seito senbatsu yōkō an [the resolution of guidelines for admission of applicants for the 1st entering class of the preparatory course at Nation Building University]" (June 9, 1937), in Yuji, 26–27. It appears that "Japanese" includes those who reside in Japan, Manchukuo, and Japan's formal colonies such as Korea and Taiwan. Regarding the educational background, the admission

students from Taiwan and Korea who attended Kendai must have received primary and secondary education after the education reform of 1922. That means, they likely had very limited chances to interact with Japanese children in classroom though their teachers were Japanese. It is also expected that those students were keenly aware of the *de facto* segregation at school enforced by the Japanese rulers. At the same time, they went through Japanization education and repeatedly heard the promises of making Taiwanese and Koreans equal to the Japanese and of building a multi-ethnic empire for all Asians.

How did such colonial condition affect their decisions to apply to Kendai? What made them decide to leave their countries and study at a highest educational institution of Manchukuo? What identity did they bring to Manchukuo, and what changes, if any, did they experience? How did they respond to Manchukuo, an informal colony of Japan, which was different from their own home countries? And to Kendai's practice of Pan-Asianism? In what follows, I attempt to answer these questions.

Mixed Motives:

Career Advancement, Romanticism, and Nationalism

Like Chinese-speaking students from Manchukuo and Kwantung Leased Territory, Korean and Taiwanese students chose to attend Kendai on their own will. Their recollection essays suggest that these youths were typically outstanding students who excelled at school and sports. For that reason, many of them were recommended by their middle school teachers to apply for Kendai. Bang Hui (3rd entering class), a former

committee made exceptions for those who did not graduate middle schools but whose academic abilities were acknowledged satisfactory by the Japanese or Manchukuo governments.

Korean student who contributed his essay to the Korean collection, recalls that he found almost everyone who took Kendai's entrance exam with him in August 1939 wore a badge that marked him as the head of a class. Normally, homeroom teachers appointed a top student to be the head, and one had to be outstanding not only in exam grades but also in sports and character. Knowing that all these heads of a class were his rivals at the entrance exam made Bang extremely nervous.³⁷⁴ Given the important roles played by colonial schools in Japan's assimilation policy in Taiwan and Korea, it is plausible to characterize these "outstanding" students as fully Japanized, at least from the perspectives of their teachers. A few applicants from Korea studied at private middle schools that sought to keep distance from Japanese-style schooling. Still, the successful candidates from those private schools were proficient in Japanese. These students from Japan's formal colonies seem to have had two types of motives in applying to Kendai. More than a half of available memoirs indicate that the nationalist sentiment had no significant or limited influence on the authors' decisions to apply. Other, fewer, authors testify that their decisions were shaped by nationalism.

Those who do not mention nationalism as their primary reason frequently write that they took Kendai's entrance exam without thinking much about it. What this means is that they did not know much about Manchukuo, nor did they think deeply about Kendai's educational objectives before taking exams. For them, decisions to apply to Kendai were related more closely to their available options in career advancement. For the brightest Korean and Taiwanese youths under Japanese colonial rule, popular future options were to attend *gokō* (five higher schools in Japan that served as preparatory

³⁷⁴ Hui Bang, "Kenkoku daigaku to gaikōkan [Nation Building University and my career as a diplomat]," in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 34–39, 34.

institutions for the admission to Imperial Universities) or to attend the preparatory programs of top colonial universities, Keijō Imperial University in Korea or Taihoku Imperial University in Taiwan. These were the paths to the elite within the colonial hierarchy. However, in addition to the competitiveness of these schools, only a small number of colonial applicants vis-à-vis Japanese candidates received admission each year. Kendai presented another option. While admission to Kendai was no less competitive than *gokō* and Imperial Universities, this new school in Manchukuo had two great appeals—that tuition, boarding, and other expenses were covered by the Manchukuo state, and its stated commitment to equality among its students of diverse backgrounds.

Most former Korean students who contribute their essays in the Korean collection testify that their school teachers recommended that they would apply to Kendai. As noted above, this recommendation itself was an honor to the students because teachers nominated only the best students at their schools. When this option was presented to Tae In-Seon (4th entering class) in 1941, along with the information that Kendai is free of charge and is highly competitive, he accepted the advice at once. He had dreamed of attending *gokō* in Japan, but the financial burden seemed too huge to him.³⁷⁵ Jeong Gi-Su (8th entering class) was similarly an outstanding student in his middle school. He always aspired to be the top student, and he did achieve this goal as he graduated from Zenshū Kita middle school in February 1945 with the Governor's Award which was presented to the best student each year. His initial hope was to enter *ichikō*, the best of the *gokō* in Japan, and then attend Tokyo Imperial University. Only because Kendai's entrance exam was held earlier than that of *ichikō*, Jeong took it regarding it as a prep test. The

³⁷⁵ In-Seon Tae, "Kenkoku daigaku to watashi [Nation Building University and myself]," in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō* bunshū, 50–56, 50–51.

admission to Kendai apparently was as honorable as being admitted to *ichikō*, as he ended up choosing to attend Kendai instead.³⁷⁶

Bang Hui (3rd entering class)'s experience reveals the strong commitment of his middle school in Korea to sending its graduates to Kendai. Like Tae and Jeong, Bang wanted to go to Japan's higher schools or Imperial Universities but decided to take Kendai's entrance exam when recommended by his homeroom teacher. Although he regarded the exam just as a mock test to prepare for other entrance exams just as Jeong did, his school exempted him from summer labor service to let him focus on preparing for Kendai's entrance exam. After passing the first written portion of the exam, Bang was exempted from classes and was advised to practice horse riding to prepare for the second part of the exam. Bang later learned that horse riding was not part of Kendai's entrance exam; it was a misinformation that his teachers believed to be true. In any case, this was the extent of enthusiasm with which Bang's middle school supported him in gaining entrance to Kendai. When he received Kendai's admission, the school celebrated it as a great honor and even pressured him to accept the admission by saying that his rejection may negatively influence the results of future applicants to Kendai from this middle school. After reluctantly matriculating in Kendai, Bang continued to prepare for transferring to *gokō* during his first year, but decided to stay by the end of that year. It appears that Kendai's *juku* life convinced him of the school's genuine commitment to the principle of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo." In addition, he was quite impressed that Kendai "did not practice thought control..."³⁷⁷

³⁷⁶ Gi-Su Jeong, "Kankirei no yume [The dream about the Kankirei]," in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō* bunshū, 93–100, 94.

³⁷⁷ Bang, 35. "思想統制は全くななく..."

The experiences of Tae In-Seon, Jeong Gi-Su, and Bang Hui seem to be typical among Kendai students from Korea. All three were outstanding students in middle schools and accepted teachers' recommendations to apply to Kendai. Financial incentives and the honor of gaining admission to a highly competitive school played a large role in these three applicants' decisions to attend Kendai.

In addition to these two common reasons, other students indicate that curiosity about Kendai and Manchukuo motivated them to enroll in Kendai. An Gwang-Ho (1st entering class) and Hong Chun-Sik (2nd entering class) both had the opportunity of listening to a talk by one of the Kendai faculty, Tsuji Gonsaku, who made tour in middle schools in Korea to advertise Kendai to prospective students. An and Hong do not provide details of Tsuji's talk in their essays but write that it raised curiosity about the new school in Manchukuo and influenced their decisions. Both authors stress that it was just a curiosity and nothing deeper than that. An writes that he took the entrance exam "...without thinking much about it."³⁷⁸ Hong explains his decision as follows: "... I did not know about the lofty ideal of Ishiwara, nor did I have profound understanding of Manchukuo. Falling for Tsuji Gonsaku's big talk, (my decision to enter Kendai) derived from a simple desire of living on a vast land of desert and prairie rather than being confined in the close quarters of Korean peninsula."³⁷⁹ Hong further states that he had

³⁷⁸ Gwang-Ho An, "Manchū kenkoku daigaku [Nation Building University]," in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 1-5, 1. "...深く考えもせず"に..."

³⁷⁹ Chun-Sik Hong, *Hankyore no sekai: aa nihon*, 27. "...高邁な石原構想を知った譯でも無く、満洲國を理解した為でも無く、唯建國大學學生監、辻權作氏の大風呂敷に包まれて、こせこせした韓半島で無く、大草原と砂漠を見れる廣い大地に住みたい、とう單純な考えからでした。[sic.]"

been too busy studying to become the top within the *kōminka* educational system that he “...had no spare time and energy to think about other things...”³⁸⁰

Kim Jae-Jin (5th entering class) applied to Kendai only because it was the only option available for him due to his family’s financial situation. However, he fell in love with Kendai when he found a curious criteria used in the interview exam. His friend Jeong Seong-Taek who took the exam together with Kim was a believer of Christianity. Knowing of this fact, Kendai’s interviewer asked “Christ or Sun Goddess, which do you think is greater?”³⁸¹ According to Kim, the conversation continued as Jeong responded, “Of course, Christ is greater.”³⁸² To this, the interviewer asked, “Do you dare to enter this university with such an idea?” “Even if you say so, there is no doubt that Christ is great” was the end of this conversation.³⁸³ Kim recalls that Jeong was disappointed at how his interview exam turned out and was sure that he did not pass. To their surprise, however, Jeong did make it. Kim continues in his essay, “If anyone scoffs at Kendai and says what kind of school it was, let him. Since this interview exam, I have started liking Kendai.”³⁸⁴ For Kim and other students from formal colonies who grew up under the strict surveillance of words and deeds, it must have been a fresh surprise to observe such openness that Kendai seemed to possess. It certainly raised curiosity about this school in

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 27. “...他の事には白紙状態であった...”

³⁸¹ Jae-Jin Kim, “Tsuiooku no Kendai [Kendai in memory],” in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 60–62, 60. “<お前が信じているキリストと天照大神とどっちが偉大だと思うか？>

³⁸² *Ibid.*, 60. “それは、もちろんキリストがより偉大です”

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, 60. “そんな考えでこの大学に入ろうとするのか？” “だけど、キリストが偉大だということに違いありません”

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 60. “建国大学とはいったいどういう学校だと笑う人は笑ってくれていい。私はあの面接試験のときから建大が好きになっていた。”

their minds. On the side note, Kim also testifies that he, too, like An Gwang-Ho and Hong Chun-Sik, had no idea about Korean nationalism before attending Kendai. Even his father, who had been one of the leading members of the March First Movement of 1919, never told his son about this dramatic nationalist activism of the past.

What does these former students' ignorance of and indifference to Korean nationalism mean? First, it suggests that these top students who attended Japanese public schools in Korea during the 1930s had very few opportunities of learning about the dynamic anti-Japanese nationalist movement that had sprung up in Korea immediately after WWI. As Takashi Fujitani shows, the Government-General of Korea increased its effort to improve the lives of Korean people and commitment to the claim of equality between Japanese and Koreans under the total war condition that started in 1937.³⁸⁵ At least among the elite and those who aspired to be the elite including these applicants, *naisen ittai* ("Japan and Korea as one body") was not just a pep talk of the colonizer. It certainly meant a real possibility in which they may be able to negotiate and secure better lives.

If so, why were An Gwang-Ho, Hong Chun-Sik, and Kim Jae-Jin took interest in Kendai? Why were others willing to leave their homeland Korea to attend Manchukuo's university? It seems that these young Koreans were certainly aware of the persistent discrimination in Korea. An In-Geon (7th entering class) recalls that he "... shared, without knowing he did, the common social impulse of launching into the continent."³⁸⁶

³⁸⁵ Fujitani, 39.

³⁸⁶ In-Geon An, "Kendaisei wa sabishiku nai [Kendai students know no loneliness]," in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 77–82, 77. "...大陸に雄飛しようという当時の時代的風潮に私自身も知らないうちにひかれていた。"

This is one of the key reasons for his decision to matriculate in Kendai. As he writes, many aspiring youths in Korea were likely to share this romantic view of going to the continent, outside of Japan's formal colony. It is also interesting to note that An In-Geon was under the influence of this romantic view of going to Manchukuo as late as the fall of 1943 when the Japanese Empire was fighting on a defensive. A year later, over seventy students from Korea took the interview exam with Im Seon-Jun (8th entering class), out of whom only fifteen gained admission.³⁸⁷ Taking into consideration that there were many more that did not pass the earlier written portion of the exam, Kendai clearly retained its popularity among Korean students even in the fall of 1944. If these young Koreans knew that the empire would soon collapse, why would they seek for a better career opportunity in Manchukuo? It appears that they had no doubt in the continuance of the Japanese rule.

Some other contributors to the Korean collection explicitly states that they chose Kendai out of Korean nationalist sentiment. For Gang Yeong-Hun (3rd entering class) and Jin Won-Jung (3rd entering class), the fact that a prominent Korean nationalist Choe Nam-Seon belonged to the Kendai faculty was a major reason to choose Kendai.³⁸⁸ I will describe the interactions between Choe and Kendai's Korean students in detail later; here, suffice it to note that some applicants did know about Choe's contribution to the March First movement and decided to attend Kendai because of their respect for this past Korean nationalist hero. Gang also writes that he was impressed by a talk by one of the Kendai faculties at his interview exam. According to Gang, the Japanese professor first

³⁸⁷ Seon-Jun Im, "Manshū Kendai nyūgaku no michi [My experience before matriculating at Kendai in Manchuria]," in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 90–92, 91.

³⁸⁸ Yeong-Hun Gang, "Kioku ni nokoru onshi rokudō sensei no ohanashi [Memorable talk of my former teacher Rokudō]," in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 40–43, 40; Won-Jung Jin, "Kaiko to sekkei," 108–111, 108.

criticized the existing universities in Japan that had been heavily influenced by Western liberalism and failed to provide answers to the current problems that the world was facing. Then, the professor continued, as Gang describes in his essay, “Kenkou University aims to break through this impasse and contribute to the advancement of academia especially in humanities and social sciences...”³⁸⁹ Intrigued by this speech, Gang decided that Kendai would be the place where he could “... search for a new avenue for the Korean nation...”³⁹⁰

Other unique aspects of Kendai also attracted some Korean applicants who were conscious of their Korean nationality. The presence of non-Japanese students was one of the reasons for Kim Sang-Gyu (5th entering class) to apply to Kendai.³⁹¹ Another appeal was the degree of cultural tolerance that Kendai students seemed to enjoy. When Bak Hui-Seong (6th entering class) visited the Kendai campus to take the interview exam, he was surprised that the current Kendai students from Korea made welcoming speeches in Korean. This was quite shocking to Bak, as his middle school in Korea would expel anyone who was found speaking Korean at or outside school. Observing his fellow Korean youths speaking in Korean in public, Bak felt as if he “... came to another world,” and found that the scene “aroused the national spirit that had been dormant within [his]

³⁸⁹ Gang, 40. “建国大学は、このような学問の停止・沈滞状態を克服し、特に、人文・社会科学の部門で新学問を発展させる...”

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 40. “...韓民族の活路を探してみたい...”

³⁹¹ Kim Sang-Gyu, “Ninen han no kaisō [Recollection of the two and a half year],” in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 57–59, 57.

mind.”³⁹² He then decided to attend Kendai, believing that “there was no other place than this school where [he] would want to invest [his] time and energy in youth.”³⁹³

Applicants who strongly identified them with Korean nationalism wished to invest their time and energy in Manchukuo to somehow make revenge on Japan. Kim Yong-Hui (8th entering class) writes that although he did not understand the politics of Manchukuo back then, he had a vague idea that going to Manchuria may teach him a way for “reclaiming the Korean rights over the territory since the Goguryeo era.”³⁹⁴ Goguryeo was an ancient Korean kingdom that ruled much of the Korean Peninsula and Manchuria. In addition, Kim liked that Koreans in Manchukuo were recognized as *senkei* (“of Korean descent”), one of the five Asian nationalities that would make up the “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” This, he thought, was much better than the Japanization policy in Korea.³⁹⁵ Im Seon-Jun (8th entering class) was deeply aware that the colonial situation in Korea limited his career path. He found Manchukuo a better place for him to nurture strength and abilities with which to “take vengeance against Japan that had been exploiting the Korean nation under colonial control...”³⁹⁶ Thus, both Kim and Im outspokenly recall dissatisfaction with the Japanese rule in Korea and the

³⁹² Hui-Seong Bak, “Kendai seikatsu no kaiko [Recollection of my student life at Kendai],” in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 63–70, 63. “...まるで別世界にきた気持ち”; “眠っていた民族の魂をよび起こされた。”

³⁹³ *Ibid.*, “私の青春を燃やすところはこの大学以外にない”

³⁹⁴ Yong-Hui Kim, “Kenkoku daigaku seikatsu no kaiko [Recollection of my student life at Nation Building University],” in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 86–89, 86. “高句麗時代の領土を取り戻せるように感じた。”

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 86–87.

³⁹⁶ Seon-Jun Im, 90. “祖国を支配して民族の膏血を絞っている日本に報復するため...”

want of avenge against Japan as their motives for choosing a school in Manchukuo over *gokō* in Japan or Keijō Imperial University in Korea.

Whether one was primarily concerned with choosing a better career opportunity and honor within the hard reality of colonial rule or being influenced by Korean nationalism, it seems that applicants from Korea regarded Manchukuo and Kendai as better choices. For the former group, it was a realistic choice for better personal career advancement, financial incentives, curiosity about the new school in Manchukuo, or a romantic view of the continent that influenced their decisions. A Taiwanese student Li Shuiqing (1st entering class) had a similar reason when he applied to Kendai in 1937. After graduating from common school and evening middle school, he passed a competitive exam to become a civil official for the Government-General of Taiwan at fifteen, a record-breaking young age. Li, an aspiring young man, was preparing for another exam to step up in his career when he came across with Kendai's advertisement for student recruitment. Li immediately decided to apply because he believed that "Taiwanese could not compete fairly with Japanese if they stayed in Taiwan."³⁹⁷ Like Korean applicants discussed above, Li made a realistic choice for a better future within the colonial situation. For the latter group that was influenced by nationalism, it was the knowledge of political status of Manchukuo as an informal colony and Pan-Asianist commitment found at Kendai that made it appear better place—at least not worse—than Korea. In either case, these students from Japan's formal colonies chose to leave their countries to attend Kendai, out of awareness—though the degree varies—of the limit of the promised equality between the colonizer and the colonized in their own countries.

³⁹⁷ Shuiqing Li, 8. "台湾人は台湾に留まっていたは日本人と公平に競争できないと思っていたから"

**Korean Students' Experiences:
Awakening to a Korean Identity—But What Kind?**

Although the timing varied, students from Japan's formal colonies eventually became conscious of their national identities as either Korean or Taiwanese. As discussed above, many students chose to matriculate at Kendai for practical reasons such as a better career opportunity and financial incentives. For those students, it appears that their experiences at Kendai played a large part in opening their eyes to their national identities. Former Korean students' memoirs show that their awakening to Korean nationalism was not a simple process shared by all of them. Rather, they were constantly faced with a difficult question—whether to support national independence or *naisen ittai* (“Japan and Korea as one body”), a colonial policy aiming at greater assimilation of Korea into Japan. While the former option was more popular among the Korean students enrolled at Kendai, there were some who believed that the latter route would be desirable for Korea.

Interactions among Koreans

The Korean students at Kendai utilized the school's lenient policy toward students' freedom of speech to engage in dialogue, which was difficult in Korea. Kim Jong-Cheol (3rd entering class) recalls that Korean upper-classmen hosted a welcome party for him and others from Korea immediately after they entered Kendai in April 1940. For Kim, who knew nothing of the real world, as he admits in memoir, all the talks of Korean spirit

and nationalism at this party brought him a fresh perspective.³⁹⁸ This practice of the Korean seniors welcoming incoming students from their homeland became a tradition. When Im Seon-Jun (8th entering class) participated in the pre-matriculation orientation on campus in February 1945, some current students from Korea hosted study meetings to discuss Korean independence from Japan.³⁹⁹

For Choe Heung-Cheol (6th entering class), the best memory of his student life at Kendai is that of having banquets among the Korean students on campus. They harvested potatoes from school's farm, cooked potato salad, brought along their school meals, and enjoyed their "feasts" while conversing in Korean. Naturally, their conversation often moved to the future of a Korean nation. They also sang some Korean songs that were prohibited in Korea at that time.⁴⁰⁰ Where were they having these good times? According to Choe, these banquets were held on the Kendai campus, and interestingly, those were not secret events. Choe indicates that they felt at ease in having these banquets on campus because "no one was interested in [their] conversation, nor were there someone covertly monitoring their activities..." on the Kendai campus.⁴⁰¹ Even if there were such surveillance, Choe continues, "...no one would be able to understand Korean language..."⁴⁰² Here, we see a uniquely high degree of freedom that non-Japanese students enjoyed on the Kendai campus. It appears that one of Ishiwara Kanji's

³⁹⁸ Jong-Cheol Kim, "Kankirei jidai no dansō [My scattered memories about the time I spent at Kankirei]," in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō* bunshū, 30–33, 30.

³⁹⁹ Seon-Jun Im, 92.

⁴⁰⁰ Heung-Cheol Choe, "Kendai no seikatsu wo kangaeru [Regarding the life at Kendai]," in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō* bunshū, 71–76, 74.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 74. "私たちの集まりに関心をもつものも監視の目もなく..."

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, 74. "...私たちの言葉を知るわけがないと思っていた..."

proposals—letting students interact freely among themselves in their own languages—was put into practice.

Conversations about a Korean nation occurred not just among the Korean students on the Kendai campus but also between them and Korean residents in Manchukuo outside campus. For instance, Kim Sang-Gyu (5th entering class) had a fierce argument with a Korean official who worked at the Manchukuo emperor’s advisory council in spring 1945. When Kim visited the politician’s official residence, he asked the official’s opinion on his urgent question. Kim asked: “Now that Japan’s defeat appears imminent, what is your take on the possible clash between the United States and the Soviet Union over our homeland Korea?”⁴⁰³ The response Kim received was far from satisfactory from his standpoint. Kim recalls the official saying angrily: “How dare you bring up such a subject at this crucial time?... Think about it! Would a woman who married to a man abandon him when confronted with crisis?”⁴⁰⁴ Kim ended the conversation by saying: “It is only you, who has married to Japan.”⁴⁰⁵ In this conversation, we see two different and opposing views of Korea’s future. It is clear that the official believed in the *naisen ittai* principle, likening Korea to a loyal wife who would accompany her husband, Japan, no matter what happens. This is a typical gendered discourse on the colonial relations between the Japanese and colonial subjects. In contrast, Kim held that Korea must seize the moment to secure its national independence once Japan surrenders to the Allies.

⁴⁰³ Sang-Gyu Kim, 58–59. “もうすでに日本が敗北する日が近づいたようです。そうなるとわが祖国は米・ソの勢力がぶつかる場になる心配がありますが、参議はどう思っていますか？”

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 59. “今がどんな時期だと思っそんな話をするのか。・・・考えてみろ！嫁に行った女が、夫が危機におちいったとして、その夫を捨てるというのか？”

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 59. “日本に嫁に行ったのは参議だけです”

The same debate over the future of Korea—whether to support independence or *naisen ittai*—happened among the Korean students enrolled at Kendai. As noted earlier, many of them enthusiastically supported Korea’s national independence; however, there were few students who believed *naisen ittai* to be a better choice. Not surprisingly, none of the available memoirs confesses that the author himself supported the *naisen ittai* policy. Doing so would feel inappropriate in the postwar society of the Republic of Korea. Nonetheless, the Korean memoir collection provides some evidence that the Korean students on the Kendai campus were divided in their opinions on Korea’s future. For instance, Gang Yeong-Hun (3rd entering class) writes that by the time he started his second year at Kendai in 1941, he had increasing difficulty in determining where his heart lied. He found that his fellow Korean students approached the issue of Korea’s future from three angles—nationalism, the principle of *naisen ittai*, and communism.⁴⁰⁶ Gang struggled to find his own stance and eventually set his mind on the goal of national independence. Kim Yong-Hui (8th entering class) recalls that when he arrived at Kendai in 1945, two Korean alumni were working as Associate Professors. One of them told him that “...Korea must gain independence, or at least be granted the right of self-rule like India...” under the British rule.⁴⁰⁷ By contrast, Kim continues, the other Korean faculty insisted that “...Korean people would be happier under the principle of *naisen ittai*...”⁴⁰⁸ These two entries attest to the fact that some Korean students, including alumni, embraced Japan’s assimilation policy in Korea.

⁴⁰⁶ Yeong-Hun Gang, 41.

⁴⁰⁷ Yong-Hui Kim, 87. “...韓国は独立しなければいけない、せめてインドのような自治制が実施されなければいけない...”

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 87. “...内鮮一体のほうが韓国人にとっては幸せなのだ...”

For those who set their minds on Korean independence, the influence of one of the Korean faculty members, Professor Choe Nam-Seon, was significant. As discussed in Chapter I, it was Ishiwara's idea that Kendai recruited Choe, a leader of the March First Movement of 1919, to its faculty. I have discussed his perspective on the history of Manchuria in Chapter I; here, I will focus on his interactions with the Korean students. Removed from a teaching position and granted a title of Honorary Professor at Kendai, Choe did not teach actual courses. His influence on the Korean students was rather through his informal conversations with them at his house. Choe's house was a gathering place for Kendai's Korean students. Many students recall their fond memories with Choe. I Jong-Hang (1st entering class) is one of them. He and his friends often visited Choe on Sundays, "...ate foods, had fun, as if being at [their] own homes, and listened to [Choe's] talks..."⁴⁰⁹

Gang Yeong-Hun, whose struggle on the issue of nationalism I have discussed above, also had close interactions with Choe. Gang and six other Korean students of the 3rd entering class visited Choe's residence immediately after matriculating at Kendai in 1940. Gang summarizes what Choe told them as follows:

Nowadays, Japanese people say *naisen ittai, dōso dōkon* ("same ancestor, same origin"), and so on, but those are all sheer nonsense. Our nation must shape our own fate while riding on the unique strength and culture of our homogeneous race. I know there are some even among us (who are at Kendai) who believe in the principle of *naisen ittai* and are wishing to become Japanese. But, that is like you climb a tree to catch a fish. We must never forget that we are Korean.⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁹ Jong-Hang I, "Itsu-ga no mizu wa imammo nagarete irudaro! [The water must still be flowing in the Yitong River!]" in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 6–11, 6. "...わが家のように食べて遊びながら先生のお話を聞く..."

⁴¹⁰ Yeong-Hun Gang, 40. "現在、日本の人たちが内鮮一体だとか、同祖同根と言っているが、それは全部いい加減な話だ。わが民族は、その固有の文化と単一民族としての特性を生かしながら、独立した民族としての運命を開拓して、進むべきだろう。われわれの中にも内鮮一体を信じ、

In his memoir, Gang notes, this conversation with Choe convinced him that he had made a right decision to choose Kendai over Hiroshima Higher Normal School from which he had received admission.⁴¹¹

Kim Yeong-Rok (2nd entering class) recalls a similar interaction. When he visited Choe for the first time in 1939, Kim asked this former leader of the March First Movement if he had actually believed that Korea would gain independence through the movement in 1919. Kim describes the ensuing conversation, which he vividly remembers.

[My] question apparently made [Professor Choe] uncomfortable. But, although he looked pensive, his answer was simple.

“Yes, I thought so.”

“Do you still believe now that Korea will be able to gain independence?”

I asked this question with great curiosity.

“We live our lives solely for that purpose. Without that hope, why are we living?”⁴¹²

Kim writes that the word “we” that Choe used in answering his question made a deep impression on him. Indeed, the word “we” clearly separated the Koreans from the rest, and particularly in this context, the Japanese. For Kim and the Korean youths of his generation who grew up under Japan’s assimilation policy, drawing this line between the colonizer and the colonized had been taboo. Even if they could see clear difference and inequality between the two peoples in real life, they were not allowed to express their

日本人になるのを望み、願っている人もいるようだが、それは木に登って、魚を求めるのと同じだ。われわれはあくまでも、朝鮮人であることを忘れては駄目だ。”

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 40–41.

⁴¹² Yeong-Rok Kim, “Kamakiri no yume [The dream about Kenkirei],” in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 12–25, 13. “その質問は相当痛いようだった。沈痛な表情だった。でも、答えは簡単だった。’そう思った’今も朝鮮の独立は可能だと思っていらっしゃいますか?’私はこの質問にどんな回答が出るかなと、大きな好奇心を持って耳を傾けた。‘我らはそれを望んで生きている。その希望がなければ、何のために生きているのだろうかね?’”

awareness of that fact. It must have been a great sensation to see a prominent nationalist activist do just that and explicitly identify them as a same kind with him.

On December 8, 1941, when the news of Japan's Pearl Harbor attack brought excitement to the Kendai campus, a group of Korean students spent some time at Choe's house. Hong Chun-Sik (2nd entering class) and Min Gi-Sik (3rd entering class) were among them, and both write in their memoirs what they heard from Choe. According to them, Choe explained the huge gap between the national strength of Japan and the United States and the current world situation, and stated that Japan would soon be defeated and Korea would win independence.⁴¹³ Hong writes in his memoir that on this day he "... awakened to his Korean identity with an electrified feeling thanks to Professor Choe."⁴¹⁴ This indicates that Hong had not thought about the issue of national identity so intensely for over two years since he matriculated at Kendai. In that sense, Hong's experience of awakening to his Korean identity makes a contrast with that of Gang Yeong-Hun (3rd entering class) whose prolonged struggle over this issue I have discussed above. While Hong experienced the moment of awakening relatively late with an "electrified feeling," Gang continued to ponder on the same issue ever since he entered Kendai.

⁴¹³ Chun-Sik Hong, "Seishun hōkō ki [The record of my youthful days]," in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 26–29, 28; Gi-Sik Min, "Kenkoku daigaku to shikikan [Nation Building University and my career as Commander]," in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 44–49, 45.

⁴¹⁴ Chun-Sik Hong, "Seishun hōkō ki," 28. "...崔先生のおかげで、朝鮮人であることを骨がしびれるぐらい分かった。

Cross-Cultural Interactions

Cross cultural interactions on the Kendai campus also influenced the Korean students' sense of nationality. Some authors of the Korean collection detail their unique experiences of sharing their school and dormitory lives with not only Japanese but also other Asian students. The following seven accounts show different responses to the Pan-Asianist experiment of living out the ideal of “harmony among various peoples” on the Kendai campus.

A member of the 1st entering class, An Gwang-Ho, describes in his memoir how he faced challenges in working to realize harmonious relationships during the five years of his campus life. Among many things that influenced his ideas, two events stand out. First one is Vice President Sakuta Sōichi's resignation in June 1942. As introduced in Chapter I, Sakuta was one of the four academics who led the planning and founding of Kendai. Although his dictum of the centrality of the Japanese Emperor estranged many of the non-Japanese students, Sakuta was often fondly remembered by Japanese, Korean, and Taiwanese students for his diligent pursuit of learning. A Taiwanese alumnus Li Shuiqing (1st entering class) writes in his memoir that Sakuta's course on *shūshin dōtoku*, or “living a virtuous life based on morality” was one that “all students listened in with utmost enthusiasm.”⁴¹⁵ The aforementioned Korean student Gang Yeong-Hun agrees and attributes the uniquely open academic culture of Kendai to Sakuta's scholarship.⁴¹⁶ After

⁴¹⁵ Shuiqing Li, 14. “全学生が最も熱心に聴講した”

⁴¹⁶ Yeong-Hun Gang, “Kenkoku daigaku no gakufū ni tsuiteno ichi kōsatsu [Discussion of the academic culture of Kenkoku University],” in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 112–115.

a group of Chinese students were arrested for their anti-Japanese activities, and his efforts failed to release them, Sakuta resigned his position to take responsibility for the event. His position was replaced by Suetaka Kamezō, a former lieutenant general and the nineteenth division commander of the Japanese Army. The appointment of Suetaka was arranged by the Kwantung Army and thus indicated the increasing interference of the Kwantung Army with Kendai's administration. An Gwang-Ho writes, "all students from the 1st to 5th entering classes felt resistance toward the runaway Kwantung Army and uneasiness that the ideal of creating *ōdō rakudo* (the rule by the kingly way, the land of paradise), the founding principle of Manchukuo and [Kenkoku] university, was vanishing away..."⁴¹⁷ This indicates that An did embrace the stated ideal of Manchukuo and Kendai. For, otherwise, he would not worry about the changing situation at the time.

The second event that reveals An's response to Pan-Asianism occurred in March 1943. One day he went out for a drink with his classmates. An writes that the following conversation "...turned out to make a significant impact on (his) life."⁴¹⁸ At a bar, the non-Japanese students complained that the wage gap that persisted in Manchukuo contradicted the ideal of creating "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo." To this, the Japanese students replied: "... Korean students do not have military obligation. It is inevitable that their wages are different (lower) from that of

⁴¹⁷ Gwang-Ho An, "Byōbō sanzen ri [In the remote past, at a great distance]," in *Kankirei—manshū kenkoku daigaku zaikan dōsō bunshū*, 101–107, 101. "1期から5期まで全学生の胸の中には関東軍の独走に対する抵抗感と共に、満洲の建国理念であり大学創学の理念の基盤だった王道楽土建設という夢が遠くへ離れていくという不安が..."

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 102. "...人生を左右するぐらいの重大事になったのだ。"

Japanese who dedicate their lives to the nation (through military service).”⁴¹⁹ This response deeply upset An who thought to himself: “There is nothing that we are incapable of doing... OK, we will dispel such self-righteousness in our generation.”⁴²⁰ This sentiment was so strong that An took it into action immediately. Soon after that conversation, An absconded from Kendai, returned to his home in Seoul, and enlisted for army training in Korea. It was two months before his scheduled graduation from Kendai, and the school administration later granted him to receive a diploma. This episode clearly shows that An volunteered for army training in order to challenge the contradiction between the promised ideal and the existing discrimination both in Korea and Manchukuo. Moreover, it demonstrates that he perceived the goal of harmonious relationships to be spontaneous partnership among equal peoples. Hence, An responded to the challenges of realizing “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” by committing himself to the cause rather than discarding the ideal in disappointment. His voluntary enlistment in the army in this context derived from his effort of proving that Koreans were equally capable and dedicated to the ideal of Pan-Asianism.

Like An, Kim Yeong-Rok (2nd entering class) embraced the dream of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” and was quite honest in sharing his opinions with his classmates. He recalls one discussion meeting at his *juku* where students discussed the ways to make this goal a reality. According to Kim, someone said that the principle of *naisen ittai* could provide a model for the actual practice of the principle in Manchukuo, virtually proposing the Japanization of all peoples of distinct

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 102. “...韓國人學生たちには兵役義務がないではないか。身命を国家に捧げる日系と違いがあるのは仕方がないことだ”

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, 102. “我らにできない事があるか...よし、そんな独善は我らの世代で払拭しよう”

nationalities residing in Manchukuo. Kim openly opposed this opinion because he thought that *naisen ittai* was “the worst colonial policy” that sought to “...annihilate the Korean nation...”⁴²¹ In front of both Japanese and non-Japanese *juku*-mates, Kim described the oppressive measures taken in Korea under the policy of *naisen ittai*—the prohibition of Korean language, requirement of paying homage to Shinto shrines, suppression of nationalist activities and so on. Then, Kim writes, he concluded his remark as follows: “If I held the power of life or death, I would kill half of the Japanese living in Korea.”⁴²² Kim admits that his comment created a tense atmosphere, which urged the Mongolian student, who was in charge of leading the discussion on that day, to end the meeting abruptly.

Kim’s outspoken personality drew three Chinese-speaking students close to him. Kim notes that he and the three used to converse through writing at the study room in the *juku* building. He does not provide the content of those conversations; but, it is highly likely that they discussed some sensitive matters that they did not want the other students, especially Japanese, to know. One day, the three Chinese-speaking students invited Kim for a walk. At a quiet place on campus where no other people could hear them talk, the three asked Kim: “If we want to hold a meeting, should we inform the school administration of it, or should we keep it secret? We want to know what you think.”⁴²³ Kim replied: “How would I know what you should do? But, perhaps you can think about

⁴²¹ Yeong-Rok Kim, 14. “最悪の植民地政策”; “...朝鮮民族抹殺の...”

⁴²² *Ibid.*, 15. “もし私に生殺与奪の権があるのなら、朝鮮にいる日本人の半数を殺してしまうだろう”

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, 15. “ぼくらが、何か集まりを持とうとする時、学校当局に知らせるのがいいのか知らせない方がいいか、お前の意見を聞きたいんだ”

it more simply. If (the meeting) is welcomed by the school, let them know. If not, you cannot tell them.”⁴²⁴

While this appears to be a simple and insignificant conversation, it certainly had some importance to Kim, who writes about it in his memoir. Kim believes that if he had asked for more details, his friends would have shared what they had in their minds. Kim did not ask because he thought the issue at hand must be a significant matter that “...he should not get involved...”⁴²⁵ Nonetheless, the fact that the three students initiated this conversation with Kim appears to have made him quite happy. He writes, “...unless they felt genuine trust toward [him]...” they would not have talked to him in this manner.⁴²⁶ Kim further speculates that because this conversation took place a few months before the mass arrest of Chinese-speaking students in November 1941, the two incidents had some relation. This is one example of interactions among non-Japanese students at Kendai. Without clearly stating, they could communicate who the word “we” referred to. In this case, it referred to the Chinese-speaking students who identified themselves as “Chinese.” Such communication was possible because there were clear groupings on campus based on one’s nationalities both in an official level and in students’ consciousness.

Hong Chun-Sik (2nd entering class)’s experience shows two different types of interactions between the Korean and Chinese-speaking students on the Kendai campus. As discussed above, Hong initially had no particular feeling toward Korean nationalism.

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, 15. “ぼくだって、そんな事、どうすればいいのか分からないだろ？でも、簡単に考えてもいいんじゃないの？大学が歓迎する事であれば報告するのがいいし、そうでなければ報告できないだろ”

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 15. “...深入りする事ではなさそう...”

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, 15. “...よほどの信頼がなければ...”

He even admits that he behaved like Japanese at that time. This was not surprising because Hong attended Keijō dai-ichi kōtō hutsū gakkō (Keijō higher regular school No. 1), the top public middle school for Korean children in Keijō, Korea, which served as a model school for *kōminka* education.⁴²⁷ Hong's Japanese-like words and deeds invited two different reactions from his Chinese-speaking classmates. He writes: "one person secretly told [him] about the current activities of Korean independence activists in China, while another person disparagingly said: 'You guys used to belong to China's vassal state. Stop behaving like Japanese.'"⁴²⁸ The former person's comradely gesture apparently derived from his assumption of a shared resentment against Japan's expansionist policy in Asia. By contrast, the latter's comment intended to separate Koreans from Japanese by bringing up the past tributary relation between the imperial China and the Korean kingdom. These two remarks nevertheless share one thing: national consciousness that divided the Kendai student body.

In addition to this incident, one conversation with a group of Japanese classmates affected Hong's sense of identity. One day, he happened to be the only non-Japanese when several students were having conversation. Noticing Hong's presence, one of them identified him as Japanese saying, "Hear me out on this, as you are Japanese too."⁴²⁹ Hong does not recall the content of the conversation that followed; however, he does remember finding himself in an awkward position. He could feel that the person who

⁴²⁷ Chun-Sik Hong, *Hankyore no sekai*, 14.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, 28. "或る者は中國での朝鮮獨立運動者の現況をひそかに話してくれました。ある者は「君達は中國の屬國だったぞ、あまり日本人振舞いするな」と蔑すむやうな口振りをしました。”

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, 28. "君も日本人だから聞いてくれ”

called him “Japanese” did so out of the uneasiness about Hong’s presence. Through these two incidents and everyday interactions within the diverse student body at Kendai, Hong gained a fuller sense of “...the sorrow of the people without a country...”⁴³⁰ Hence, a young Korean who arrived at Kendai in 1939, as one of the top students from a model school of *kōminka* education in Korea, gradually awakened to his Korean identity through the interactions with his classmates at Kendai.

By contrast, when Bak Hui-Seong (6th entering class) became a Kendai student in 1944, he already had a strong sense of Korean nationalism. He attended the required pre-matriculation orientation trip from Tokyo to Shinkyō with about 90 other prospective students of Japanese and Korean origins. During the trip, the incoming students had the opportunity of attending a banquet with the Japanese Korean Army’s commander in chief, Itagaki Seiichirō. They were asked to share their resolutions as prospective Kendai students. When it became his turn, Bak first talked about a Korean marathon runner who became a world champion and enthusiastically discussed how competent the Korean people are. Suddenly finding that his excited remark was not appropriate, Bak concluded his comment by stating that he was determined to “...repay [his] deep debt of gratitude to the emperor by bringing forth such world-class Korean national characteristics at Kendai and working toward the realization of the founding principles of Manchukuo...”⁴³¹ This entry shows that Bak knew the model answer expected of a colonized citizen at the time, which was a consequence of Japan’s *kōminka* education in Korea.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*, 28 – 29. “...國を失った民の悲しみ...”

⁴³¹ Hui-Seong Bak, 64. “...世界のどんな民族にも負けない優秀な民族性を建大で発揮して満洲国建国の理念を達成することに努力し、天皇の鴻恩に報いたい...”

On the other hand, some, although not many, Korean students continued to feel at ease in expressing their opposition against the incomplete practice of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” at Kendai. So called “separate meal incident” of March 1944 shows one such example, as described by Kim Sang-Gyu (5th entering class). This was a violation of Kendai’s proud tradition of absolute equality at meal serving. The Manchukuo government had a discriminatory law that prohibited Chinese residents from eating white rice. Under the government’s ration system, which prioritized export of white rice to Japan, only Japanese residents were allowed a ration of white rice while non-Japanese residents were given sorghum and other coarse grains. However, Kendai students of the 1st entering class collectively rejected this discriminatory practice and subverted the government’s regulations. They mixed all rationed grains together so that all students ate the same food. In doing so, Kendai students upheld the principle of absolute equality in meal serving as part of their practice of Pan-Asianist vision of harmonious relationships.

When this proud tradition of Kendai was violated on March 9, 1944, Kim Sang-Gyu could not help but speak up against what he saw as contradicting the principle of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” According to Kim, in the morning of that day, many Kendai students were shocked to find a sudden change in this practice. Japanese and Korean, who were recognized as Japan’s imperial subjects, were served bowls of steamed white rice, while other students received sorghum gruel.⁴³²

Although Kim does not provide the background of this incident, his Korean friend Kim

⁴³² Kim Sang-Gyu, 57–58. Following this logic, the Taiwanese students should have been served white rice as they were Japan’s imperial subjects, too. However, Kim Sang-Gyu only mentions the Japanese and Korean students. It is not clear what meal Taiwanese students were served on this day.

Jae-Jin (5th entering class) explains in his memoir that this unequal meal serving occurred because some Japanese students who had been drafted for military service insisted that they would eat white rice before leaving campus. Kim Jae-Jin writes: "...I will never forget the courage of Kim Sang-Gyu, who protested in front of everyone, asking 'is this the spirit of harmony?'"⁴³³ It is important to note that Kim Sang-Gyu remonstrated against this change in the meal system even though he, as Korean, received a bowl of white rice as the privileged group. What he was served did not matter to Kim; he stood against this act by some Japanese students that contradicted the principle of harmony among peoples of different nationalities. In Kim's understanding, equality was integral to this principle. Thus, we find evidence of an egalitarian perception of Pan-Asianism, embraced by a Korean youth as late as spring 1944. Moreover, he was willing to express it openly in public.

For Kim Yong-Hui (8th entering class) who entered Kendai in 1945, encountering some of the "eccentric" Japanese students and faculty was quite confusing.⁴³⁴ One day, his Japanese *juku*-mate Yamamoto Masao and a few other Japanese students called Kim out to the school yard "...to have a heart-to-heart talk..."⁴³⁵ They asked Kim: "Do Koreans think it better to pursue *naisen ittai* as it's currently implemented? Or, do they hope to gain independence?"⁴³⁶ This question startled Kim as he could not know whether

⁴³³ Jae-Jin Kim, 61. "...金相圭君が前に出て、これが協和の精神かと抗議した時の勇気、私はそれを永遠に忘れない。"

⁴³⁴ Yong-Hui Kim, 87. "とんでもない"

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, 87. "...胸襟を開いて話し合おう..."

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, 87. "韓国は現在のように内鮮一体でいるのがいいと思うのか、それとも独立を望んでいるのか?"

it came from their genuine curiosity or from their scheme to trick him into disclosing some inappropriate ideas. He only answered that he “never thought about this issue and needs some time to think more...”⁴³⁷ In the end, Kim never spoke with them on this topic because apparently he could not trust these Japanese classmates. In retrospect, however, he writes in his memoir: “when I think of it now, there were some Japanese with outstanding characters (at Kendai),” which appears to imply the possibility of those Japanese classmates being such good-hearted ones.⁴³⁸ He goes on to describe another such “outstanding” Japanese, a professor, who appears to be Fujita Matsuji of Agriculture.⁴³⁹ Kim recalls that when this “eccentric” teacher mentioned the emperor during farm work at school, students stood stiffly at attention as normally required by other instructors. To Kim’s surprise, this instructor told them: “Hey, the emperor is a human being too! You don’t need to react that way.”⁴⁴⁰ This is a remarkable deviation from the Japanese official deification of the emperor, which provided a ground for the legitimacy of the imperial rule. The fact that in his memoir Kim groups the Japanese classmates who asked him about *naisen ittai* together with this instructor indicates that he now thinks that his Japanese classmates’ question came from their genuine curiosity. He describes these Japanese as “outstanding” and “eccentric” in a sense that they exhibited an unusually high level of curiosity and openness towards the colonized subjects and that their words and deeds diverged from the official line of thought.

⁴³⁷ *Ibid.*, 87. “そんなことについては一度も考えたことがない。よく考えてみるから...”

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*, 87. “思えば、日本人の中にはとんでもない人たちが、たまにいた。”

⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*, 87. “傑物”

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 87. “おい！天皇も人間だ。気をつけする必要はない”

Another member of the 8th entering class, Jeong Gi-Su, mentions in his memoir another such “eccentric” Japanese student, Horie Hiromasa of the 6th entering class. Jeong came to know Horie through a Korean student Yu Chi-Jeong (6th entering class). Yu and Horie were in charge of the management of the school cafeteria, and they and Jeong spent a lot of time together working there and going to downtown to buy foods. Jeong writes of Horie as follows: “Even though Horie was Japanese, he became a firm supporter of Korean independence just as we (Koreans) were.”⁴⁴¹ This brief comment reveals that some Korean students felt at liberty to share their opinions about colonial politics with certain Japanese classmates. It also shows an example of Japanese students developing political views that diverged from Japan’s official line.

Voluntary Enlistment in the Army, 1943

Living among the diverse student body of Kendai, the Korean students had ample opportunities of contemplating their national identity. As seen above, many Korean students recall various moments that prompted them to think about the complex position they found themselves in as Japanese imperial subjects originated in Korea. The student mobilization of October 1943 was one such crucial event that pressed them to think hard about their national identity.

The drafting of students was a massive campaign to fill the ever increasing wartime need of manpower throughout the Japanese Empire. Previously, students enrolled in universities, higher schools, and vocational schools were exempt from

⁴⁴¹ Gi-Su Jeong, 97. “堀江さんは日本人だが、私たちと同じように強固な朝鮮独立主義者になっていた。”

military duties until the age 26. The Japanese government lifted this deferment in October 1943, drafting Japanese students of the age twenty and above.⁴⁴² The state conscripted Japanese students and celebrated ostentatiously with the catchword “students departed for the front” (*gakuto shutsujin*). Simultaneously, the government also enacted regulations that enabled Korean and Taiwanese males in higher education over the age twenty to volunteer for the army.⁴⁴³

The student mobilization of 1943 affected the Korean students enrolled at Kendai in a slightly different manner due to Manchukuo’s ostensibly independent political status. After the Kendai administration delivered the news in early October 1943, the Korean students engaged in serious discussion over whether to volunteer for the army. In his memoir, Kim Yeong-Rok (2nd entering class) explains how he and other Korean students felt pressure to volunteer.

Because Manchukuo was an independent country, the authorities could not immediately act on the regulation (of allowing Korean students to volunteer for the army) like they did in Japan and Korea. It initially appeared impossible to force voluntary enlistment on Koreans in Manchukuo. Soon, however, [the Manchukuo state] began to have a stance of accepting volunteers if any. Then, it started to solicit volunteers.

⁴⁴² Exceptions were made for students majoring in sciences and those who were being trained to become school teachers.

⁴⁴³ In Korea and Taiwan, Japan’s formal colonies, serving the Japanese military meant both obligation and right. Despite the fact that the wartime Japanese state recognized Koreans and Taiwanese as the imperial subjects (*kōmin*), conscription of young men from these colonies started only in 1944 for Korea and 1945 for Taiwan. These colonial “Japanese” were only slowly incorporated into the Japanese military forces. In April 1938 Korean male seventeen years and older were granted the right to volunteer for the army, followed by the same change in Taiwan in April 1942. In August 1943, the navy began to take Korean and Taiwanese volunteers of sixteen years old and older. When the mobilization of students in higher education started for Japanese in October 1943, Koreans and Taiwanese students were granted the right to volunteer for the army. Conscription finally started in 1944 for Koreans and 1945 for Taiwanese. For detailed explanation of the process of incorporation of colonial subjects into the Japanese military force, see Fujitani, *Race for Empire*, “Chapter One. Right to Kill, Right to Make Live: Koreans as Japanese,” 35–77.

It was a matter of time before the authorities in Manchukuo would force their way through as it happened in Korea and Japan.⁴⁴⁴

Kim's classmate, Hong Chun-Sik, also recalls a shared concern among Korean students at that time. He writes, "Everyone knew by then that Japan would collapse and Korea would gain independence."⁴⁴⁵ Therefore, Hong continues, "any Korean detested the idea of dying in this losing battle and thus not being able to savor the day of independence."⁴⁴⁶

Unable to find a solution, the Korean students consulted Professor Choe Nam-Seon. Hong Chun-Sik and Gang Yeong-Hun (3rd entering class) report in their memoirs what they heard from Choe. The fact that their descriptions are almost identical adds credibility to their memories of Choe's words. According to Gang, Choe told the students that "military power and technologies" would be the utmost importance once Korea becomes independent.⁴⁴⁷ Gang continues to quote Choe, "Now that the Japanese Empire... is trying to use us Koreans, we must see this as an opportunity and take advantage of it to nurture our nation's military power."⁴⁴⁸ Likewise, Hong recalls Choe saying that "...if you serve the (Japanese) military and gain knowledge, you'll later serve

⁴⁴⁴ Yeong-Rok Kim, 24. "満洲は独立国だ。日本や朝鮮のように直ぐには施行できないようだ。初めは朝鮮人学生の学徒兵志望は満洲では考えられないように見えた。そうだったのが、志願すれば受け入れるというふうになって、さらに志願を勧誘するという事になった。満洲でも、朝鮮や日本と同じく、強制突破するのは時間の問題のようだった。"

⁴⁴⁵ Chun-Sik Hong, *Hankyore no sekai: aa nihon*, 35. "この時は誰の目にも、日本は負けて朝鮮は独立するという事が見えました。"

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 35. "この途端場に巻き込まれて独立の日を迎え切れ無く死ぬ事はできない、と言うのは韓人ならば誰もが抱いた心情でした。"

⁴⁴⁷ Yeong-Hun Gang, 42. "軍事力と軍事技術"

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 42. "今日帝は...わが民族を利用しようとしているが、われわれはこのチャンスを利用して、民族の軍事力を養成しなければならない。" [sic]

our country well.”⁴⁴⁹ After talking with Choe, Hong writes, the students finally decided that “all would volunteer for the army” and informed the Kendai administration of this decision.⁴⁵⁰ At that night, the school hosted a special banquet for these students.

One gets a different picture from Kim Yeong-Rok’s recollection. According to Kim, while Kendai’s Korean students were debating whether to volunteer for the army, a group of students asked the Korean students of the 2nd entering class, who were the oldest Korean students enrolled at Kendai at that time, to make decision for all younger students. When the students of the 2nd entering class got together to discuss the matter, Kim proposed that they draw a lot and a half of the Korean students volunteer and the rest remain on campus to work for Manchukuo. He explains the rationale behind it in his memoir. The mission of Kendai’s Korean students was, in Kim’s understanding, “...to work for the three million Korean residents in Manchukuo...”⁴⁵¹ In order to ensure that even some of them would be able to fulfill that mission, he believed, others must volunteer for the army in a show of cooperation. Kim thus suggested drawing a lot to make the selection of volunteers. He thought, drawing a lot would make the selection fair for everyone. His classmates rejected this proposal. Still unable to find a solution, the group decided to leave the decision up to each student and their parents. Thus Kim went home in Korea to consult his parents. During his stay there, the school sent him a telegram to summon him to campus. When he returned to Kendai, Kim writes, the school administration “... had already ordered all of its Korean students (who were eligible) to

⁴⁴⁹ Chun-Sik Hong, *Hankyore no sekai: aa nihon*, 35. “...諸君が軍隊で習えば祖国で重要な役割が待っている。”

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 36. “皆入隊”

⁴⁵¹ Yeong-Rok Kim, 24. “...在満 300 万朝鮮人のために何人でもいいから残って働いて...”

volunteer for the army.”⁴⁵² This last statement contradicts with the above mentioned Hong Chun-Sik’s account about the spontaneity of the Korean students’ enlistment.

While there is no existing official record that clarifies this important point about Kendai’s Korean students’ enlistment, other evidence support Hong’s version. First, on November 12, 1943, a Japanese student Yamashita Kōichi (5th entering class) wrote in his diary that he learned about Korean students’ decision to volunteer. “I am deeply impressed to learn that all *senkei* (“of Korean descent”) students, without exception, volunteer (for the army). It’s a prodigious feat, indeed.”⁴⁵³ Of course, Yamashita was not aware of the nationalistic motive behind Korean students’ decision; but, his diary entry shows that the Kendai community perceived its Korean students’ enlistment as voluntary and celebrated it. Second, Hong Chun-Sik shares his impression that of all the schools in Manchukuo, Korea, and Japan, Kendai was the only one in which all of its Korean students responded to the call for the voluntary enlistment. This fact itself does not directly answer the question of whether Kendai’s Korean students voluntarily served the army. What is more indicative is Hong’s explanation of why Kendai’s Korean students were more responsive to the call compared to Korean students enrolled in other schools. He writes: “Having lived in Manchukuo and closely interacted with people of different nationalities, we (Kendai’s Korean students) knew too well the sorrow of belonging to a lesser nation. Thus, we could not help getting on the same boat.”⁴⁵⁴ Indeed, the Korean

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 25. “・・・全員入隊の命令が待っていた。”

⁴⁵³ Kōichi Yamashita, *Jukusei nisshi [student diary at juku]* in Yuji, 485. “鮮系学徒が挙って志願する、と聞いて、さらに感激深い。よくも、かく快挙しえたものぞ。”

⁴⁵⁴ Chun-Sik Hong, 36. “満洲で異民族との接触で弱小民族の悲哀を痛感した我等朝鮮系の学生は共同隊列から離脱する事ができませんでした。”

students were having an intense debate over whether to volunteer for the army. As we saw in Kim Yeong-Rok's account, the younger students even asked their seniors to determine a solution for *all* Korean students enrolled at Kendai. They seem to have wished to make a group decision rather than making it a problem for each individual. In this context, Hong's explanation cited above makes sense. It was unlikely that they volunteered willingly; nonetheless, it was their decision to respond to the call.

Then, why does Kim Yeong-Rok remember being ordered by the school administration to volunteer? I suspect that Kim's going home at the time left him out from the final decision making of his fellow Korean students on campus. The army started to accept application for voluntary enlistment by Korean students on October 25, 1943, and closed the registration on November 20. Hence, Kendai's Korean students made their final decision somewhere during this one-month period. Meanwhile, on October 21, the Kendai administration announced that those students who would join the army were not allowed to return home unless there was an extraordinary reason.⁴⁵⁵ Kim's visit to his parents, then, was an exception. Most—if not all—of his fellow Korean students remained on campus, engaging in further debate and making their collective decision to enlist in the army. Thus, it is likely that Kim, who were absent in the final decision making, mistook the decision of enlistment as one forced on students by the school.

Despite the contradiction on the question of spontaneity, these three accounts by Hong Chun-Sik, Gang Yeong-Hun, and Kim Yeong-Rok reveal two intense emotions likely shared by Kendai's Korean students. One is the sense of hopelessness regarding the

⁴⁵⁵ Yuji, 453.

situation that Korean students were put in Manchukuo; there seems to have been no possibility of evading the order to “volunteer” for the army entirely. The other is the strong desire to work for his fellow Korean people. For Kim, this desire was so powerful that it convinced him to leave the fates of his own and his friends’ up to a simple lottery. Likewise, Hong and Gang claim that it was precisely this same patriotic aspiration that pushed them to “volunteer” for the army.

Thus, for many of these Korean students who left the Kendai campus to bear arms, Korean nationalism was the answer to their inner struggle over their identity. Whether they had believed in *naisen ittai* or independence, the student mobilization of October 1943 confirmed that they were different from Japanese, despite the official claim of the unity of the two nations. The empire treated Japanese and Korean students differently, leaving the latter a choice in theory. Moreover, the Korean students themselves felt about serving the army quite differently compared to their Japanese classmates. Hong Chun-Sik writes in his memoir that he and his Korean friends “... envied [their] Japanese classmates who excitedly set their minds on serving their homeland.”⁴⁵⁶ In contrast to the Japanese students whose Japanese citizenship now required military service, the Korean students had to struggle to find reasons and meanings to enlist because of choice given to them in theory. Their campus life in Manchukuo continued to press them to contemplate the meaning of Korean nationalism. Furthermore, this challenge continued even after the end of the war. After returning to Korea, some chose the north and others the south as their new homes. Still now, the Korean memoir collection only contains entries authored

⁴⁵⁶ Chun-Sik Hong, *Hankyore no sekai: aa nihon*, 36. “...祖国の為だ、と勇躍した日系の同窓の後姿を羨しく思いました。”

by those who resided in South Korea. Whereabouts of many of those who chose to live in North Korea are not known.

**A Taiwanese Student's Experience: Pursuing Two
Dreams at the Same Time—To Realize a Shared
Pan-Asianist Dream in Manchukuo and
to Bring Honor to a Taiwanese Nation**

Just as Taiwanese residents belonged to a tiny minority in Manchukuo, only a few Taiwanese students were enrolled at Kendai in each class. Li Shuiqing was one of the three Taiwanese students of the 1st entering class that matriculated at Kendai in 1938.⁴⁵⁷ His pre-university life in Taiwan characterizes Li as a highly aspiring and competent young man. Even though he completed common school in Taiwan and passed the competitive entrance exam of the middle school, he had to give up that path because his parents could not afford the school fee. As introduced earlier, he nonetheless worked his way up to become a civil official at the Government-General of Taiwan while working as a servant and attending an evening middle school. He was not satisfied at that level of work, however. He was preparing to take the higher civil service exam in Tokyo. This exam was to select the best and brightest to serve the empire as high government officials. Because Taiwanese were recognized as Japanese citizens, Li was eligible to take this highly competitive exam. While he was studying hard for this exam, Li came to know about Kendai, a highest learning institution of Manchukuo that aimed to train government

⁴⁵⁷ Shuiqing Li, 9.

officials of the newly founded country. As mentioned above, Li chose to apply to Kendai because he felt it was a better career path than staying in Taiwan. He refers to the inequality and discrimination found in colonial Taiwan, and writes in his memoir that “...the situation did not seem to improve in the future.”⁴⁵⁸ Thus, by entering Kendai, Li seemed to have made a rational choice with his mind set on a goal of climbing up the ladder of social hierarchy within the empire. By the time he graduated from Kendai, however, Li was no longer interested in becoming the elite-track official. He, instead, desired to work in a remote rural village in Manchukuo, pursuing a Pan-Asianist dream of creating *ōdō rakudo* (“a peaceful land governed by the Kingly Way”). Li’s memoir helps explain how this transformation occurred while he attended Kendai.

Moving from Taiwan to Manchukuo and suddenly becoming a ‘foreign’ national, Li started to identify himself clearly as Taiwanese and of Han Chinese. At Kendai, Li found, the topics of conversations were broad and philosophical: the way to achieve “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo,” the future of Manchukuo, the purpose of life, and so on. Li writes:

In Taiwan, [he] needed to think only of [his] own matters. The situation was completely different [at Kendai]; when thinking about [himself], [he] also had to consider his own origins, that is, [his] fellow Taiwanese and the Han Chinese people. No one regarded [him] as one individual but rather saw him as a person from Taiwan or of Han nationality.⁴⁵⁹

This was a fresh surprise for Li because, as he admits, he had been caught up with his personal achievements while in Taiwan. The difference between the political systems of

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 8. “...将来とも変ることはないと思われるから。”

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 21. “以前台湾に居た時は、ただ自分個人のことを考えるだけでよかったが、現在は全くそれと異なり、同時に自己の背景即ち台湾同胞を、またその背後の漢民族のことを考慮しなければならず、誰も自分を一個人とはみなされず、台湾系の某某、または漢民族の某某とみなされた。”

Taiwan and Manchukuo also helps to explain Li's response. In Taiwan, despite the *de facto* discrimination, Taiwanese were officially regarded as Japanese subjects. The colonial regime did not encourage Taiwanese to uphold their own distinct culture. Quite differently, the Manchukuo state's founding principle stipulates the harmonious coexistence of peoples of distinct national and cultural identities. Kendai was to become the testing ground for the realization of such harmonious relationships. Naturally, the school community expected Li to represent the Taiwanese nation.

Li's awakened sense of Taiwanese identity brought him close to other Taiwanese residents in Manchukuo. He often visited those Taiwanese who worked for Manchukuo's government agencies or nearby universities. For instance, Li was one of the participants at the evening study meetings hosted by Wu Jinchuan of the Central Bank of Manchukuo. Because Wu's residence was five kilometers away from Kendai, Li had to obtain his *juku* headmaster's permission to take a leave and miss end-of-the-day meetings at *juku*. It is interesting to note that Li had no problem getting approval for these outings.⁴⁶⁰ Besides, he frequented the homes of other Taiwanese who lived in Shinkyō City. Li fondly recalls one such meeting with Guo Songgen, Professor at Medical University of Shinkyō. Guo told Li and his friend that for Taiwanese as a small nation to be recognized in the world, they must foster as many top class talents as possible in every field. Li shared this belief. He writes:

For our fellow Taiwanese who reside in Taiwan under the Japanese rule, it is impossible to come to the front regardless of their abilities. But, if we find opportunities outside of Taiwan, we can prove ourselves by fully

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 17–18.

exerting our potentials... Although we are all Japanese by law, we strongly identify ourselves with the Han ethnicity.⁴⁶¹

Hence, close interactions with other Taiwanese residents in Manchukuo reinforced Li's sense of Taiwanese identity. He found a new meaning to his hard work at school—to make his mark in the world as a representative of the Han people from Taiwan.

Li's response to Kendai's curriculum was very positive. As a member of the 1st entering class, he spent most of his school life when Sakuta Sōichi was leading the Kendai administration. As discussed in Chapter I, Kendai's Pan-Asianist education was in its prime under Sakuta's leadership. Particularly, the administration put a great amount of effort into *juku* education. Li characterizes Kendai's *juku* as a place where teachers (*juku* headmasters) and students learned together by engaging in honest dialogue. Students spontaneously organized a number of study groups and invited faculty members as lecturers. Those meetings were normally held in the evening, but professors and *juku* headmasters willingly gave their time. The essence of what he learned at *juku* was, Li writes, that one must “pursue the primary purpose of life...without seeking personal fame and gain.”⁴⁶² By the late 1930s and early 1940s when Li was enrolled at Kendai, Japan's education emphasized *kōminka*, or imperialization, not only in Taiwan and Korea but also in Japan. Intending to foster loyalty to Japan's imperial leadership, schools clearly defined the “primary purpose of life” for all subjects—to work for the empire. What Li

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 18. “日本植民地の台湾島内の台湾同胞は、能力の大小に関わらず、皆抑圧されて頭を上げられない。併し、若し海外に出て、一つ一つ潜在している力を発揮できる場所を得れば、頭角を現すことができる。…皆日本国籍ではあるが、漢民族としての意識は非常に高いと自認している。”

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*, 11. “名利を求めず、… “人生追求の第一義” を目標とすることであった。”

learned from Kendai's *juku* education was directly opposite to this trend. Kendai openly encouraged its students to define the "primary purpose of life" on their own.

From Li's perspective, Kendai students were doing just that. One example that he cites is the creation of the equal meal system that I have discussed above. The students of the 1st entering class collectively protested Manchukuo state's regulation that prohibited *mankei* people from eating white rice. Kendai students received different grain ration according to their nationalities. Defying the law, they mixed them all together to cook and serve the same bowls of meal for all students. Many former students of Kendai—both Japanese and non-Japanese—mention this tradition as a notable characteristic of the Kendai community. As a member of the 1st entering class that initiated this system, Li explains how he and other students thought about it.

At that time, we thought it all natural that we ate the same meal because we shared all other aspects of life [in *juku*]... it was nothing special for us, not a subject worthy of mention. Besides, we were undertaking the same farm work and labor that ordinary peasants would do. How could we not eat the same meal that those peasants were having? If we could not eat the foods produced locally, how could we go out to the corners [of Manchukuo] to serve the country?⁴⁶³

This passage reveals that the student body regarded equality as essential to their lived experiment of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo." Equally notable is Li's emphasis on the spontaneity in the creation of the equal meal system. If we take Li's words at face value, the students of the 1st entering class of Kendai were

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, 11–12. “当時我々は学生が共同生活をする以上、同じものを食べるのは当然なことであるとした。・・・我々は元々特別なこととは見ていなかったし、提言に値しない問題であると考えていた。況んや我々が受けた農訓やその労働作業は農民の作業と異ならないのに、何で一般農民の食べる食糧が食べられない訳があるだろうか。当地産出の食糧が食べられずに、如何にして地方に出て服務できるだろうか。”

genuinely committed to the vision of harmonious relationships on the basis of equality as well as determined to serve Manchukuo.

During the course of his study at Kendai, Li developed close relationships with some of the Japanese faculty members and others who supported Ishiwara Kanji's vision of East Asian League. As discussed in Chapter I, Ishiwara advocated the creation of a Pan-Asian political alliance to counter the threat coming from the West. Associate Professor Tagawa Hiroaki was one such Japanese intellectual with whom Li established genuine trust. During the summer break of 1941, Li and two of his classmates visited Tagawa in Chengdu, a southwestern prefecture of Manchukuo. During their stay, Tagawa asked Li to read the manuscript of his article for feedback. Tagawa took Li to a café that was beyond the reach of the Japanese military so that they could freely exchange opinions. While not remembering details, Li recalls the main point of the article was to call for the creation of a new order in East Asia. In their long discussion, Li made remarks on two points. First, Tagawa's article failed to understand that Chinese communists' Eight Route Army was fighting against the Japanese "...not just for communism but also for the survival of the nation..."⁴⁶⁴ Second, Li thought discussing lofty ideals at that time was not timely. This second remark appeared to have derived from his observation of the harsh living condition of peasants in Chengdu under the Japanese rule. Drawing from a story of Mongolian conquest of China in the thirteenth century, he shared a passage: "if one does not follow the way of morality, how could he discuss the Mandate of Heaven?"⁴⁶⁵ Here, Li clearly refers to the contradiction between

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 34. "... "共産革命" のためのみに戦っているわけではなく、民族の生存のために懸命であり..."

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 34. "人倫を知らずして天命を知るや"

the Japanese authorities' words and deeds. It is remarkable that Li could feel at liberty to share with his Japanese teacher such direct criticisms about Japan's rule. He also notes that Tagawa, while seeming disappointed a little, sympathized with the passage that Li shared. This episode shows an example of one characteristic of Kendai, which Li terms as “*shitei kyūgaku* (mentor and disciple learning together).”⁴⁶⁶

By the time the arrest of a number of Kendai's Chinese students shook the campus in 1941 and 1942, Li had developed a clear understanding of what “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” meant for Kendai students. Among Li's eight *juku*-mates, three were taken by the military police. When the remaining students talked about this incident, Li told them: “this isn't a personal problem of those who were arrested. It's a problem that we together have to solve... Because so much unjust exists in the society outside [Kendai], we must make even greater efforts to make our ideal [of harmonious relationships] a reality.”⁴⁶⁷ Li's *juku*-mates agreed with him, he notes. Li believed that creating “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” required two steps. First, “one must recognize his own national identity...”⁴⁶⁸ Then, “one must be able to put himself in the shoes of others...”⁴⁶⁹ Through this process, if there emerged a mutual understanding, Li believed, that is called the “true harmony of peoples of different

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 11. “師弟求学”

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 36. “この事件は彼ら個人個人の問題ではなく、我々が共同して負わなければならない問題である。...外の一般社会には多くの不公平な現象が存在しているので、我々学生は更に努力して理想を実践しなければならない。”

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 36. “民族自覚を自分の中に認識し...”

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 36–37. “他民族と相互の立場を替えて考慮すること...”

nationalities.”⁴⁷⁰ In that sense, it appears that this Pan-Asianist ideal was not far from a reality at least from Li’s perspective. For, he states, this incident resulted in “deeper friendship among [Kendai’s] students,” which implies that the students were able to share their feelings about the incident and reach some understanding regardless of their different nationalities.⁴⁷¹

At the same time, Li recognized that Kendai students were increasingly disappointed at the world surrounding them. From his perspective, Ishiwara’s vision of creating an East Asian League through the cooperation among Japan, China, and Manchukuo had given hope to the students who were committed to Pan-Asianism. By the early 1940s, however, the drawn-out Sino–Japanese War and the Kwantung Army’s increasing interference with the Kendai administration swayed their determination. The situation worsened when Sakuta resigned from the position of Vice President, to be replaced by Suetaka Kamezō, a military man. Li describes the suffering that he believed was shared by Kendai students around that time as follows: “Even though the students of different nationalities felt deep friendship and understanding, they could not share the same goal. All they could do was to work for their own goals despite the fact that none of them could see a rosy future ahead of them.”⁴⁷²

While some students, especially non-Japanese, lost hope in the Pan-Asianist ideal that Kendai and Manchukuo were to represent, Li personally continued to set his mind on

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 37. “真正の民族協和”

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 37. “同窓学生の友誼は返って深まった。”

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*, 45. “各民族の同窓生は仮令相互に深い友情と理解を持っていても、同一の目標に向かって奮闘できず、やむを得ず各自の前途に向かって進むよりほかになく、しかもその前途は明るくて平坦ではない。”

working for it. The following episode shows Li's disillusionment with the new Vice President Suetaka and Li's determination to work for the nation-building of Manchukuo. In November 1942, Suetaka invited all students of the 1st entering class, two at a time, to his residence to stay with him for one day. Through this one-day live-in guidance, Suetaka hoped to personally train the students who were scheduled to graduate from Kendai the following year. When Li and his Japanese classmate Ōsawa Chōtarō were having dinner with Suetaka, he asked the two students' career plans after graduation. Assuming that Li wanted to return to Taiwan, Suetaka said that if Li would like, he "could write a recommendation letter to the military commander" in Taiwan.⁴⁷³ Li replied without a moment's pause: "I do not wish to return [to Taiwan]. Taiwan does not need us because there are many talents. By contrast, here [in Manchukuo] many more works must be done, and there is not enough manpower."⁴⁷⁴ Clearly, Suetaka's suggestion came from his goodwill. However, it disappointed Li because he thought Suetaka "failed to understand the primary purpose of Kendai's foundation," which was to foster a generation of leaders who would make Manchukuo a Pan-Asian utopia.⁴⁷⁵ By another Kendai professor, a similar recommendation was made for Li and his Taiwanese classmate after they graduated from Kendai. At that time, too, they rejected the offer for the same reason.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*, 45. "軍司令官に推薦状を書いてあげるが。"

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 45. "帰りたいとは思っていません。台湾には人材も多く、我々が帰ることを必要としていません。当地は却ってすることが多く、人も足りません。"

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 45. "建国大学創立の本意を理解していない。"

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 52. At that time, the recommendation was made by Kendai's honorary professor and one of the "four professors" who led the planning of Kendai, Hiraizumi Kiyoshi. For more on Hiraizumi, see Chapter I.

Indeed, Li planned to stay in Manchukuo and work for the development of rural villages. As early as the winter of 1940, he had already set his mind at this plan. When he had a chance to talk with Tsuji Masanobu, Ishiwara Kanji's right-hand man who had contributed to the founding of Kendai, Li described his career plan to Tsuji as follows. He hoped to work at one of the youth training centers built in every prefecture of Manchukuo. "[T]ogether with peasants there," Li wished to "raise the level of education and industry so that [Manchukuo's] rural villages could catch up with those in Taiwan and Japan as quickly as possible."⁴⁷⁷ As we have seen, this plan is remarkably different from the kind of career path that Li had envisioned before moving to Manchukuo. The two years of school life at Kendai changed Li's focus from climbing up the social ladder to going into the bottom of the society to work for lofty ideals. Furthermore, Li even suggested to Tsuji that all Kendai graduates should work at the youth training centers to cover all 167 locations throughout Manchukuo.⁴⁷⁸ In the fall of 1942 when Suetaka offered him a helping hand that could open a way for Li to get into the elite group of the colonial hierarchy in Taiwan, this option no longer interested him.

Nonetheless, Li took up a position at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Manchukuo's State Council after completing the ten-month training course at Daidō Gakuin which was required of all Kendai graduates. The story behind this change of mind shows Li's dedication to the ideal of Pan-Asianism. From late May to early June, 1943, right before Kendai held its first graduation ceremony, the former Vice President Sakuta Sōichi visited Kendai to deliver special lectures. At that time, Sakuta summoned

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 29–30. “農民と共に、農村の教育と産業の水準を高め、なるべく早く台湾や日本の農村に追いつくことが私の願いです。”

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 28–29.

Li to have a secret talk. According to Li, Sakuta told him that one of the Kendai faculty, Professor Nakayama Yū, and the aforementioned Tsuji Masanobu were currently in Nanjing, China. Then, Sakuta asked if Li would like to join them after graduating from Kendai. Although Sakuta did not specify what tasks Nakayama and Tsuji were undertaking, Li could immediately understand that they were working to find a way to achieve China–Japan peace.⁴⁷⁹ For, Nakayama, Tsuji, and Sakuta all supported Ishiwara Kanji’s vision of East Asian League. Li responded to Sakuta that he wanted to go to Nanjing. Li explains in his memoir that he could “... sacrifice anything for the withdrawal of Japanese troops from the continent and complete peace” between China and Japan.⁴⁸⁰ He regretted that he would not be able to dedicate his life for the rural development of Manchukuo as he had planned; however, he could count on his “classmates who would be working [at the youth training centers] in all prefectures along the Great Wall.”⁴⁸¹ What this story reveals is that Li was strongly committed to the type of Pan-Asianism that Ishiwara advocated—the idea that the cooperation among Japan, China, and Manchukuo was the key to creating an East Asian League and that the development of Manchukuo would provide a model for the new order.

Unfortunately, the effort of Nakayama and Tsuji in Nanjing was not leading to any positive result. Li spent half a year doing office work at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Shinkyō and waited for his turn to move to Nanjing. That chance never arrived.

⁴⁷⁹ Nanjing, the capital of the Republic of China until 1937, was now the headquarter of Wang Jingwei’s regime that were supported by the Japanese Empire.

⁴⁸⁰ Shuiqing Li, 46. “日本軍が若し大陸からの撤収ができ全面和平が獲得できたら、私はどんな犠牲でも惜しくはない・・・”

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 46. “長城沿いの各県には均しく私の同窓同級生が服務している。”

By the mid-1944, Li grew frustrated, feeling that he alone was not doing any meaningful work when most of his Japanese classmates had been drafted and his non-Japanese friends were engaging in the rural development of Manchukuo. After consulting a few of Kendai's Japanese faculty members who believed in the vision of East Asian League, Li quitted his job and applied for a position at youth training centers. When he was notified of an opening at Gannan Prefecture in Qiqihaer City, Li was reluctant to take up that position because the place was already "abundant in agricultural crops..." and he "...wanted to go to a peripheral region that was full of challenges."⁴⁸²

In February 1945, Li finally landed the job of his dreams, a manager of the youth training center at Weichang Prefecture in Rehe Province. Located in the southwestern frontier of Manchukuo, the region was important in defending against the Chinese communist forces. Weichang was a designated cultivation area for opium poppies, yielding 75% of all opium produced in Manchukuo.⁴⁸³ When Li arrived, there were not only many uneducated and even illiterate young men but also opium addicts throughout the prefecture. The youth center, which was administered under *kyōwa kai* (Concordia Association), was to provide these rural young men with basic education and training so that they would become leading members of the Manchukuo Imperial Army or the Labor Service Corps in that region.⁴⁸⁴ In his memoir, Li admits that such youth training was part

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*, 51. “農産物豊かな...”; “多事多難な辺境地帯にどうしても行きたい...”

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁴⁸⁴ On May 27, 1942, the Manchukuo government implemented the Labor Service Act, which required all men between the age 21 and 23 who were not serving the military to fulfill the labor service for twelve months. Later, the age limit was extended to 30, and the duration of service was increased to three years. For more on Manchukuo's Labor Service Corps, see Min Zheng “Rōmu shin taisei [the new labor system],” in *Nicchū kyōdō kenkyū: Manshūkoku towa nandattanoka [collaborative research by Japan and China: what was Manchukuo?]* Edited by Shokuminchi bunka gakkai (Tokyo: shōgakkai, 2008), 140–150, 142–143.

of the Japanese effort of mobilizing people for the war. At the same time, however, Li writes that he believed in the potential of its long-term impact—“bringing education to the mass and encouraging the local people to unite... so that they would be able to create a modern state.”⁴⁸⁵

As a manager and an instructor at the youth training center, Li modeled himself after the Kendai faculty members whom he respected. For instance, even though he received rationed foods that were of higher quality compared to those allotted to his students, he ate the same meals as his students. Just as Kendai’s *jukutō* did, Li lived in the dormitories together with his students.⁴⁸⁶ When he realized that the rationed foods were not enough, Li and his students transformed a tract of unused land into a vegetable garden and grew potatoes and other vegetables that could be served as additional dishes. This project, too, Li states, was modeled after Kendai’s agricultural training. Li’s students thus cultivated vegetables as part of their training.⁴⁸⁷

Li was as committed to his students’ education and wellbeing as his own mentors at Kendai. He made an exception to admit an illiterate young man, Jiang Huai, on the condition that Jiang would master basic reading and writing skills through Li’s one-on-one tutoring for one hour each night after everyone goes to sleep. By the end of the training program, Jiang was selected as one of the most capable trainees to form a Youth Action Group (*seinen kōdō tai*), whose tasks we do not know.⁴⁸⁸ Li also dedicated his

⁴⁸⁵ Shuiqing Li, 55. “全民教育及び郷土住民の団結の基礎と成しえる...現代化国家を開くことができる。”

⁴⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 58, 67.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 58–59.

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 57, 59.

time and effort to the rehabilitation of his trainees who were addicted to opium. Until they overcame addiction, Li would not let them return home.⁴⁸⁹ Thus, a young man from Taiwan, who once aspired to work his way up to the elite, found himself busy working together with Manchukuo's rural youths. He was not just fulfilling his duties; he was taking great initiative at work, which he believed would lead to the educational and industrial development of that rural region.

Li's endeavor towards Manchukuo's nation-building was terminated when Japan capitulated and Manchukuo collapsed in August 1945. Although Soviet Union's troops crossed the Manchukuo borders on August 9, the news did not reach Li in the rural village. It was as late as August 15 that Li heard a rumor of a massive Soviet invasion and of its conquest of Harbin, an important city 170 miles north of Shinkyō. On the following day, Li visited the Concordia Association's prefectural headquarter and met Japanese General Manager whom Li recalls as Yokose. Yokose did not share with Li the important news about Japan's surrender. Instead, he ordered Li to have the Youth Action Group destroy the Weichang Airport and public roads to obstruct Soviet troops' advance. Even though Li still did not know of Japan's capitulation at the time, he felt that the situation was much worse than he had imagined. After returning to the training center and receiving Yokose's order to meet him at the headquarters once again, Li and one of his subordinates who had helped Li manage the training center decided to hide themselves from the Japanese supervisors. Thus, Li's work for the dream of an East Asian League abruptly fell apart leaving him a bitter feeling towards his Japanese supervisor who betrayed him at the crucial moment. What followed was an eight-month journey that

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 67.

finally brought him home in Taiwan in April 1946. He remembers this trip as an arduous one in which he had to hide himself from not only Japanese but also Soviet troops and Chinese communists.

Conclusion

In terms of Japan's policy and official pronouncements, Pan-Asianism found different expressions in formal colonies, Korea and Taiwan, on one hand, and in an informal colony, Manchukuo, on the other. In the former, the colonial authorities implemented assimilation policy, claiming to make the local population the same as the Japanese. By contrast, the Manchukuo government sought to create a unity of distinct nationalities under the slogan of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo." Thus, within the Japanese Empire, one finds different models of Pan-Asianism expressed in official terms.

This difference seems to have shaped the experiences of Kendai's Korean and Taiwanese students in three ways. First, the difference within the empire presented them options of staying in their home countries or moving to a new place. They had the privilege of choosing between these options because they had been top students at their respective middle schools. As seen above, reasons for deciding to enroll at Kendai differed among individual students. For many of them, Kendai's prestige, generous financial aids, and the promise of secure employment after graduation presented practical appeals. For others, the vision of "harmony among various peoples residing in

Manchukuo” upheld by Kendai aroused curiosity. Whichever it was, they made a conscious choice on their own volition when moving to Manchukuo to attend Kendai.

Second, the differing expressions of Pan-Asianism in formal colonies and Manchukuo complicated their sense of identity. In formal colonies, they grew up being told that they were Japan’s imperial citizens while simultaneously being discriminated in the colonial school system. After moving to Manchukuo, although they were officially “Japanese,” the Manchukuo society and especially the Kendai community often regarded them as representing Korean or Taiwanese nations. Again, they had choice of how they wished to identify themselves. Indeed, the former Korean students’ memoirs reveal that their opinions were divided between *naisen ittai* and national independence. Thus, unlike former Chinese students’ recollections, Korean alumni’s accounts show a variety of views even on the sensitive matters as their national identity.

Third, Manchukuo’s stated promise to encourage harmonious co-existence of diverse peoples created a room for idealists to act on the egalitarian version of Pan-Asianism. The idealistic part of Kendai such as the equal meal system and some open-minded Japanese faculty and classmates appeared quite foreign to the students from formal colonies. Essays written by Kendai’s former Korean and Taiwanese students show that such commitment to equality was welcomed by many of these students. Some authors even express enthusiastic support, which we cannot find in the Chinese alumni’s recollections. Li Shuqing’s experience is a prime example of genuine support for Pan-Asianism expressed by Kendai’s non-Japanese students. As seen above, Li truly embraced the Pan-Asianist dream of creating an East Asian League.

At the same time, these students' experiences show that Kendai and Manchukuo's proclamations of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo" never fully convinced them that Japan's colonial relationship with Korea and Taiwan did not matter in that ostensibly an independent state. Despite the stated ideals, segregation and discrimination prevailed in the Manchukuo society outside the Kendai campus. In addition, the opportunities of close interactions within the diverse student body and beyond the campus influenced them to identify more strongly with their own nations. When Korean students finally decided to volunteer for military service, they did so for the sake of Korean nation and not for the Japanese Empire. Even Li, who had become a strong supporter of Ishiwara's vision of an East Asian League, kept in his mind that he was representing the Taiwanese and that his personal achievements would bring honor to Taiwan. In that sense, these students continued to pursue different dreams while participating in Kendai's experiment of Pan-Asianist education.

CHAPTER IV

LEARNING TO BECOME “CHINESE” AT A JAPANESE SCHOOL: CHINESE STUDENTS’ EXPERIENCES AT KENKOKU UNIVERSITY

Today in China, the institution whose official name in Japanese was and still is *Kenkoku daigaku*, Nation Building University, is officially known as *Weiman jianguo daxue*, Bogus Manchukuo Nation Building University. While a number of Kendai Japanese alumni have published full length memoirs, and the Japan-based alumni association and class organizations have collected short essays from their members based on their experiences as students since the late 1940s, very few writings by Chinese alumni appeared until the late 1990s. For this reason, former Chinese students’ perspectives are underrepresented in the existing retrospective literature as well as in a few academic works published in Japan.⁴⁹⁰ In 1997, six decades after the founding of Kenkoku University, fifty-eight Chinese alumni published the first collection of recollections to appear in print in the People’s Republic of China (PRC), *Huiyi wei man jian guo da xue* [*remembering Bogus Manchukuo Nation Building University*] (hereafter *Huiyi*). This collection, although produced under undeniable political constraints, makes

⁴⁹⁰ Eriko Miyazawa’s *Kenkoku Daigaku to minzoku kyōwa* [*Nation Building University and the ideal of ethnic harmony*] (Tokyo: Kazama shobo, 1997) is the first academic research that solely focuses on Kendai. While this is a foundational work, non-Japanese students’ perspectives are underrepresented for an understandable reason that she did not have access to the sources in the 1990s. Still, some information she provides based on her interviews with the former Chinese students are valuable sources. Shishida Fumiaki’s *Budō no kyōikuryoku: manshūkoku kenkoku daigaku ni okeru budō kyōiku* [*The educational value of Japanese budō (martial arts): the budō training at Kenkoku University in Manchukuo*] (Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Senta, 2005) incorporates more sources about non-Japanese students. However, his research focus is limited to the martial arts training at Kendai.

an invaluable contribution to the research archive.⁴⁹¹ This chapter attempts to recover the experiences of Chinese students who attended Kendai by mining these source materials.⁴⁹² The second source of published memoirs of Chinese students is two short essays that appeared in *Hakki [Eight flags]* published in Japan in 1985.⁴⁹³ Authored by two of the few former Chinese students who responded to the request of the Japanese alumni group to contribute to their volume, these essays present a different perspective from those in *Huiyi*. I first investigate the Chinese students' experiences at Kendai based on the essays written and published in *Huiyi*. In the final section, I will introduce the recollections that appeared in *Hakki* in Japanese for purposes of comparison.

While historical memory is an issue in all memoirs, the recollections written by former Kendai Chinese students and published in China present the particular problem of how to read narratives produced under political constraints. After Japan's defeat in 1945 and after the Chinese Communist Party's victory in 1949 and establishment of the PRC, former Chinese students at Kendai faced varying degrees of political persecution as *hanjian*, or national traitor, due to Kendai's close association with Japanese imperialism

⁴⁹¹ In addition to the Chinese anthology *Huiyi*, there is another essay that was written and published in Chinese in the PRC: Diqian Liu, "Wo suo liaojie de weiman jianguo daxue [what I know about Bogus Manchukuo Kenkoku University]," (1985), republished in Chunxi Shuikou, "*Jianguo daxue*" de huanying [*The illusion at "Kenkoku University"*], Trans. Bingyue Dong (Beijing: Kunlun chubanshe, 2004), 146–195. This essay is similar to *Huiyi* memoirs in the sense that it was written by a former Chinese student and published in Chinese as part of a Chinese city government's publication. I will use this essay to supplement my analysis of Chinese-language memoirs.

⁴⁹² As discussed in Chapter I, the term "Chinese" is not entirely accurate because the Chinese-speaking students enrolled at Kendai consisted of not only ethnic Han Chinese but also ethnic minorities such as Manchu and Hui and sometimes Mongolians. However, it is difficult to distinguish Manchu and Hui from Han Chinese. It appears that the school administration and Japanese faculty and students did not differentiate these Chinese-speaking students by their ethnicities. In this chapter, I will use the term "Chinese" to refer to those Chinese-speaking students.

⁴⁹³ *Hakki [Eight flags]*, (Kendai seventh and eighth classes' bulletin no. 8). ed. Yoshihisa Ueda et al, 1985.

in China. Nevertheless, the improvement in relations between Japan and the PRC beginning in the 1980s created an opening. In 1995, seventeen former Chinese students of Kendai established an editorial committee, sponsored by the Changchun City Government's Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee, to solicit and publish recollections of the Chinese Kendai alumni. In Changchun, which used to be the capital of Manchukuo, Shinkyō, quite many former Chinese students resided in the 1990s.⁴⁹⁴ In the preface, the editors state that the project commenced in commemoration of the “fiftieth anniversary of the end of Anti-Fascist war and China's Anti-Japanese War of Resistance.”⁴⁹⁵ Recognizing that Kendai itself was the “product of and historical evidence of Japanese political and cultural invasion in China,” the editors claim that recording their experiences of Kendai “will benefit patriotic education of youths today and in the future.”⁴⁹⁶ As seen in the preface, the editors and authors of the *Huiyi* collection were actually conscious of the political baggage of having been students at Kendai. Even after allowing for the ideological and political constraints of the production, however, these essays show how the Chinese students' experiences diverged from Kendai's official goal of instilling Pan-Asianism as the dominant political consciousness and forging a community of like-minded students and instructors.

⁴⁹⁴ The alumni association in Japan stayed in contact with 54 former Chinese students living in Changchun City as of 2003. *Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai meibo [Kenkoku University Alumni Association Roster]* (Tokyo: Kenkoku University Alumni Association, 2003).

⁴⁹⁵ “Qianyan [Preface],” in *Huiyi wei man jian guo da xue [Remembering Bogus Manchukuo Nation Building University]* (Changchun: Changchun City Government's Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee, Historical Record Committee, 1997).

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

**Going to the Colonizers' School:
Motives for Applying to Kendai
and Their Arrivals on Campus**

Between 1938 and 1945, about 520 Chinese students attended Kendai.⁴⁹⁷ Except for a few who were from China proper, all of them came from various provinces throughout Manchukuo and the Kwantung Leased Territory.⁴⁹⁸ Almost all of them graduated from National Higher School (*kokumin kōtō gakkō*), which taught pupils of thirteen to seventeen years of age who were non-Japanese residents of Manchukuo.⁴⁹⁹ It is important to keep in mind that they attended Kendai on their own volition. These young Chinese students chose to apply to the school, passed highly competitive entrance exams, and received hearty congratulations from their families and friends when they entered Kendai. Historian Eriko Miyazawa highlights the impoverished family background of some of the former Chinese students. Indeed, many of the essays published in *Huiyi* concur with that view. Nonetheless, it is also important to note that some were from well-to-do families of the Chinese migrant settlers in the Manchurian region.⁵⁰⁰ What drove these Chinese teenagers to apply to a university that was

⁴⁹⁷ Shize Liu, “weiman jianguo daxue jishu [The summary of Bogus Manchukuo Nation Building University],” in *Huiyi*, 28–41, 28. He includes Mongolians, Manchu, and Hui in this number.

⁴⁹⁸ “Kenkoku Daigaku yōran [Directory of Kenkoku University]” (Shinkyō: Kenkoku daigaku kenkyūin, 1941).

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.* This is based on the education system of Manchukuo after 1938.

⁵⁰⁰ Due to the wealthy backgrounds, some of Kendai’s Chinese alumni became the targets of political persecution later under the CCP.

established by the country, Japan, which most Chinese at the time denounced as imperialist aggressors? Japanese imperialists who were at war with China?

First, Kendai's generous scholarship attracted students from poor families. Tuition and living expenses were paid in full by the Manchukuo's government. Of twenty other institutions of higher education in Manchukuo as of 1939, twelve national universities and a normal university offered full tuition scholarships to all enrolled students.⁵⁰¹ However, Kendai's former Chinese students stress the particular generosity of Kendai's scholarship. In addition to all necessities such as "...uniforms, caps..., a pair of leather shoes and sneakers..., gloves, a lunch box, a water bottle, a school bag, (and) school supplies," students received monthly allowances of five yen.⁵⁰² Medical fees were waived, too.⁵⁰³ Second, Kendai's six years' course of study, longer than the three- to four- year programs at other colleges in Manchukuo, held out the promise of a more complete education. Indeed, Kendai and Shinkyō University of Law and Politics were the only general universities; all other national universities in Manchukuo were to provide technical education.⁵⁰⁴ Third, Kendai offered a secure career path to its graduates. After a three-month-period of training at the Daidō Gakuin, Manchukuo's government clerk training institution, all graduates were promised positions in state or local governments or in the Kyōwakai (Concordia Association), a state-sponsored civil organization dedicated

⁵⁰¹ Shishida, 87–88.

⁵⁰² Liu Diqian, 155. Five yen back then is equivalent of \$20.00 to \$50.00. The currency in Manchukuo had the same value as that of Japan. For the purpose of comparison, a Japanese official who worked for the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in Tokyo earned a monthly salary of 200–300 yen in 1938. Cited in Yamamuro, *Manchuria Under Japanese Dominion*, 170.

⁵⁰³ Miyazawa, 191 and 182; Liu Diqian, 155.

⁵⁰⁴ Shishida, 88.

to the principle of creating “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” The guaranteed government-related jobs must have been particularly appealing to the young Chinese residents of Manchukuo considering the fact that important white-collar jobs tended to be dominated by the Japanese residents. Finally, as I will show below, Kendai’s reputed commitment to the ideal of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo” seemed to have had a measure of appeal to Chinese applicants.

The competitiveness of Kendai’s entrance exams, rather than deterring applicants, was an added incentive. Many of the *Huiyi* entries mention it. The entrance examination consisted of written exams on math, geography, history, composition, and Japanese language fluency, a physical exam, and interviews.⁵⁰⁵ The interviews were conducted in both Chinese and Japanese to test applicants’ skills in Japanese, which was Kendai’s language of instruction. The exams were especially competitive in the early years. Yan Tingqiao (1st entering class, matriculated in 1938) recalls that “[he] was among the four who passed the exam out of two hundred applicants from Harbin Daiichi Middle School.”⁵⁰⁶

While noting the competitiveness of Kendai, the contributors to *Huiyi* rarely mention their desire to enter the school. If they write about their motives for applying to Kendai, they do so only in passing and stress that they became disappointed immediately after entering the school. Pei Rong (5th entering class, matriculated in 1942) begins his memoir by mentioning his “burning desire for learning” that led him to Kendai but was

⁵⁰⁵ *Manshūkoku kenkoku daigaku seito boshū kōkoku* [Official announcement of student recruitment for Kenkoku University in Manchukuo] (August 10, 1937) in Manzō Yuji, *Kenkoku daigaku nenpyō* [The chronological timetable of Kenkoku University in Manchukuo] (Tokyo: Kenkoku Daigaku Dosokai, 1981), 56–59.

⁵⁰⁶ Tingqiao Yan, “Weiman jianguo daxue shimou zhajiji [A general note on Bogus Manchukuo Nation Building University],” in *Huiyi*, 21–27, 23.

extinguished as soon as he arrived on campus.⁵⁰⁷ Zhang Wensheng (7th entering class, matriculated in 1944) states that he entered Kendai because it provided everything for free, but was immediately disheartened by the skimpy portions served at meals. By 1944 when Zhang matriculated, Kendai was also subject to food rationing.⁵⁰⁸

Yue Yishi (1st entering class, matriculated in 1938), whose motives for attending Kendai were similar to Zhang Wensheng's, writes at length about his subsequent disillusionment. First, he was shocked when the school provided students with a rifle along with school supplies. Second, the haughty attitudes of his Japanese classmates angered him. He writes, "both the sky and the earth (of Manchukuo) belong to China. How come the Japanese behave so arrogantly?!"⁵⁰⁹ He writes he did not interact with the Japanese students but hung out only with a few Chinese classmates. Third, rather than experiencing the integrated dormitory system called *juku* as a gesture toward the principle of harmonious relationships, he criticizes it as a tool to "keep the Chinese students under surveillance."⁵¹⁰ Finally, Yue claims that the language barrier further alienated him from Kendai education. He complains that much of the instruction was given in Japanese "...which [he] had no interest in learning..." and significantly impeded his studies.⁵¹¹ Considering the fact that all non-Japanese students had to pass highly competitive

⁵⁰⁷ Rong Pei, "Dushu yu fan dushu de huodong [The activities of reading books and the suppression of them]," in *Huiyi*, 243–248, 243.

⁵⁰⁸ Wensheng Zhang, "Jianda xianxiang [Kendai phenomenon]," in *Huiyi*, 264–267, 264.

⁵⁰⁹ Yishi Yue, "Wo likai jianda dao Chongqing [I left Kendai to go to Chongqing]," in *Huiyi*, 117–119, 118.

⁵¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹¹ Yishi Yue, 118.

entrance exams including Japanese language fluency, Yue's testimony raises a number of questions, including his desire to show that he was not a cultural traitor of China.

While these three *Huiyi* essays emphasize the authors' disillusionment with school life at Kendai, one former student admitted in his entry that Kendai's stated commitment to the equal treatment of all students had certain appeal. To emphasize the competitiveness of Kendai's entrance exams, Yu Jiaqi (1st entering class, matriculated in 1938) states that even the son of Kendai's President Zhang Jinghui failed the exams.⁵¹² Other authors agree that Kendai's entrance exams were known to be free from favoritism and class bias, which attracted some Chinese applicants. In addition, some authors mention their first meal on campus. All students were served rice mixed with sorghum as a staple diet, which is one example of Kendai's practice of egalitarianism, as described in Chapter III. The practice of absolute equality in meal servings starkly distinguished Kendai from the formal and informal patterns of Japanese privilege that prevailed outside the university that even the contributors to *Huiyi*, who tend to be critical about Japanese imperialism and Kendai mention it favorably.

Kendai Education and *Juku* Life

For many Chinese students, the heavily ideological education and the *juku* life that was filled with Japanese rituals were the sources of further disappointment with Kendai. Although Kendai administrators planned to invite prominent scholars and even revolutionary activists from around the world to join the faculty, their effort met with

⁵¹² Jiaqi Yu, "Weiman jianguo daxue ji qi pouxi [Analysis of Bogus Manchukuo Nation Building University]," in *Huiyi*, 1–20, 19.

mixed success, as previously discussed.⁵¹³ In the end, all but a small minority of the faculty members were Japanese.

Many Chinese students were dissatisfied with the imbalance in the faculty's nationalities, which appeared inconsistent with the school's stated commitment to the principle of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo." Gao Ke (8th entering class, matriculated in 1945) writes that "Japanese professors constituted 90 %" of the Kendai faculty.⁵¹⁴ According to the list of the courses that Yu Jiaqi (1st entering class, matriculated in 1938) took, non-Japanese faculty members typically taught relatively "dry" subjects such as mathematics, bookkeeping, and languages, while Japanese professors taught the more ideological courses.⁵¹⁵ As Gao's and Yu's accounts indicate, Japanese instructors continued to dominate the Kendai faculty throughout its short history from 1938 to 1945. In addition, *Huiyi* essays point out that the majority of the Japanese faculty advocated Japan-centered political views such as *kōdō* (imperial way) and *hakkō ichiu*, which literally means "eight corner of the world under one roof," a metaphor for Japan's imperial expansion in Asia and beyond. In Yan Defan's (1st entering class, matriculated in 1938) words, many of the Japanese professors were not independent thinkers and true intellectuals but "scholars in the service of Imperial

⁵¹³ For more on Kendai administration's effort to recruit non-Japanese scholars for the faculty see Chapter I.

⁵¹⁴ Ke Gao, "Weiman jianda fanman kangri huodong ji qi fazhan [The activities of anti-Manchukuo and anti-Japanese aggression and their development at Bogus Manchukuo Kendai]," in *Huiyi*, 86–116, 95.

⁵¹⁵ Jiaqi Yu, 12–13.

Japan.”⁵¹⁶ As we see in Chapter I, there is a good deal of truth to what may appear to be a blanket statement.

A number of the Chinese students reflecting on their experiences at Kendai not only criticize their Japanese teachers but also denounce those they regarded as traitors among non-Japanese faculty members. “*doufu zongli* (President bean curd)” and “*doufu jiang* (bean curd cooker)” were the epithets of ridicule that the Chinese students secretly applied to Kendai’s President Zhang Jinghui, who was so obsequious to the Japanese authorities as to appear emasculated, and had in fact once been a bean curd manufacturer. Zhang Jinghui was President in name only; all administrative authority was exercised by the Japanese Vice President Sakuta Sōichi, who was succeeded by Suetaka Kamezō in 1942.⁵¹⁷ One of the contributors to *Huiyi* goes so far as to denounce a Mongolian professor Gao Qiyuan as a traitor because he spoke disparagingly of *baihua*, the Chinese vernacular prose style that was the hallmark of Chinese Nationalist writers.⁵¹⁸

However, the authors direct most of their criticisms of the instruction they received at the Japanese faculty and the courses they taught. For instance, Liu Shize (5th entering class, matriculated in 1942) condemns the course devoted to expounding the theory of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo.” He recalls that the instruction was in fact all about “the superiority of the Yamato (Japanese) race” and was intended “to erase national consciousness of non-Japanese students, assimilate them, and

⁵¹⁶ Defan Yan, “Weiman jianda renwu sumiao [Sketch of people at Bogus Manchukuo Kendai],” in *Huiyi*, 56–62, 58.

⁵¹⁷ Cheng Chang, “Guanyu Zhang Jinghui he Weigao Guicang [About Zhang Jinghui and Suetaka Kamezō],” in *Huiyi*, 52–55, 52; Rong Pei, 244.

⁵¹⁸ Diqian Liu, 171.

consolidate the rule by the Yamato race.”⁵¹⁹ To Liu, such a hierarchical and Japan-centered vision of harmonious coexistence never made sense; on the contrary, it revealed the hypocrisy of Japan’s Pan-Asianism. Liu does not identify the professor by name, and there is a formulaic ring to his criticisms. Nevertheless, as we have seen the Japanese faculty themselves were divided on the crucial questions of Japan’s proper relationship to other countries of Asia.

Though few in number, some of the essays in *Huiyi* speak positively about certain Japanese instructors. After criticizing Sakuta Shōichi’s course on Manchukuo’s history at length, Pei Rong (5th entering class, matriculated in 1942) briefly mentions two Japanese teachers whom he liked. “Some Japanese instructors had a sense of righteousness. Mr. Itō who taught Japanese language and Mr. Takahashi who taught history were among them. In class, they at times spoke with sincerity that we Chinese students welcomed.”⁵²⁰ Without elaborating on the content of these instructors’ “sincere” sentiments, Pei quickly brings the thought to an end by noting that “of course, these teachers had to face Japanese authorities’ investigation and rebuke.”⁵²¹ Clearly, the author’s emphasis is on the undesirable consequence that the “sincere” teachers had to face, rather than what they said in class. By separating his favorite Japanese instructors from the Japanese authorities, Pei seems to imply that those “sincere” Japanese were also the victims of Japanese imperialism.

⁵¹⁹ Shize Liu, 35.

⁵²⁰ Rong Pei, 245.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*

Besides classes, the ideological aspects of the *juku* system were another source of Chinese students' complaints. The Kendai administration proudly regarded its *juku* system as the most explicit expression of school's commitment to the "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo." Sharing a large bedroom, eating the same meals, and waking up and going to bed at the same time, *juku*-mates were supposed to receive character-building discipline through inter-cultural interactions. Considering the fact that the reality of people's life outside of the Kendai campus was rife with discrimination and far from harmonious coexistence, the *juku* system must have surprised the Chinese students at first. One author of *Huiyi* even expresses his positive feeling, emphasizing the equality in all students' living condition.⁵²²

Nevertheless, the students soon discovered that daily life in the *juku* was filled with Japanese rituals and customs. As described in Chapter I, all students were forced to participate in daily flag-hoisting ceremonies of both Manchukuo's and Japanese flags. They also had to bow facing east to show respect for the Japanese Emperor, and the recitation of an ancient Japanese poem was required before breakfast. In addition, at the meeting convened in the *juku* at close of the school days, all students had to sit on the floor in Japanese *seiza* style, the proper seating posture in Japan, which non-Japanese students found painful. Under these conditions, even if Liu Shize's (5th entering class, matriculated in 1942) protestation of "spiritual enslavement" has a ring of ideological correctness, we can infer that many of the non-Japanese students felt this way at the time.⁵²³

⁵²² Tingqiao Yan, 23.

⁵²³ Shize Liu, 31.

At the same time that a number of the contributors to *Huiyi* criticize practices associated with Japanese imperialism, they insist that *juku*'s rituals and *jukutō* or *juku* headmasters never succeeded in controlling their minds. They uniformly insist that they merely went through the motions. When the Chinese students paid reverence while performing obligatory Shintō rites, they did so only to avoid the *jukutō*'s rebuke.⁵²⁴ When the *jukutō* was absent, some students appeared to skip out. For instance, Pei Rong reports failing to bow when he passed by a mausoleum dedicated to Japanese soldiers who died in the fighting that followed the Mukden Incident of 1931. He writes, "Why bow to those devils that had massacred Chinese people and were killed because of that? It did not make sense to us."⁵²⁵ The Kendai administration required students to pay reverence to Manchukuo's martyrs enshrined at this mausoleum, without taking into account that those 'Manchukuo's martyrs' were in fact Japan's army of invasion of Chinese territory. Unfortunately for Pei, *jukutō* Terada was hiding behind the mausoleum and caught and scolded Pei. That Pei provides the detail of being caught adds credibility to this story.

Liu Diqian (6th entering class, matriculated in 1943) describes how one *jukutō*'s behavior defied the *juku*'s stated commitment to the principle of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo." The Chinese students were not the only students to resist. Liu reports that his close friend Batubayar from Mongolia once told him about an exchange with *jukutō* Arata. Arata first said that the Qing Dynasty, whose royal family were Manchus, and the Japanese had historically treated the Mongolians well, and asked Batubayaer if he was having trouble at Kendai because Mongolians were

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁵²⁵ Rong Pei, 248.

minority on campus. Finally, Arata told him, “if the Chinese students treat you badly, tell me. I will support you.”⁵²⁶ We do not know if Arata was pretending to be concerned about Batubayaer’s situation or was genuinely concerned. In any case, Batubayaer must have doubted Arata’s intentions as he shared this incident with his Chinese friend. In his entry in *Huiyi*, Liu cites this as evidence that Arata attempted “to create rifts among students of different nationalities,” contrary to the principle of harmonious relationships of peoples of different backgrounds.⁵²⁷ From Liu’s perspective, the *juku* system’s real goal was “to train Japanese as colonists and make slaves out of ‘*mankei*’ students.”⁵²⁸ Yu Jiaqi (1st entering class, matriculated in 1938) is more sarcastic; he writes that the *juku* system actually aimed “to teach (non-Japanese students) the contradiction of the principle of ‘harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo’ through experiences.”⁵²⁹ Here, Yu’s use of the word “contradiction” refers to the unequal power relationship of the ruler/the ruled, and the implication is that the ruled must learn to conform.

Becoming “Chinese”: Anti-Japanese Activities on Campus

Despite its stated adherence to the principle of “harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo,” Kendai’s regime appears to have failed in winning the hearts and minds of its Chinese students. Among the Chinese students who were enrolled at

⁵²⁶ Diqian Liu, 183.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid.*, 171. As discussed in Chapter I, the term ‘*mankei*’ was used confusingly. It generally referred to Chinese, Manchu, Mongolian, Hui, and Russian who resided in Manchukuo. In some cases, the term was used as a synonym of ‘Chinese.’

⁵²⁹ Jiaqi Yu, 4.

government-run colleges in Manchukuo, Kendai students actually constituted the largest number of “political criminals” or “thought criminals” arrested by the Kwantung military police for their anti-Japanese and anti-Manchukuo activities.⁵³⁰ The Kwantung military police originated in the Russo–Japanese War (1904–1905) when the military police was dispatched accompanying the Japanese troops. When Japan acquired the Kwantung Leased Territories and the South Manchurian Railway zones from Russia in 1905, the military police began to function not only as military police but also as civil police in the region. Eventually by the 1930s, its primary function became the liquidation of dissidents, which meant the purge of anti-Japanese activists in the context of Manchukuo politics. Together with the Manchukuo police, the Kwantung military police arrested at least 2,000 activists involved in the underground Chinese communist groups and anti-Japanese patriotic associations between 1935 and 1945. These mass arrests were followed by torture, execution, and sentencing of life term or long-term imprisonment.⁵³¹

Chinese Kendai students’ anti-Japanese activities, which often took the form of secret reading of progressive books, is the most frequently discussed subject in the memoirs published in China. While we should not be surprised that Chinese alumni’s memoirs exhibit this strong anti-Japanese tendency, the detailed accounts that they provide make their stories credible. The authors discuss their activities as evidence of their patriotism towards China. The essays in *Huiyi* collectively suggest that their experiences at Kendai made them awaken to their Chinese identity—a narrative that we

⁵³⁰ Diqian Liu, 150.

⁵³¹ For more on the Kwantung military police’s purge of political dissidents, see Maojie Li, “Chian kikan [the organizations for the public order],” 70–73, and “Chian no jittai [the reality of the maintenance of the public order],” 73–82 in *Nicchū kyōdō kenkyū: ‘Manshūkoku’ towa nandatta noka [The Chinese–Japanese collaborative research: what was ‘Manchukuo’?]*, Edited by Shokuminchi bunka gakkai (Tokyo: Shokuminchi bunka gakkai, 2008).

find in many of the former Korean students' recollections. In addition to the national identity, the Chinese authors claim that they were also learning to choose between political ideologies: Nationalist and Communist. It is important to note here that the rivalry between the Chinese Nationalist Party (Guomindang; GMD) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was deepening throughout the war even though the two had officially established a United Front to fight against their common enemy, Japanese imperialists in 1937. Keeping in mind the authors had a strong interest in affirming their patriotism in leftist terms, this section will describe the development of the anti-Japanese activities on campus. For this purpose, Gao Ke's (8th entering class, matriculated in 1945) article is illuminating because he writes about the anti-Japanese activities on campus based on not only his own experience but also the interviews with more than ten former Chinese students.

Their resistance stemmed from a shared sense of disillusionment and loss of purpose among the Chinese students of the first class as seen in the case of Yue Yishi (1st entering class, matriculated in 1938). After losing his passion for learning at Kendai and deciding not to socialize with his "arrogant" Japanese classmates, Yue and his close Chinese friends found some progressive books at a secondhand bookstore in town. Finding new joy in reading books by Lenin, Marx, and Japanese Marxist Kawakami Hajime, they secretly began circulating them among Chinese classmates. He and his friends often took walks after dinner to talk about books and current events.⁵³² In this way, the Chinese students of the first three classes spontaneously formed small reading groups. Until 1941, they encountered few obstacles because Kendai, under Vice President Sakuta

⁵³² Yishi Yue, 118–119.

Shōichi's leadership, encouraged its students to read a wide variety of books, including leftist works, in order to learn how to criticize them. The Chinese students seized this opening to read many "progressive" books.

Meanwhile, their anti-Japanese activities began to branch out in the early 1940s. First, a few Chinese students established a connection with an off-campus secret society member, without knowing, or so they claim, that he belonged to the Nationalist organization. Acting on the agent's suggestion, the students launched an on-campus secret society *jianda tongzhi hui* (Kendai comrade group) in April 1940. Later in June 1941, they reorganized it as the *jianda ganshi hui* (Kendai executive group) to accommodate the expanding membership. The nineteen leaders also decided to publish a semiannual bulletin, the *Qianshao* (the outpost), which unfortunately did not survive to this day.⁵³³ In addition, during the school trip to Japan in November and December 1940, some Chinese students secretly met with Chinese study-abroad students in Tokyo and were inspired to join anti-Japanese activities in Manchukuo.⁵³⁴ Some Chinese students left school for Chongqing to join the GMD or for Yan'an to join the CCP.

These activities led to the arrest of a number of Chinese Kendai students. On March 2, 1942, Japanese military policemen came to the school and arrested thirteen students in the presence of *jukutō* Arata Shinji. Around the same time, two more students were arrested in their hometowns. Including the four students who had been arrested since November 1941 and an additional seven students who were caught in December 1943, Shinkyō Prison housed altogether twenty-two Kendai students as "political

⁵³³ Ke Gao, 93.

⁵³⁴ Tingqiao Yan, 24–25.

criminals.”⁵³⁵ The sentences given to them were severe, including life imprisonment for two students and five- to fifteen-year imprisonment for the others.⁵³⁶ Moreover, they had to endure the horrible condition of life in the prison, frequent beating by the guards, and torture. Two Kendai students died in prison. Wang Yongzhong (2nd entering class, matriculated in 1939) became insane after being tortured and died two days after he was severely beaten by a guard. Chai Chunran (1st entering class, matriculated in 1938) died in prison because the guards denied him medical treatment despite his high fever.⁵³⁷

The Kendai administration demanded the release of its students but to no avail. Some Kendai students, including their Japanese classmates, visited them in prison in a show of solidarity. According to Liu Diqian (6th entering class, matriculated in 1943), Vice President Sakuta visited his students and told them: “you did not commit a crime because you were morally corrupt. Rather, your willingness to sacrifice your lives for the sake of your nation brought you here to this prison.... I do not blame you but just hope that you will feel confident and proud.”⁵³⁸ This is a telling evidence of the expansive understanding of Pan-Asianism expressed by Kendai’s top leader. Sakuta praised the students for “sacrifi[cing] [their] lives for the sake of [their] nation,” by which he meant China. Even in 1942, after the outbreak of the war in the Pacific, we see that Kendai’s

⁵³⁵ The number of the arrested students are from two sources: Hong Zhao, “Wo de kongsu: 1954 nian shenpan riben zhanfan shi de kongsu shu [My accusation: my letter of appeal to the Japanese war crime tribunal in 1954],” in *Huiyi*, 154–163 (Originally published in 1989 as part of another Chinese publication vol. 8 of *Riben diguo zhuyi qinhua dangan ziliao xuanbian dibaquan: dongbei lici dacanan [The selected archival records about Japanese imperial encroachment in China: the tragedy in the Northeast]* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989).); and Miyazawa, 228 and 269.

⁵³⁶ Miyazawa, 228; and Ke Gao, 94.

⁵³⁷ Hong Zhao, 156.

⁵³⁸ Diqian Liu, 150.

highest Japanese administrator demonstrated a surprising level of commitment to the ideal of Pan-Asianism as a voluntary community. His praise of these Chinese students' nationalism seems to resonate with Ishiwara Kanji's vision of an East Asian League in which each nation spontaneously joins its hand while preserving its sovereignty. The fact that Liu quotes Sakuta in his account subverts the official editorial line of the Chinese anthology that Kendai was nothing more than a vehicle of Japanese imperialism. Indeed, Liu does not directly praise Sakuta, very likely because this might make him appear too sympathetic to an important Japanese official and expose him to accusations of being pro-Japanese.

These sympathetic words by Sakuta, as well as the fact that Japanese classmates visited them in prison, are not mentioned in Zhao Hong's (2nd entering class, matriculated in 1939) account of the incident. As one of the arrested students, all Zhao writes is that Sakuta visited them and "forced them to listen to his lecture," which implies that Sakuta was acting coercively and reprimanding the students.⁵³⁹ This may well be how Zhao actually remembered Sakuta's address to the students, which would be consistent with the official CCP's history of Manchukuo that regards all Japanese officials as agents of Japanese imperialism. The weight of evidence, however, suggests the contrary. Some former Korean and Taiwanese students write in their memoirs about the incident and Sakuta's actions. For them, this was one of the touching moments that convinced many of them of Sakuta's sincere commitment to Pan-Asianism and the genuine friendship of some of the Japanese students. Moreover, a Taiwanese alumnus Li Shuiqing writes about important fact about some of the arrested students. According to Li, three of the arrested

⁵³⁹ Hong Zhao, 162.

students had actively involved in the creation of Kendai's school song. Reflecting the ideal of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo," the students created lyrics in different languages, including Chinese. It was one of the arrested students who composed the Chinese lyrics for this school song. The Taiwanese alumnus explains that initially these Chinese students were genuinely committed to the ideal of harmonious coexistence, but by 1941, they became alienated by Japan's continuing expansionist policy in Asia.⁵⁴⁰ Understandably, none of the Chinese memoirs mention the fact of these students' early commitment to the strain of Pan-Asianism identified with Kendai; rather, they represent the arrested students as Chinese patriotic heroes.

After Sakuta resigned his position in June 1942 to take responsibility for the arrest of Kendai's Chinese students, the new Japanese Vice President Suetaka Kamezō tightened his hold on students' activities. Liu Shize (5th entering class, matriculated in 1942) recalls that with Suetaka in charge his *jukutō* intensified efforts to suppress the Chinese students' anti-Japanese activities. The *jukutō* would inspect students' possessions to confiscate progressive books and carry out "midnight surprise attacks" on students' rooms to discourage Chinese students from holding secret meetings.⁵⁴¹ When one Chinese student openly expressed his resistance by leaving a lecture about the inevitable victory of Japan's "sacred war" in the Pacific, spoke about the Allies' triumphs in the Pacific theater, and even urinated in front of the *kenkoku* (nation-building) shrine, the *jukutō* put this student under house-arrest in a dorm room for a month. When he showed

⁵⁴⁰ Shuiqing Li, 41–42.

⁵⁴¹ Shize Liu, 36–37.

no sign of regret, he was expelled.⁵⁴² Liu states, “this savage act of *jukutō* willfully insulting and persecuting Chinese students was not an isolated incident. Consequently, it ignited stronger anti-Japanese patriotism among the Chinese students.”⁵⁴³

Gao Ke (8th entering class, matriculated in 1945) agrees and argues that Kendai’s oppressive measures led to the radicalization of Chinese students who increasingly allied with the CCP over the GMD as their movement’s inspiration.⁵⁴⁴ They collected study materials by stealing Soviet journals from Kendai faculty’s research building, finding the Japanese translation of Chinese communists’ articles in Japanese journals, translating them into Chinese, and circulating them secretly among themselves.⁵⁴⁵ Meanwhile, upper class Chinese students recruited newly entering Chinese students, especially those from their hometowns, by holding secret lectures, passing along study materials, and teaching them how to sing revolutionary songs. Thus, Gao argues, the leftist-inspired anti-Japanese secret activities became a tradition on campus and prepared Chinese Kendai students to sacrifice themselves for the revolution once Japan capitulated and the civil war erupted between the GMD and the CCP. As we have seen before, the formulaic CCP rhetoric with which Gao concludes is laid over the well documented fact of nationalist resistance activities by some, if not the majority, of Kendai’s Chinese students.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*, 38.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁵⁴⁴ Ke Gao, 95.

⁵⁴⁵ Ke Gao, 88 and 96. The 5th entering class student who stole Soviet Union’s journals was severely scolded by *jukutō* and quit the school. The Japanese journals that they used were *Tōa* and *Tōa Junkan*. In terms of a direct action, some 4th entering class students distributed anti-Japanese fliers on streets of Manchukuo’s capital city, Shinkyō (Xingjing) and at some schools, which Gao claims had a big impact (Ke Gao, 101).

While many authors emphasize the unity among Chinese students in carrying out their anti-Japanese activities, they do so differently. Pei Rong (5th entering class, matriculated in 1942), Zhang Wensheng (7th entering class, matriculated in 1944), and Gu Xueqian (7th entering class, matriculated in 1944) recall their fond memories of time spent with their upper class Chinese students, *laodage*, or older brothers, whom they credit with awakening their Chinese national consciousness.⁵⁴⁶ Even after graduating in June 1944, the several graduates of the class entering in 1939 visited the underclassmen to hold lectures.⁵⁴⁷ Moreover, we learn from Wang Yeping (8th entering class, matriculated in 1945) that some non-Chinese students shared the anti-Japanese sentiment. Kim Yong-Hui (Korean), Ba Tu (Mongolian), and Tu Nanshan (Taiwanese) often joined Chinese students' secret meetings at the storehouse.⁵⁴⁸ While Gao highlights the role that the secret organization played in these activities, Zhang claims that it was an “organization without a formal structure.”⁵⁴⁹ To him, it was never clear who the organization's leaders were and who among Kendai students were actually members. By so stating, Zhang seems to underline the spontaneity of the anti-Japanese activities at Kendai and to imply that students came and went at will. On the other hand, it may have been that the organization's leaders concealed their identity for fear of arrest.

⁵⁴⁶ Rong Pei, 243; Wensheng Zhang, 265; and Xueqian Gu, “Shenghuo zai minzu maodun zhi zhong [Living under the paradox of ‘harmony among various peoples residing in manchukuo’],” in *Huiyi*, 268–273, 270.

⁵⁴⁷ Ke Gao, 106.

⁵⁴⁸ Yeping Wang, “Chongpo laolong ren niao fei [Quickly breaking the prison, birds flew away],” in *Huiyi*, 77–85, 78–79.

⁵⁴⁹ Wensheng Zhang, 267.

One commonality evident in the entries in *Huiyi* is the authors' insistence on their own leftist affiliations. Although some of the contributors mention that there were Chinese students at Kendai who were influenced by GMD ideas, understandably, none states that he himself was on side of the Nationalist government.⁵⁵⁰ First, Liu Shize (5th entering class, matriculated in 1942) cites the high enrollment of Chinese students in Russian language courses as the evidence of their progressive political thought, where "progressive" was shorthand for Marxism.⁵⁵¹ Second, in explaining what he learned from these texts, Pei Rong (5th entering class, matriculated in 1942) offers his understanding of the foundations of a harmonious society, which clearly challenges the traditional Confucian hierarchical vision of social harmony preached by Japanese professors.

People should be equal, and the age of Great Harmony should come. Only when the poor, who constitute the majority of the population, rise up, can there be equality and the world can gradually move to the direction of the Great Harmony.⁵⁵²

Pei thus suggests class struggle as the path toward the achievement of the ideal of the Great Harmony, a formulation which represents a blending of Confucian and Marxist theories. Then he adds, "from this type of superficial idea, I gradually built up the correct philosophy and worldview, which guided me to the path of revolution."⁵⁵³ While there is an obvious CCP cast to this last sentence, it is easy to surmise that the alienation that

⁵⁵⁰ Between 1927 and 1937, the Republic of China under the GMD (Nationalist Party) had its government in Nanjing. After the Japanese troops conquered the city in December 1937, in the event commonly known as the Nanjing Massacre or Rape of Nanking, the GMD leaders fled to Chongqing and established their new headquarter there. Meanwhile, Chinese politician Wang Jingwei established a new regime in Nanjing in March 1940, sponsored by Japan. Because of his collaboration with the Japanese and his career in the Nanjing regime that proclaimed Pan-Asianism as one of its founding principles, Wang was and still is recognized as a national traitor in China.

⁵⁵¹ Shize Liu, 33.

⁵⁵² Rong Pei, 246.

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*

some of the Chinese students experienced at Kendai made them receptive to the basic equalitarian tenets of Marxism.

Third, the contributors to *Huiyi* attribute the arrests of Chinese Kendai students to the so-called December Thirtieth Incident, in which the military police rounded up the communist secret societies in Manchukuo in late 1941. However, this link is questionable. Recent research shows that more Chinese Kendai students were involved with the GMD-led off-campus organizations than with the ones led by Communists.⁵⁵⁴ One of the essays in *Huiyi* suggests—perhaps inadvertently—that this may have been the case. Yan Tingqiao (1st entering class, matriculated in 1938) states that only after graduating from Kendai in 1943, did he learn about the Communist Eight Route Army, its guerrilla activities against the Japanese, and Mao Zedong’s theory of New Democracy.⁵⁵⁵ Unless Yan’s experience was atypical, his admission implies either that Kendai’s Chinese students’ anti-Japanese activities did not have much communication with off-campus Communist organizations or that he was out of the loop of the campus anti-Japanese activities. It seems likely that Kendai students whose daily lives were somewhat isolated from society at large were not in fact aware of the extent of the GMD–CCP divide. It is important to recall in this regard that the GMD and the CCP formally entered into a United Front for the War of Resistance against Japan in 1936, and both championed the cause of patriotic resistance against Japanese aggression. Undoubtedly, many Kendai

⁵⁵⁴ For more on this new interpretation, see Hideki Okada, “Jūni ten san zero jiken to kenkoku daigakusei [The December thirtieth incident and Nation Building University students],” *hōsho gekkan* 179 (August 2000), 33–35.

⁵⁵⁵ Tingqiao Yan, 26.

students were indeed leftists in their political allegiances, but it appears anti-Japanese nationalism was what united them.

Escape and Launching Revolution:

The End of Kendai Student Life for Chinese Students

By 1945, Japan's military situation was desperate and affected Kendai to the extent that the school could not follow its regular curriculum. Once the Japanese government began conscription of students in October 1943, Japanese students at Kendai were not exempted. Except for few students who were physically unfit, all Japanese students twenty years of age and over left school to bear arms. Japanese faculty members were drafted as well. As seen in Chapter III, Korean students volunteered to join the army under pressure. The school cancelled almost all academic classes and only offered military training.⁵⁵⁶ In addition, the remaining students were mobilized for labor service. In April 1945, a group of about 100 mostly Chinese students of the 4th and 5th entering classes were dispatched to the airplane factory at Gongzhuling, Jilin Province, located 60 kilometers northeast of the Kendai campus. Under these circumstances, many Chinese students fled from the Kendai campus and the factory at Gongzhuling before the end of the war. A number of the entries in *Huiyi* describe their last days as Kendai students in detail and portray their actions as heroic acts of patriotism.

Liu Chengren (4th entering class, matriculated in 1941) had been conscripted to work at the factory at Gongzhuling since April 1945. When 70 to 80 Chinese high school

⁵⁵⁶ Yamada, 150.

students joined Kendai students at the factory, he and his Kendai classmate were assigned to train the younger students. Liu explains that he made use of this opportunity to instill them with Chinese patriotism and encouraged them to slack off at work. On August 14th, one day before the end of the war, the *jukutō* who had been supervising the student factory workers announced Vice President Suetaka's order that the group must return to the school immediately. On the way back, at noon on the following day, the group heard the Japanese Emperor's announcement of Japan's surrender over the radio. The author recalls this moment as follows:

the *jukutō* said: "... all we should do now is to follow Vice President Suetaka's order and return school immediately. What do you think?" The Chinese students scowled at him. After a moment of silence, he said: "why don't we say this then. Those who're willing to return school with me, step forward now!" All Japanese students did so but not a single Chinese student, which forced the *jukuō* to dismiss the group on the spot. The Japanese students and *jukutō* gathered together and glared at Chinese students with baleful looks. Because the Japanese still were in charge, the Chinese students could not do more than shout after them, "Good riddance! Hit the road!"⁵⁵⁷

The Chinese students of the 7th and 8th entering classes who were still on campus were faced with a similar situation. On August 12th, in response to the Soviet Union's invasion of Manchukuo that began on August 9th, Vice President Suetaka gathered all the students together and announced that they would form two units: a fighting unit of Japanese and a labor unit of non-Japanese students. Then, Suetaka asked the non-Japanese students who wish to join the fighting unit to step forward. Song Shaoying (8th entering class, matriculated in 1945) and Wang Yeping (8th entering class, matriculated in 1945) both recall Suetaka's rage-filled eyes fixed on the Chinese students when none responded. The contributors to *Huiyi* all insist that no one volunteered. In fact, we know

⁵⁵⁷ Chengren Liu, "Lingming qian de kanzheng [Struggle before the dawn]," in *Huiyi*, 63–66.

from other sources that one Korean student did volunteer; however, the entries in *Huiyi* omit this detail, insisting that “not a single person stepped forward!”⁵⁵⁸ According to Wang, this was proof of the complete failure of “the foolish scheme to train Chinese youths to become Japanese slaves.”⁵⁵⁹ In the afternoon, the labor unit set out for Gongzhuling on foot. Curiously, not a single author mentions the tearful parting between them and the remaining Japanese students on campus, which the latter discuss in memoirs. The anti-Japanese sentiment and friendship toward their Japanese classmates may have coexisted in Chinese students’ minds. However, the fact that the nationalistic antagonism was emphasized over the personal bond reminds us of the conscious choices the authors were making in constructing their narratives.

Although Xue Wen’s (7th entering class, matriculated in 1944) account is one exception that reveals a good-natured interaction at parting, he stresses the unexpectedness of the event. Xue recounts his group’s unpredictably amicable parting of the ways with their *jukutō*, Satō Hisakichi and Nakajima Saburō, during their trip to Gongzhuling. While en route, as a student leader of the labor unit consisting of about 160 Chinese students, Xue claims that he and his friends made a secret plan to desert. The plan was that when the group reached a remote place, they would set upon and kill the two “*guizi*” (“devils” referring to the *jukutō*) and run off.⁵⁶⁰ Before they could execute the plan, however, many students absconded under cover of darkness and only 23 remained

⁵⁵⁸ Yeping Wang, 81. Japanese historian Eriko Miyazawa, former Japanese students, and Liu Diqian, the author of another Chinese publication, all note that a student from Korea volunteered to join the fighting unit.

⁵⁵⁹ Yeping Wang, 81.

⁵⁶⁰ Wen Xue, “Ji ‘ba yi wu’ qianhou de ririyeye [Note about the days around ‘August 15’],” in *Huiyi*, 67–72, 69.

by the next morning. They changed their plan, deciding first to demand disbanding the group before resorting to violence. To their surprise, the *jukutō* not only agreed but offered to issue a certificate authorizing them to return home. They had a last meal together, and distributed what funds remained equally. Then, the two teachers shook hands with each student and bid farewell. Even after this amicable parting, Xue recalls, the Chinese students lost no time heading off, fearing that the *jukutō* might report them to the police, which did not happen.⁵⁶¹

What are we to make of Xue's account we just read? Did he and his classmates really plot to kill the two *jukutō*? One cannot help noticing the ring of fanciful heroism layered upon his memory of what is actually the most significant revelation. What we see is how differently various Japanese staff at Kendai reacted when they realized the war was finally over. Further, given the political constraints under which Xue writes this story, we can surmise that the unexpectedly amicable parting of the ways of the Chinese students and the two *jukutō* left a deep impression on him. Finally, one sees that Xue felt at liberty to feature in his piece an incident that reveals that the Japanese instructors at Kendai were not all fanatic advocates of Japanese imperialism.

Song Shaoying (8th entering class, matriculated in 1945) and Wang Yeping (8th entering class, matriculated in 1945) were among those who absconded from the group on the way to Gongzhuling. They ran away because, in Song's words, "no one wanted to go to the factory and make the weapons that would be used to kill our own people."⁵⁶² Song stresses that their escape was not an act of passive resistance or cowardice but

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 69–71.

⁵⁶² Shaoying Song, "Qianye da taowang [The great escape in the night before]," in *Huiyi*, 73–76, 74.

rather “a courageous and heroic act” toward revolution.⁵⁶³ Likewise, Wang relates his desertion to a decision to take a stand against the Japanese and join the revolutionary army. He writes that he had been waiting for the Soviet Union’s invasion because that would offer an opportunity for the Chinese to launch the offensive against the Japanese invaders in Northeast China that they had been planning.⁵⁶⁴

The imprisoned students also experienced a dramatic moment of liberation at the end of the war. According to Zhao Hong (2nd entering class, matriculated in 1939), the police headquarter decided to execute all political prisoners on August 14th. At Shinkyō Prison, Guard Murakawa took more than 70 prisoners outside, including Zhao and other incarcerated Kendai students. They were handcuffed and told to walk to another prison. In fact, Zhao believes, the plan was to take them to another spot and shoot them all. Luckily, the group came across a contingent of Chinese cadets who had revolted against their Japanese officers, beat Murakawa to death, and released the prisoners.⁵⁶⁵

The Challenge of Reading Former Chinese Students’

Memoirs: The *Huiyi* and *Hakki* Accounts Contrasted

As seen above, *Huiyi* entries, though produced under heavy political constraints and read critically, provide considerable insight into the resistance of Chinese students to the Japan-centered conception of Pan-Asianism implemented in Kendai’s educational

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁵⁶⁴ Yeping Wang, 84.

⁵⁶⁵ Hong Zhao, 156.

curriculum and aspects of the *juku* system. However, reading two essays by former Chinese students published in *Hakki* for Japanese readers provides a different insight into Chinese students' experiences at Kendai. The stark difference between the two sources lies in their descriptions of motives for attending Kendai and the experiences after the closing of Kendai. Below, I will show how *Hakki* accounts differ from that of *Huiyi*.

Unlike *Huiyi* accounts, the contributors to *Hakki* discuss their motives for applying to Kendai at length. Han Weiping (8th entering class, matriculated in 1945) decided to apply to Kendai because he wanted to pursue study at college rather than becoming a soldier. His decision was supported by his friend who had studied abroad at Waseda University in Tokyo and by his older brother who was serving in the Manchukuo Army as sergeant.⁵⁶⁶ Han's friend and brother had received Japanese education and were now working as government and military clerks in Manchukuo. Their success apparently convinced Han that attending Manchukuo's highest learning institution would put him on a secure career path. We should note that Han made this decision in mid-1944, when Japan was suffering a series of devastating military losses in Saipan, the Philippines, and Guam. While some of the accounts published in *Huiyi* report that Chinese Kendai students were anticipating the war's end and preparing to join the CCP-led revolution, Han's story shows no sign of his and his family's awareness of imminent end of the war and Manchukuo.⁵⁶⁷ Otherwise, Han would not have chosen to enter Kendai in April 1945, five months before Japan surrendered to the Allies.

⁵⁶⁶ Weiping Han, "Shūsen zengo no ashioto [The footsteps around the war's end]," Trans. Yoshihisa Ueda, in *Hakki*, 21–25, 21.

⁵⁶⁷ One contributor to *Huiyi* who hints at the awareness of war's imminent end is Wang Yeping. As I discussed his account above, he was anticipating and waiting for the Soviet Union's entry to WWII against Japan.

Another Chinese contributor to *Hakki*, Zhang Tailu (8th entering class, matriculated in 1945) writes that Kendai's generous scholarship was a powerful incentive. Zhang writes that "for [him], a son of an underprivileged family, Kendai was perfect because all expenses were covered by state funds."⁵⁶⁸ His middle school in Liaoning Province was unique in that although it had separate classes for Chinese and Japanese students, students sat in the same classroom for certain subjects. Zhang Tailu claims that this experience made Kendai a natural choice.⁵⁶⁹

Both Han Weiping and Zhang Tailu write at length about how much they wanted to gain admission to Kendai. Once his mind was set, Han reports, he began putting extra efforts into his study of Japanese. To pass the physical exam, he jogged every morning and did calisthenics. He worried about his family's police record, for his father had been arrested by Manchukuo police for what the author calls "thought crimes," which probably refers to leftist beliefs, and died in prison in 1942. Interestingly, this family tragedy neither turned him against Japan nor did his father's political crimes disqualify him in the eyes of Kendai's Japanese administrators, which was what he feared. Han further reports that he was so elated when he received the letter of acceptance that he quickly recovered from typhoid fever, which he had contracted after taking the entrance exams.⁵⁷⁰ Zhang also stresses how hard he had studied in preparing for the Kendai entrance exams. He sought out advice from the Chinese students from his hometown who were currently enrolled at Kendai. One piece of advice he received was that "as long as [he] thoroughly

⁵⁶⁸ Tailu Zhang, "Kenkoku daigaku de mananda hibi [The days I spent at Nation Building University]," Trans. Yoshihisa Ueda, in *Hakki*, 43–46, 44.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁰ Weiping Han, 22.

reads newspapers [he] would pass the interviews.”⁵⁷¹ Being aware of the Japanese audience of his memoir, Zhang does not elaborate on the meaning of this advice. However, it is obvious that Chinese applicants were expected to parrot the mainstream perspective on current news as narrated in the Japanese press, and that he himself was willing to do so in order to be admitted to Kendai. When he succeeded, he recorded his joy at having finally arrived at “*akogare no Kankirei*,” the Kankirei of my dream.⁵⁷²

The comparison of the entries penned by the former Chinese students in *Hakki* and *Huiyi* should not surprise us. Writing at the request of their former Japanese classmates, Han Weiping and Zhang Tailu show no hesitation in expressing their strong desires to become Kendai students but appear reluctant to discuss their disappointment at the reality of their campus life. By contrast, the contributors to *Huiyi* tend to emphasize how disappointed they were with the Japan-centered Pan-Asianism they encountered after they arrived on campus. Indeed, the majority of *Huiyi* accounts skip over the period in which the authors excitedly applied to the school, which may well be because they do not wish to portray themselves as Japanese collaborators to their Chinese readers. When read together, however, the recollections published in *Huiyi* and *Hakki* convey the appeal that Kendai had for Chinese students.

Another difference between *Huiyi* and *Hakki* is evident in their accounts of the chaotic period following the closing of Kendai in August 1945. As discussed above, the contributors to *Huiyi* tend to portray their absconding from the Kendai campus as an act of patriotism. By contrast, writing about his departure in his entry in *Hakki*, Han Weiping

⁵⁷¹ Tailu Zhang, 45.

⁵⁷² *Ibid.* ‘Kankirei’ is the name of the hill in which Kendai campus was located.

reports the event matter-of-factly. He writes he left the Kendai campus on August 10th, 1945, one day after the Soviet Union invaded Manchukuo. Conscious of his Japanese readers, Han merely mentions that he and his friend left campus “to go home.”⁵⁷³

Following the war’s end, which also brought an end to both Kendai and Manchukuo, Chinese students who had attended Kendai were caught up in the complicated politics of China’s civil war between the Nationalists and Communists. The comparison of the accounts in *Huiyi* and *Hakki* on this theme illuminates the complex reality that they faced as former Kendai students in the late 1940s. While severely criticizing Kendai for offering an education that aimed at the enslavement of non-Japanese students, many contributors to *Huiyi* claim that their experiences at Kendai taught them an important lesson: patriotism. Through the on-campus anti-Japanese activities that mainly took the form of secret meetings and discussion of progressive books, they portray themselves and by implication all of the Chinese students who entered Kendai as preparing themselves for the political struggle that followed Japan’s capitulation in August 1945. They also insist that most, if not all, of them were on the side of the Communist Party. For instance, Wang Yeping (8th entering class, matriculated in 1945) states that his days at Kendai motivated him “to leave the dark and rotten domain ruled by the party of the Nationalist government and enter the bright and progressive liberated district (under the CCP control) to join the revolution.”⁵⁷⁴ Wang may well have joined the CCP after Japan’s defeat; however, the specific rhetoric he employs sounds suspiciously politically correct.

⁵⁷³ Weiping Han, 23.

⁵⁷⁴ Yeping Wang, 85.

Although many contributors to *Huiyi* insist that they themselves were influenced by Maoism or that they joined the CCP and worked for the revolution, there is reason to believe the actual situation was more complicated. Here we turn to the entry in *Huiyi* of Gao Ke (8th entering class, matriculated in 1945), whose account is based on his interviews with former Chinese Kendai students as well as his own experience. According to Gao Ke, eight students from the 1st to 4th entering classes established *dongbei qingnian tongmeng* (Northeast Youth League) on August 23, 1945. He describes the league as a “supra-partisan, spontaneous gathering” that “supported Nationalist–Communist cooperation and unity for nation building.”⁵⁷⁵ Among the eight leaders, two leaned toward the GMD and six the CCP. Their disagreement led to a split, and the pro-CCP members established *xin qingnian tongmeng* (New Youth League) in Shinkyō City, now renamed Changchun City, in October 1945 under the CCP’s guidance.⁵⁷⁶

We do not know whether the three to one division of political allegiances within the leadership was reflective of the entire student membership. Nevertheless, Gao, perhaps inadvertently, provides evidence that not all “patriotic” Chinese students at Kendai were committed leftists. Without further explaining what happened to the students who joined the GMD, Gao goes on to describe the communists’ activities. Many former Kendai students went on to attend colleges and share the leftist study materials that they had collected while at Kendai with their fellow students. They also resisted discriminatory treatment by the GMD in Changchun City, Jilin Province, together with the former students of other Manchukuo schools. For instance, they demonstrated against

⁵⁷⁵ Ke Gao, 108.

⁵⁷⁶ This new organization was committed to the youth education in Northeast China and published its journals *Qingnian Xinbao*, *Xin Shaonianbao*, and *Buyecheng*. Ke Gao, 108–109.

Changchun University's decision to require special exams for former Manchukuo schools' students in August 1946, which led to the so-called *jiqiang dianming* ("taking attendance by machineguns") incident of September 18th, in which the Nationalist Army fired at student demonstrators. In the end, the students pressured the university to abolish the special exams and made the GMD to promise not to repeat such violence again.⁵⁷⁷

Meanwhile, many students left Changchun University to join the CCP, while some stayed, disguising themselves as Nationalists and contributed to the communist revolution through espionage.⁵⁷⁸

We get a fuller account of the political affiliations of Kendai's former Chinese students in a short memoir contributed by Han Weiping (8th entering class, matriculated in 1945) to *Hakki*. Writing for a Japanese audience and removed from Chinese government oversight, Han reveals more information about former Kendai students' connections with the GMD. According to Han, in March 1946, some former Kendai students participated in an anti-communist demonstration that was organized by the GMD. About 300 college students from Changchun, Shenyang, Harbin, and Jinzhou traveled to Beijing and demonstrated with slogans such as "expel the red imperialists from our country" and "we will not tolerate the second 'September 18' (Mukden Incident) by (communist) Army."⁵⁷⁹ The author notes that he and his friends joined this activity because they thought that uniting the country and bringing stability would allow them to pursue learning. Han also states, "strong enthusiasm and determination for nation

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 111.

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 112.

⁵⁷⁹ Weiping Han, 23–24.

building united the former Kendai students” who participated in the event.”⁵⁸⁰ After returning home, they attended colleges in the Nationalist-controlled region in Northeast, where he reports they secretly studied Mao Zedong’s works. Han writes that he bade farewell to three of his friends, including one former Kendai student, who left Shenyang to join the communist revolution. Han stayed for reasons that he does not explain.⁵⁸¹

The contrast between Han’s and Gao’s accounts of Kendai’s former Chinese students’ political views and affiliations reminds us that we must approach politically charged topics as described by the contributors to *Huiyi* with considerable caution. In the chaotic political struggle in Northeast China during the latter half of the 1940s, former Kendai students’ patriotism was tested. As revealed in Han’s and Gao’s accounts, not every Kendai student chose the CCP as an expression of their patriotism. Some aspired to national unification, while others chose to join the GMD. Nevertheless, the contributors to Chinese publications tend to emphasize the leftist inclination of Chinese Kendai students. Even the *Hakki* entries do not speak in detail about political activities by Kendai students that were not leftist in character, especially if the authors themselves were involved.

These tendencies are not so surprising when the historical memories in question are so politically charged, and the authors of the memoirs are sensitive to contemporaneous political contexts. Especially in the context of the Chinese civil war (1946–49) that ended with the CCP’s victory, one would expect the authors to highlight their active participation in the revolution. And as we have seen, none of the authors

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

clearly admits to formal ties with the GMD. However, Japanese alumni who have kept in contact with their Chinese classmates report that some former Chinese Kendai students faced persecution during and after the communist revolution because they were regarded as affiliated with the GMD. For instance, Tsutsui Ryūta (7th entering class, matriculated in 1944), a Japanese contributor to *Hakki*, mentions the experience of Zhang Jinduan (7th entering class, matriculated in 1944) who had recently visited Tsutsui in Japan. Following Japan's capitulation, the Soviet Union Army confiscated Zhang's family property and his family scattered. During the Cultural Revolution, he was sent to a compulsory labor camp in a rural village for eleven years because his family was considered anti-revolutionary.⁵⁸²

All of Kendai's former Chinese students must have strongly felt the need of defending themselves from political persecution, for anyone who was closely associated with Japanese imperialism was deemed national traitor. The authorized interpretation of Chinese students' experiences at Kendai is found in *Riben qinhua jiaoyu quanshi* [general history of Japanese colonial education] published by People's Education Press in 2005. The entry on Kendai concludes that Kendai ultimately aimed to enslave Chinese students through education. This 'official' history considers the former Chinese students of Kendai to be either victims or collaborators of Japanese imperialism.⁵⁸³ As we have seen, the reality was more complex.

⁵⁸² Ryūta Tsutsui, "Tōhatsu nagakeredo gankō mijikashi [Wearing her hair long, while fixing her eyes near]," in *Hakki*, 46–49, 48.

⁵⁸³ *Riben qinhua jiaoyu quanshi* [General history of Japanese colonial education], Ed. Enrong Song, Zixia Yu, and Bihong Cao et al. (Beijing: renmin jiaoyu chubanshe, 2005).

The political nature of historical memory poses a challenge to our understanding of former Chinese students' experiences at Kendai. Nevertheless, a close examination of the *Huiyi* memoirs, especially when read against the *Hakki* memoirs written for a Japanese audience, reveals not only commonalities but also differences in former Chinese students' experiences and perspectives about Kendai. The common experience was that they *chose* to attend Kendai and arrived on campus with hope and aspirations. For some students it was the joy of learning, for others the incentives of a fee education and prestige of passing highly competitive exams, and for still others it was the curiosity about the strange school that commits itself to the principle of "harmony among various peoples residing in Manchukuo." Upon arrival, they became disappointed at the curriculum, the arrogant attitudes of many of the Japanese teachers and students, and the imposition of Japanese values and rituals. While some students quit Kendai, others who stayed on campus found meanings in their student lives. The campus life—especially the aspects of Kendai that disappointed them—appears to have had the opposite effect of the planners of Kendai intended: prompting the Chinese students to develop their national consciousness and patriotism toward China.

AFTERWORD

As described by the students themselves in their diaries and memoirs, for Kendai students the end of war in August 1945 was the beginning of an entirely new life regardless of their country of origin. Kendai students, whose future career had been promised by the Manchukuo state, had to fashion new lives for themselves under radically altered circumstances. After going back to their “homes,” which often required a long and arduous journey and even cost some of them their lives, Kendai alumni established new lives that were even more diverse than those they had left behind several years earlier when they had matriculated at Kendai. How did their experiences at Kendai affect their post-1945 lives, when to varying degrees in every country including Japan, the wartime concept of Pan-Asianist empire was widely denounced, discredited or disavowed? The sources available provide only partial answers to these questions.⁵⁸⁴ Nevertheless, where individual lives can be documented, one sees widely divergent and in some cases unexpected legacies.

Even before war's end, Kendai as an educational institution had been severely impacted by the war. In the fall of 1943 when Japan's conscription of students began, with the exception of the physically unfit, all Japanese students twenty years of age and over left the school to bear arms. In the following year, the draft age was lowered to nineteen. The Japanese graduates of the first three classes who were employed in Manchukuo were also drafted. On August 11, 1945, two days after Soviet Union's Red Army invaded Manchuria, all the non-Japanese students were dispatched as forced

⁵⁸⁴ On certain topics, I rely heavily on historian Eriko Miyazawa's brief discussion of Kendai alumni's post-1945 lives.

laborers to a munitions factory in Gongzhuling.⁵⁸⁵ On August 12, the remaining Japanese students over eighteen years of age were called to arms in the so-called *nekosogi dōin*, “root-and-branch mobilization.” This left about seventy Japanese students and an unknown number of Japanese faculty members to defend the Kendai campus from the invading Red Army and the “rebel” forces of mostly Chinese soldiers who had deserted from the Manchukuo Imperial Army.⁵⁸⁶ The fighting around Kendai continued even after the official end of the war on August 15. Yamada Shōji, a Japanese student of the 8th entering class, recalls engaging in exchange of fire with an armed group of Chinese-speaking men who attacked Kendai late in the evening of August 15.⁵⁸⁷ Such conditions continued until sometime between August 18 and 20.

Kendai officially declared its closing on August 23, 1945, and a difficult journey back to Japan began for the Japanese students and instructors.⁵⁸⁸ The younger students who remained on campus to the end took refuge in Kendai’s Japanese faculty members’ residences while waiting to be repatriated. Because the Soviet Union’s occupation army prohibited people from gathering in large groups, each faculty’s family took a few students into their homes. Some older Japanese students who had been demobilized and returned to the Kendai campus found lodgings together in Shinkyō—now renamed Changchun. Although the administration distributed the school’s remaining financial

⁵⁸⁵ The Kendai administration ordered these non-Japanese students to return to campus on August 14. By that time, however, many of them absconded.

⁵⁸⁶ Sōsuke Nishimoto in Yuji, 534–535, 534.

⁵⁸⁷ Yamada, 173–174.

⁵⁸⁸ The chronological timetable of Kenkoku University in Manchuria indicates that Kendai’s closing ceremony was held on campus on August 23, 1945. However, there are other accounts that suggest different dates: August 9, 17, and 19.

resources to faculty, staff, and students, the sums of money did not feed them long. Some former students worked as wage laborers in order to feed themselves, while the entrepreneurial minded others sold personal assets of their host instructors' families on their behalf. Meanwhile, some Japanese faculty members and students were captured by the Red Army and sent to Siberia for forced labor. Among them was Associate Professor of Philosophy Koito Natsujirō who died from the harsh working condition of the Soviet camps.⁵⁸⁹ The exact number of those who were sent to Siberia is unknown. Historian Miyazawa Eriko conducted research on the whereabouts of Japanese students of the 1st entering class and found information on 35 out of 75 students who had initially matriculated at Kendai. Of these 35 graduates, eleven of them were held as prisoners in Siberia for two to four years before returning to Japan. Undoubtedly some others died in Soviet camps while awaiting repatriation. As Miyazawa speculates, in all likelihood the situation was similar for all Japanese Kendai students. In addition, some Japanese students who had been drafted in the Japanese army found themselves stranded in various parts of the empire when the war ended. They all headed back to Japan as *hikiagesha*, or repatriates.

What about the non-Japanese students? Memoirs written by Japanese faculty and students indicate that some of the former Russian students served in the Soviet occupation army immediately following war's end, often as Japanese translators. As described in Chapter IV, the Chinese students were thrown into the political struggle between Chinese Communists and Nationalists. Japanese recollections suggest that more former Chinese Kendai students allied themselves with the Nationalist at the end of the

⁵⁸⁹ Yamada, 205–216.

war than indicated in the Chinese memoirs. Korean and Taiwanese students were left on their own. They headed back to their home countries, often in groups, determined to work for their countries that would soon become free from Japanese rule. Interestingly, when a group of Korean students were about to leave Shinkyō, they asked Tanaka Kazuo, a Japanese student, if he would join them. Tanaka and his family had lived in Jeollabuk-do, Korea. Although Tanaka did not join the group assuming his family would soon be repatriated to Japan, the fact that the Korean students reached out to Tanaka, a son of Japanese colonial settlers, testifies to bonds of friendship among at least some Kendai students that transcended nationality.⁵⁹⁰

During the chaotic time following Soviet Union's invasion of Manchuria, a number of Japanese instructors and students had their first opportunity to hear the real feelings of some of the non-Japanese students. Assistant Professor Nishimoto Sōsuke, who had also served as *jukutō*, wrote in 1967 that his last interactions with some non-Japanese students were something to be remembered for the rest of his life.⁵⁹¹ A Chinese student came to see Nishimoto around Kendai's closing day. Nishimoto identifies this student as "G" who has been one of his students at *juku* and has been arrested by the military police in the spring of 1945 for his involvement with anti-Japanese activities. Nishimoto remembers that after apologizing for betraying the teachers' good will, "G" addressed him as follows: "Even if faculty members were well meaning, and no matter how great the ideal of an East Asian League was in theory, it was obvious to us that

⁵⁹⁰ Kazuo Tanaka in *Hakki kaishi* [bulletin of the 8th entering class] in Yuji, 561.

⁵⁹¹ Sōsuke Nishimoto, "Kenkoku daigaku no shūmatsu zengo: kaku minzoku no dōkō [The situation of Kenkoku University around the time of its dissolution: the activities of each nationalities]," in *Kendaishi shiryō* 2, 20–23, 22; Nishimoto in Yuji, 555.

Manchukuo was nothing more than a puppet state and a creature of Japanese imperialism.”⁵⁹² A Korean student visited Nishimoto’s residence to bid farewell. At that time, he confessed that with few exceptions, the Korean students at Kendai had been secretly involved in national independence movements, which somewhat corresponds to the testimony found in the collection of Korean alumni’s memoirs. Then he stated: “Cooperation between Korea and Japan is only possible when Korea achieves liberation from Japanese imperial rule. I will return to Korea to work for my homeland’s independence and reconstruction.”⁵⁹³ Thus, Japan’s defeat and the closing of Kendai gave Nishimoto the chances of listening to the honest feelings of his former students.

Nishimoto also had a surprising encounter with Stavitski, a Russian student of the 5th entering class.⁵⁹⁴ Nishimoto was taken prisoner by the military police of Soviet occupation army together with more than ten Japanese students and Professor of Philosophy Mori Shinzō. When Nishimoto found that the Red Army officer who interrogated him at prison was his former student Stavitski, Nishimoto was so astounded, he “lost his head.”⁵⁹⁵ Whatever Stavitski’s ideological convictions may have been at this time, Nishimoto concluded that Kendai’s anti-communist instruction failed to take root in this Russian student. Undaunted by the role reversal, Nishimoto demanded the release of his Japanese students and the elderly Professor Mori. While there is no concrete evidence,

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*, “先生たちの善意がいかようにあれ、また東亜連盟の理想がいかように遠大であれ、満州国の実質が、帝国主義日本のカイライ政権のほかのなにものでもなかったことは、遺憾ながらあきらかな事実でした”

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*, “朝鮮が日本の隷属から解放され独立してはじめて、韓日は真に提携できるのです。わたくしは祖国の独立と再建のために、これから朝鮮に帰ります”

⁵⁹⁴ Both contemporary records produced by the Kendai administration and the alumni rosters compiled by the alumni association in Japan omit the family names of Russian students.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, “動顛する思い”

Nishimoto believes that it was Stavitski who worked behind the scene to secure the release of these Kendai students and Professor Mori a few days later. In the end, Nishimoto was the only one in this group who was actually sent to Siberia.⁵⁹⁶

A Japanese student of the 8th entering class, Yamada Shōji received direct help from one of Kendai's former Chinese students. Before he managed to return to Japan, Yamada worked as a live-in servant at a bread factory in the northeastern part of Shinkyō City owned by the father of a former Chinese student Li Wanchun of the 3rd entering class. In effect, Li and his family protected Yamada from being captured by the Chinese Communist Army. The Li family even offered Yamada the opportunity to marry their daughter and inherit the family business. When they learned that Yamada wanted to return to Japan, they arranged for his safe trip back.⁵⁹⁷ This episode was not a rare case for the Japanese students who managed to return home safely; a number of Kendai alumni reported cases of Japanese students receiving protection and assistance from their former Chinese classmates.⁵⁹⁸ These testimonies again call into question Chinese alumni's memoirs' one-sided emphasis on the hostility between them and the Japanese students and faculty.

While the evidence is far from being comprehensive, these stories suggest that although many of non-Japanese students, and especially the Chinese students, opposed Japanese imperialism, they drew a distinction between their former classmates and instructors and the wartime Japanese state. Thus, their hostility towards Japanese

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁷ Yamada, 229–236.

⁵⁹⁸ For instance, Yamada introduces another case, Ueda Yoshihisa (8th entering class), who returned to Japan by Li Chunshan (1st entering class)'s help. Yamada, 231–232.

imperialism did not prevent many Chinese former students from helping Japanese students who appeared sincerely devoted to the ideal of equality and harmonious coexistence of peoples of different backgrounds. Ironically, the failure of Pan-Asianism and closing down of Kendai produced individual interactions of this kind which attest to the existence of personal friendship at Kendai. At the time when the institution was falling apart, Ishiwara Kanji's hope of open-minded exchange of ideas among the students and faculty at Kendai occurred most dramatically.

Perhaps because of these strong bonds among students and faculty and their intense experiences of Kendai's grand experiment of Pan-Asianist education, Kendai's alumni maintained contact despite the turbulent situations of post-1945 East Asian societies. Initially, these contacts were made and maintained within each country. As for the Chinese alumni, Historian Miyazawa Eriko reports that as many as 120 of them attended Dongbei University (Northeastern University) which was established by the Nationalist government of China in Shenyang City, Liaoning Province, in 1946. Miyazawa cites the account of Han Weiping, a member of the 8th entering class who also attended Dongbei University, that Kendai alumni were working closely together to achieve Nationalist-Communist reconciliation. By the fall of 1948, however, the region fell under the Communist control, and many of these Kendai alumni had to go through "thought reform" by the CCP.⁵⁹⁹ Moreover, many of them faced political persecution during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), being imprisoned and subjected to forced labor.

⁵⁹⁹ Miyazawa, 251-252.

For the Japanese alumni, the prolonged process of repatriation and social and economic dislocations of the immediate postwar period made it difficult to reestablish contact with fellow alumni. Nonetheless, some alumni started to create rosters as soon as they settled down in their post-war lives. The earliest list was compiled by a group of alumni residing in the Kyūshū region in July 1946 and contained contact information on 71 former Kendai students. In 1947, the alumni who lived in the Greater Tokyo Area and the members of the 8th entering class created their own rosters.⁶⁰⁰

Meanwhile, Kendai alumni and former faculty members experienced political persecution during the Allied occupation of Japan. In January 1947, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) banned those who had attended or worked for Kendai from holding public office.⁶⁰¹ This was part of SCAP's policy of purging Japanese society of militaristic and ultra-nationalistic elements. At the same time, the Japanese government allowed Kendai's former students of the 4th through 8th entering classes—the students who had not graduated Kendai due to war mobilization and the closing of the school—to transfer to public universities in Japan if they passed the required exam.⁶⁰² To arrange the transfer of credits, the Foreign Ministry of Japan designated Professor Mori Kyōzō as representative of Kenkoku University's alumni and

⁶⁰⁰ *Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai nihon deno ayumi [foundation and activities of the Kenkoku University Alumni Association in Japan]* (Tokyo: Nihon kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai, 2007), 2–3. Hereafter, I call this source *Ayumi*.

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁶⁰² Miyazawa, 250.

the issuer of various forms. Thus an unofficial alumni association was created in December 1950.⁶⁰³

It was on May 2, 1954 that the Kenkoku University Alumni Association in Japan was officially founded.⁶⁰⁴ Commemorating the sixteenth anniversary of Kendai's opening, 89 members—67 former students and 22 former faculty members—gathered in Tokyo and selected former Vice President Sakuta Sōichi as the first president of the alumni association.⁶⁰⁵ Well advanced in age and suffering from ill health, Sakuta's nomination was nevertheless significant for its symbolism. By selecting Sakuta, as we have seen, the alumni signaled their desire to remember Kendai as it was in its early years under Sakuta's administration rather than its subsequent existence when the institution was subjected to the increasing intervention of the Kwantung Army.⁶⁰⁶ The association continued to meet annually until 2010 when at the 57th general meeting, declared it to be the final meeting due to advanced age of its constituents. Over the years participation in the annual reunions actually increased as more alumni began to bring their families, and as the association started to invite the alumni and their families from overseas. In 1988, 239 people attended the 35th meeting which commemorated the 50th anniversary of

⁶⁰³ *Ayumi*, 1–2. The very first alumni association was established on October 9, 1943, a few months after the 1st entering class graduated. Nevertheless, the association, named by Vice President Suetaka Kamezō as Isshinkai, or Association of One Mind, did not have any meaningful activities because virtually all its members were soon drafted. No significant records about Isshinkai survived to this day.

⁶⁰⁴ Even before the official foundation of the alumni association in May 1954, about 80 members gathered in Tokyo in January 1953, which sometimes is seen as the beginning of the alumni association.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ayumi*, 3–4.

⁶⁰⁶ After Sakuta resigned his post in 1973, succeeding presidents were all selected from former students.

Kendai's opening.⁶⁰⁷ Even the last reunion held in Tokyo in 2010 had about 120 participants including an alumnus from South Korea.

Aiming to promote continuing friendship among former Kendai students, the alumni association in Japan continued to expand its rosters, adding not only Japanese but also non-Japanese alumni. The latest list compiled in 2003 includes all names of 1,408 former students and 400 faculty members. These names are categorized under the faculty and staff and each entering class; and under each category, they are divided into three groups: those who are alive, those known to be deceased, and those whose status is unknown. Astoundingly, the alumni association in Japan obtained information on 1,213 or 86% of all former students (including those known to be deceased) and 191 or 48% of all former faculty members (including the news of their death). As of 2003, the association was in contact with 691 former students who were still alive.⁶⁰⁸

The alumni rosters compiled in 1955 and 2003 and other sources provide an overview of Kendai alumni's post-1945 occupations. Table 1 shows the occupations of 268 former Chinese students who were alive and stayed in contact with the alumni association in Japan as of 2003. The list contains former Mongolian students who currently resided in Inner Mongolia, an autonomous region of the PRC.⁶⁰⁹ Given that these alumni were in their mid-70s to late 80s, many of the reported occupations must have been the posts they had held before retirement. Not surprisingly, many alumni made

⁶⁰⁷ Ayumi, 8–9.

⁶⁰⁸ *Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai meibo [Kenkoku University Alumni Association Roster]* (Tokyo: Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai, 2003). Hereafter I call this source the 2003 alumni roster.

⁶⁰⁹ The 2003 alumni roster has one former Mongolian student who currently resided in Mongolia. It is unknown if this person really is the only Kendai alumnus living in Mongolia after the establishment of the PRC.

professional use of their Japanese language skills, most commonly as Japanese language instructors, researchers, and businessmen. Several of the Chinese graduates achieved prominence in their fields and played a role in the normalization of relations between the PRC and Japan. Nie Zhanglin of the 4th entering class was among the first several Chinese journalists dispatched in Japan in 1964 after the signing of the Sino–Japanese Journalist Exchange Agreement, which secured a line of communication before the normalization of two countries’ diplomatic relations in 1972.⁶¹⁰ Chen Kang, a member of the 5th entering class, was a politician who played an important role in the China–Japan relations, which I will discuss later. Strikingly, more than 100 members were employed as educators: university professors, researchers, and secondary school teachers.

According to Historian Miyazawa Eriko, this was because in post-1949 Chinese society, teachers had fewer chances of being asked about their revolutionary pasts or lack thereof, compared to people in other occupations.⁶¹¹ It is also significant that after education, employment in state enterprises ranked second, which suggests that being a Kendai graduate was not an obstacle to public sector employment. In addition, a significant number of Kendai alumni listed two names on the 2003 alumni roster, which may indicate that they had sought to hide their past affiliation with Kendai.⁶¹²

⁶¹⁰ *Ayumi*, 42.

⁶¹¹ Miyazawa, 252.

⁶¹² *Ibid.*, 257. Footnote

Table 1. Occupations of alumni residing in the PRC in 2003
(of 268 who were alive and stayed in contact)

Occupation	Number
Faculty or researchers at universities or other research institutes	84
Public sector	73
Teachers in secondary education	25
Lawyers	3
Medicine	3
Military	3
Family-owned business	2
Press	1
Occupation unreported	74
Total	268

Source: *Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai meibo [Kenkoku University Alumni Association Roster]* (Tokyo: Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai, 2003).

Table 2. Occupations of alumni residing in the Republic
of Korea in 2003 (of 27 who were alive and stayed in contact)

Occupation	Number
Company or bank employees (including company executives)	9
Faculty or researchers at universities or other research institutes	6
Teachers in secondary education	3
Politicians	3
Accountant	1
Public sector	1
Occupation unreported	4
Total	27

Source: *Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai meibo [Kenkoku University Alumni Association Roster]* (Tokyo: Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai, 2003).

Table 2 shows the occupations held by former Korean students before their retirement. While the Korean students in South established their own alumni association and published two collections of their memoirs in 1986 and 1988, very little is known about the whereabouts of those who settled in North Korea, which is not surprising in light of prohibitions of both the North and South Korean governments on people to people communication between the two countries. The latest roster published in 2003 does not include any contact of those believed to be living in North Korea. Table 2 shows that the alumni residing in South Korea have been quite successful in their careers. During the Korean War (1950–1953), some Kendai alumni in South Korea achieved high positions in the Republic of Korea military. Min Gi-Sik, a member of the 3rd entering class, was involved in the creation of the ROK Army, fought in the war as a divisional commander, and later served as the Chief of Staff of the Army in 1963–1965.⁶¹³ Like the Chinese alumni, quite a few Kendai alumni became high level actors in Japan–Korea relations. Bang Hui of the 3rd entering class visited Japan for a number of times as a diplomat in the late 1970s and 1980.⁶¹⁴ Another member of the 3rd class, Gang Yeong-Hun, is perhaps the most notable Korean alumnus. After serving as the Ambassador to the United Kingdom and the Vatican City State, Gang became Prime Minister (1988–1990). He was the first ROK head of state to visit North Korea. When the Japanese Emperor Hirohito passed away in 1989, Gang attended the funeral ceremony as a

⁶¹³ *Ayumi*, 120–121.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 108.

representative of South Korea. After the two years of his career as Prime Minister, Gang served as the president for the Korean Red Cross.⁶¹⁵

Compared to the relatively plentiful data on Chinese and Korean alumni, information on the post-1945 experiences of the Taiwanese and Russian alumni—two of the smallest non-Japanese student populations in the Kendai student body—is limited. The 2003 alumni roster lists 27 Taiwanese and 31 Russian alumni's whereabouts, including ten Taiwanese and eleven Russian who were alive as of 2003. According to interviews with three Taiwanese alumni conducted by Historian Miyazawa Eriko, Kendai's former Taiwanese students encountered considerable hardship after 1945. Initially, the Chinese Nationalist government that controlled Taiwan did not allow Kendai alumni to transfer to universities in Taiwan. Only after extended negotiations, were they given permission to take transfer exams. Nevertheless, many of them fell victim to the so-called "White Terror," political suppression of intellectuals deemed by the Nationalist government as ideologically suspect, either because of leftist affiliation or collaboration with Japan, and were imprisoned for some time.⁶¹⁶ As of 2003, the reported occupations of Taiwanese alumni are seen in Table 3.

Miyazawa states that the Russian alumni had the toughest time after 1945 due to their affiliation with Kendai. According to the speech Cheusov (1st entering class) delivered at the alumni association's annual meeting convened in Japan in 1988, Cheusov and two other members of the 1st entering class, Petrov of the 2nd entering class, and Baus and Epov of the 4th entering class survived eleven years of imprisonment and forced

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 118–120, 130.

⁶¹⁶ Miyazawa, 252–253.

labor.⁶¹⁷ Miyazawa reports that a few former Russian students eventually used their Japanese language skills to work for the Russo–Japanese relations. For instance, Vtorusin of the 2nd entering class served as the Director-General of the Khabarovsk Office of the Soviet Union–Japan Friendship Association. Tolkachov of the 3rd entering class had opportunities of travelling to Japan as an interpreter.⁶¹⁸

Table 3. Occupations of alumni residing in the Republic of China (Taiwan) in 2003 (of 10 who were alive and stayed in contact)

Occupation	Number
Company employees (including company executives)	4
Teacher in secondary education	1
Accountant	1
Occupation unreported	4
Total	10

Source: *Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai meibo [Kenkoku University Alumni Association Roster]* (Tokyo: Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai, 2003).

What about the Japanese alumni? The 2003 alumni roster includes information on the whereabouts of 646 former Japanese students including the 375 who were alive as of 2003. Presumably because most were retired at the time of the survey, the list does not include the occupation of many of the association members. Although less complete, the

⁶¹⁷ Cheusov, “Shimi jimi to kotoba ni ienai shiawase [Joy that cannot be expressed in words],” speech at Kenkoku University Alumni Association Annual Meeting on May 20, 1988, cited in Miyazawa, 254–255.

⁶¹⁸ Miyazawa, 255.

1955 roster of 516 alumni provides a more complete picture of career patterns.⁶¹⁹ In 1955, most alumni were between 28 and 35 years of age. As seen on Table 4, one remarkable fact is that no fewer than 34 alumni worked in journalism, including at Japan's major newspapers *Mainichi*, *Asahi*, *Yomiuri*, *Chunichi*, and *Nikkei*. As discussed below, these members played important roles in leading the activities of the alumni association in Japan.

Table 4. Occupations of alumni residing in Japan in 1955 (of 516 who were alive and stayed in contact)

Occupation	Number
Company employees	145
Public sector	92
Banks	36
Press	34
Family-owned business/Farming	30
Teachers in secondary education	28
Attending or teaching at universities	18
Self-defense Force	8
Accountants	3
Lawyers	2
Diplomat	1
Actor	1
Occupation unreported	118
Total	516

Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai meibo [Kenkoku University Alumni Association Roster] (Tokyo: Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai, 1955).

⁶¹⁹ *Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai meibo [Kenkoku University Alumni Association Roster]* (Tokyo: Kenkoku daigaku dōsōkai, 1955). Hereafter I call this source the 1955 alumni roster.

Some of the Japanese Kendai alumni journalists who lived in the Greater Tokyo Area initiated study meetings for Kendai alumni in May 1970. Kaede Motoo of the 3rd entering class, an economics correspondent for *Chunichi*, and Maekawa Mitsuo of the 5th entering class, a political correspondent for *Nikkei*, took the lead. Since then, the meetings were held every month and provided them with a space for exchanging ideas and enjoying meals together. These meetings were named *nisuikai* which means “meetings held on the second Wednesdays,” and marked the 375th meeting in January 2007. The alumni association’s record shows that for each meeting they invited a speaker, most of whom were members of the alumni association, and on average 23 people attended. The topics of the invited lectures ranged widely, from international economy, energy policy, and China–Japan relations, to more personal subjects such as personal recollections of certain Kendai faculty members, the experiences of *juku* life at Kendai, and reports about recent travels to Taiwan, Korea, or China to meet with former classmates.⁶²⁰ Occasionally, the *nisuikai* invited non-Japanese alumni as speakers. The first such meeting was held on August 9, 1972, with Kim Sang-Gyu, a Korean member of the 5th entering class, whose talk was titled “Current Issues on the Korean Peninsula.”⁶²¹ The *nisuikai* meeting with one of the largest turnouts was held on February 2, 1980, when Chen Kang, a former Chinese student and currently the PRC Consul-General in Sapporo, was the speaker.⁶²² In addition to the Tokyo *nisuikai*, Kendai alumni in the Kansai region, northern Kyūshū, and Hokkaidō organized similar meetings.

⁶²⁰ *Ayumi*, 10–15.

⁶²¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁶²² *Ibid.*, 13.

I had the opportunity of attending the Osaka *nihukai* on June 16, 2010 and again on July 13, 2011. The meetings—more correctly called banquets—were held at a Japanese-style bar in the middle of a very busy district of Osaka. The round of drinking of the former Kendai students, who were now in their 90s and 80s, began at 4pm at a quiet and empty bar before other customers had arrived. Unlike the *nisuikai* held in Tokyo, which were more formal affairs, the Osaka events were casual and informal. After some exchanging greetings and raising beer glasses in a toast, the party began. At the 2010 meeting, six members from the 1st, 5th, 6th, and 8th entering classes attended, and in 2011, five members from the 1st, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 8th entering classes and one friend who graduated from a military school in Manchukuo. Upon learning of my interest in Kendai, they happily reminisced about their student days and campus life. One thing they emphasized was the diversity of experiences among the former students. Mr. Nakamura Masazō of the 1st entering class discussed how each *juku* had its own color. Mr. Shiokawa Shigeya of the 6th entering class urged me to look at the student experiences of Kendai not just through the sources created by the Japanese alumni but also through the ones authored by the non-Japanese students. Indeed, he kindly gave me valuable documents including the memoir of the Taiwanese alumnus Li Shuiqing's discussed in Chapter III. Mr. Ochi Michiyo of the 1st entering class gave me the collected essays published by the Korean alumni also examined in Chapter III.⁶²³

What I witnessed at these *nisuikai* meetings is an astonishingly long-lasting bond among Kendai alumni. Equally remarkable is the fact that the friendship among Kendai's former students transcends national boundaries and continues to flourish. Both the alumni

⁶²³ Besides these members I mention here, I received warm words of encouragement by other Kendai alumni members whom I encountered in Osaka and Tokyo. I have yet to repay my debt of gratitude to them.

association and individual alumni in Japan have worked ceaselessly to reestablish contact with the former Kendai students living in countries other than Japan.⁶²⁴ Contacts occurred at first among individual alumni living in Japan, Taiwan, and Korea. The alumni association's record shows that while unable to come himself, Taiwanese alumnus of the 1st entering class Li Shuiqing sent a relative to attend the first general meeting of the Kendai alumni association in 1954.⁶²⁵ In 1973, Li traveled to Japan to attend the reunion of the 1st entering class.⁶²⁶

The earliest contact between the Japanese and Korean alumni occurred in the 1950s, even before the normalization of state-to-state relations. A Japanese member of the 2nd entering class, Matsumoto Hirokazu, resided in Seoul during the Korean War (1950–1953) working as a correspondent for a leading Japanese daily newspaper, *The Mainichi*. During his stay, Matsumoto frequently shared meals with four of his classmates: Hong Chun-Sik, Dong Wan, Kim Yeong-Rok, and Choe Jae-Bang.⁶²⁷ In addition, as many of the alumni living in South Korea began to travel to the U.S. for study and on business, the Japanese alumni hosted small gatherings whenever their classmates' flights stopped over in Tokyo.⁶²⁸ In 1965, Ichikawa Emon, a Japanese member of the 2nd entering class, was dispatched to Seoul as the Counselor of the Japanese Embassy to prepare for the normalization of the two countries' diplomatic

⁶²⁴ Besides the interactions with the alumni living in Taiwan, South Korea, and the PRC, which I will discuss here, some Japanese alumni and their classmates residing in the Outer Mongolia, Kazakhstan, the Soviet Union and later Russia, visited each other.

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, 108.

relations. Ichikawa was not only able to reestablish contact with many former Korean students but also received crucial assistance.⁶²⁹ After 1965, small groups of Japanese and Korean alumni continued to visit each other, as in a gathering of the 5th entering class in Seoul in 1989.⁶³⁰ Meanwhile, the Korean alumni in South Korea established their own alumni association and stayed in close contact.⁶³¹

Despite numerous personal and informal meetings among the alumni in Japan and Korea, it was only in 2004 that a large-scale reunion event was co-hosted by the alumni associations of the two countries. Why did it take so long? Kuwahara Akito, a Japanese member of the 4th entering class and one of the Japanese alumni who led the post-1945 international networking, writes that there were some concerned voices within the alumni association in Japan about "...the conflicting views of history in (postwar) Japan and South Korea."⁶³² While he does not provide further details, he is clearly referring to the long-lasting conflict between the two countries over Japan's responsibility for its 35-year-long colonial rule over Korea.⁶³³ In the early 2000s while the alumni association in Japan was preparing for its fourth trip to the PRC discussed below, the Korean

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁶³⁰ *Ibid.*, 171.

⁶³¹ I do not have records about the date of foundation and other details of the alumni association in South Korea. The association must have been established before 1986 as it published collections of essays by the former Korean students in 1986 and 1988.

⁶³² Akito Kuwahara in *Ayumi*, 54. "日韓両国の歴史認識を懸念する..."

⁶³³ The Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal (1946–1948) left out Japan's responsibility for its aggression during colonial rule in Korea such as the violent suppression of the independence movement of 1919. As colonial powers themselves, prosecutors from the Allied Powers felt reluctant in bringing up the matters related to Japan's colonial rule. Moreover, under the intensifying situation of the Cold War in East Asia, SCAP shifted its focus from dealing with Japan's military past to making the country a reliable ally. As a result, the second and third trials, which had originally been planned, were cancelled and the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal was closed in 1948.

association proposed to jointly hold a reunion meeting for the Japanese and Korean alumni. The event took place in Seoul on May 19, 2004 as the group of over 30 Japanese alumni, many in their 80s, made a two-day stopover in Seoul on their way to China.⁶³⁴ Overwhelmed by the enthusiastic welcome they received from the sixteen Korean alumni who greeted them and their families, the Japanese participants instantly knew that feelings of unbridled friendship among Kendai's Korean and Japanese alumni were unaffected by the large issues of Japan's colonial past in Korea. Kuwahara later wrote of his strong urge "...to apologize for having allowed the contentious understanding of history to delay the Japan-Korea alumni meeting for so long."⁶³⁵

As in the case of the Japanese and Korean alumni, early contact between Japanese and Chinese Kendai alumni occurred before the normalization of diplomatic relations. However, it took much longer for the alumni association in Japan to find out the whereabouts of the Chinese alumni. In 1964, Chen Kang of the 5th entering class was dispatched to Tokyo as the Secretary-General of the PRC's trade liaison office that initiated, promoted, and regulated the semi-private trade between the two countries. During the three years of Chen's stay, Japanese alumni Hayashi Rintarō (3rd entering class), Kaede Motoo (3rd entering class), and Sugimoto Hajime (5th entering class) frequently visited Chen at his office. They made these visits even though doing so caused Japanese public security police officers to inquire as to their relationships with Chen and the purpose of their meetings. Chen returned to Japan as the Secretary at PRC Embassy in

⁶³⁴ The exact number of Japanese participants is reported in the alumni association's publications differently. One reports as 39, and the other 34.

⁶³⁵ Kuwahara in *Ayumi*, 160. "日本側が歴史認識について遠慮しすぎて延引今日に至ったことを詫びなければならない..."

Tokyo and subsequently as the first PRC Consul-General in Sapporo, Hokkaidō in 1980, and continued to play important roles in reconnecting the alumni in Japan and the PRC.⁶³⁶

These early contacts between the Japanese and Chinese alumni eventually enabled the alumni association in Japan to organize its first trip in 1980 to Changchun City where Kendai had been located. A few of the Kendai buildings remained and were used by Jilin University of Science and Technology. The initiator of this trip was Kuwahara Akito. On the Chinese side, five alumni including Wu Dongmin, a member of the 2nd entering class and currently serving as the high-ranking official of the CCP, were involved in the planning. Although the PRC had opened its doors to foreign tourists, the government imposed strict regulations regarding the number of tourists, destinations, and activities. For instance, the trip could not be made under the name of the Kendai Alumni Association. For the purposes of the visit, the Japanese alumni called themselves the Kankirei-kai (“Kankirei group”)—named after the site of the Kendai campus—and had to include in its itinerary a visit to the Vice Mayer of Changchun City to discuss China–Japan collaboration on investment. To gain approval, the official purpose of the trip became the promotion of friendship between the two countries. Of course, the participants’ primary interest was to reunite with their classmates after more than three to four decades of silence. Altogether 90 Japanese alumni and their families traveled to Changchun and several other cities and were able to meet with 108 former classmates living in China.⁶³⁷ After returning from the trip, one of the Japanese participants, Bandō

⁶³⁶ *Ibid.*, 164–165, 128.

⁶³⁷ *Kankirei* (Tokyo: Kenkoku University Allumni Association, 1980), 79.

Yūtarō of the 1st entering class, wrote a newspaper article as the alumni association's secretary. In it, he reported that "both the hosts and their guests exchanged tearful gazes."⁶³⁸ Such emotional encounters occurred throughout the trip. For instance, even though the train the Japanese alumni took to Changchun had only fifteen minute stopover at the Shenyang train station, and despite the fact that the train arrived late in the night, a group of Chinese alumni were waiting at the platform just to exchange a few words and shake hands with their former classmates. There were also three Mongolian alumni who travelled all the way from Inner Mongolia to see them.⁶³⁹

The alumni in Japan and China kept in close contact and held three more reunions in 1992, 1997, and 2004. All three meetings took the same form as the first one in 1980; a number of the Japanese alumni and their families traveled to Changchun and other cities to meet with the Chinese alumni. The event in 1992 had the largest turnout: 154 Japanese participants including alumni's families and 209 Chinese alumni and their families.⁶⁴⁰ Even in 1997 when all of Kendai alumni were in their 70s and 80s, 58 members traveled from Japan to meet with 102 Chinese alumni and their families.⁶⁴¹ On the last trip from Japan in 2004, about 30 members flew to China and met with 58 Chinese alumni.⁶⁴²

⁶³⁸ Yūtarō Bandō, "Netsurui saikai kenkoku daigaku no dōsōsei [Tearful reunion of Kenkoku University alumni]," *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, September 10, 1980. (Reprinted in *Kankirei*, 33.) "迎える者も迎えられる者も、その目に涙が光る。"

⁶³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁰ Chinese participants in reunions held in 1992 were 77 in Changchun, 53 in Beijing, 13 in Dalian, 29 in Shenyang, 23 in Harbin, and 14 in Hohhut, the capital of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region. *Dōgaku reankan [Alumni's reunion]* (Tokyo: Kenkoku University Alumni Association, 1993), 196–204.

⁶⁴¹ Chinese participants in reunions held in 1997 were 51 in Changchun, 18 in Beijing, 6 in Dalian, 12 in Shenyang, and 15 in Hohhut. *Ayumi*, 49–50.

⁶⁴² *Ayumi*, 127, 217.

In the meantime, some Chinese and Japanese alumni joined forces to found a new university, Changchun University, on the former site of Kendai, which was achieved by amalgamating several existing small colleges into a multi-disciplinary university. In the fall of 1985, Chen Kang, who was then serving as the Vice President of the Sino–Japanese Friendship Association, met with four Japanese alumni to request assistance for the project. The list of Kendai alumni involved in the project shows that by the 1980s a number of Chinese and Japanese alumni had risen to high positions in their respective countries. On the Chinese side, Gao Di (8th entering class) was serving as the General Secretary of the CCP in Jilin Province, Wu Dongmin (2nd entering class) was the Director of CCP’s Organizing Committee, Chen Xin (7th entering class) was the Vice Director of the Board of Education in Jilin Province, and Chen Kang had been leading this project.⁶⁴³ The four Japanese alumni whom Chen Kang initially contacted were Hayashi Rintarō (3rd entering class) who had been a high official in the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Bandō Yūtarō (1st entering class), the Vice President of the leading typographical printing company in Japan, Nakagawa Kei’ichirō (1st entering class), Honorary Professor at Tokyo University, and Dodo Kazu, Honorary Professor at Kōbe University.⁶⁴⁴ Among the names Chen Kang initially proposed for the new university was *jianshe daxue*, which would literally translate as “Creation University” but which used the same initial Chinese character as in Kenkoku Daigaku. In the end, erring on the side

⁶⁴³ Chen Jian (7th entering class) who had some position at the Jilin Province and Wen Jianshen (4th entering class), Professor of Foreign Languages at Changchun City Education Academy, were also involved in the project.

⁶⁴⁴ Later, Nagashima Kiyoshi (2nd entering class), who had been Professor at Osaka Prefecture University, joined the project.

of caution, at the suggestion of Nakagawa they adopted the more conventional name of Changchun University.⁶⁴⁵

As to be expected, relations between Kendai's Chinese and Japanese alumni were not without moments of tension and misunderstanding. When Chen Kang asked his Japanese friends for guidance in planning Changchun University, his primary purpose apparently was to obtain financial support from the alumni association in Japan. During the discussion that took place in Changchun in 1986, it became clear to the Japanese alumni that the Chinese members expected to obtain considerably greater financial support from Japan than the alumni association was capable of delivering. Dodo Kazu, who was present at the discussion, later recorded his feelings of frustration that "the Chinese side could not understand" that as a "non-profit private organization without recourse to public funding," Kendai's alumni association in Japan "...could contribute only a limited sum."⁶⁴⁶ On the following day, Dodo appears to have been offended when the Chinese members took the group to see an exhibit on the history of Japanese imperialist invasion in Northeast.⁶⁴⁷ Dodo writes that he felt as if the Chinese members' "purpose in calling on [them] to reflect on the past deeds of Japan was to negotiate a larger financial contribution" from the Japanese alumni association.⁶⁴⁸ Nevertheless, despite some uncomfortable moments among the Japanese alumni who travelled to Changchun, Bandō Yūtarō subsequently persuaded the Japan alumni association to

⁶⁴⁵ Kazu Dodo in *Ayumi*, 59–61.

⁶⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 60. "...生産団体でもなければ...出せる援助は限られている...中国側はこの点を理解できず..."

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 61. "我々に過去の日本の行跡を見せて反省をうながし、金銭的支援交渉を有利にしようとする試みではないかと。"

allocate part of the group's resource to the founding of Changchun University. In addition, he personally solicited donations of 1 million yen from the alumni living in Japan.⁶⁴⁹ In 1987, the university opened on the site of Kendai.⁶⁵⁰

The network of relations rooted in mutual friendship continues. Based on anecdotal evidence quite a few Japanese alumni have served as guarantors of the children and grandchildren of their former Chinese classmates who pursued their education in Japan. Until 1996, it was required that all foreign nationals other than tourists residing in Japan designate a Japanese citizen as their guarantor. Even after this requirement was removed, having a guarantor was necessary for various purposes such as renting an apartment, enrolling in schools, and applying for scholarships. After the alumni association's second trip to the PRC in 1992, the Japanese association expanded these multi-generational exchanges. The first social gathering of the Japanese Kendai alumni and the children and grandchildren of the Chinese Kendai alumni residing in Japan was held in Tokyo on December 5, 1993. Hayashida Takashi (3rd entering class), the president of the alumni association in Japan, explained that the Japanese alumni association members intended to provide guidance and encouragement to the children of their former classmates, "who as parents must be worried about their children studying or working abroad."⁶⁵¹ The gathering have been held annually ever since, attended by over 100

⁶⁴⁹ 1 million yen in the late 1980s was about 6,700 USD.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 59–61.

⁶⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 27. “遠く離れて心配している海外同窓諸兄”

participants each time. A significant number of the Chinese alumni's children and grandchildren have received financial aids from the Japanese association.⁶⁵²

As seen above, after the former Kendai students returned to their various home countries following war's end in 1945 and successfully established new lives, many sought out their former classmates at home and abroad. The Japanese alumni association was the earliest to take root but contact with alumni associations in Korea and China followed in due time as former Kendai students reclaimed the friendship that they had nurtured through the *juku* life at Kendai. Except for a few who were directly involved in the international relations, like Chen Kang and Ichikawa Emon, Kendai alumni's post-war interactions occurred on a much more personal basis than Ishiwara Kanji's idea of an East Asian League. Nationalism and colonialism are antithetical the world over; even the victorious Allied powers soon lost their Asian empires. In hindsight, Japan's defeat in World War II and the shutting down of Kendai in August 1945 may have only hastened the inevitable end of Ishiwara's dream of East Asian nations spontaneously collaborating together to defend against the West. We should also keep in mind evidence of considerable tension and antagonisms within the multi-national Kendai student body which intensified after 1941 and the onset of total war. Nevertheless, Kendai's founding mission of nurturing Pan-Asianism was reborn after the war in the form of personal friendships and the legacy of the ideal of equality and unity among various peoples of Asia.

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*, 25–40, 173.

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