

ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE

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'The First Anglo-Japanese Alliance Treaty'

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'The Second Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the Russo-Japanese War'

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'The Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1911'

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Preface

A symposium was held on 22 February 2002 to commemorate the centenary of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The symposium was arranged by the Suntory and Toyota International Centres for Economics and Related Disciplines in association with the Japan Society, London.

The period of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance covered three treaties of alliance. The first treaty was signed on 30 January 1902 and was intended to last for five years. But the Russo-Japanese War intervened; and the second treaty, a radically different treaty, was signed on 12 August 1905, before the treaty of peace between Japan and Russia was concluded. The alliance was revised again in the light of changing world circumstances. The third treaty was signed on 13 July 1911 and lasted until 17 August 1923 when it was formally replaced. It was the intention of the present symposium to reexamine the first decade of the alliance.

The alliance which spanned the Russo-Japanese War and the First World War and covered the first quarter of the twentieth century has been in need of reassessment for some time. Each of the treaties was examined separately by an expert in the field. We are grateful to them for allowing us to reproduce their papers in this pamphlet.

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Abstracts

Nish dealt with the diplomacy of Britain and Japan in the five months before the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, arguing that it was not a 'natural alliance' but that there were pockets of opposition to it which had to be overcome. In the case of Japan, this was associated with the activities of Marquis Ito in Europe on which much new material was presented. In the case of Britain, the naval and military arguments in favour of closer relations with Japan eventually overcame those against any change in policy.

Steeds argued that all three of the alliance treaties could be numbered among the successful alliances of history. The 1905 treaty was about deterring any kind of Russian revenge in East Asia (for Japan) and Central Asia (for British India) and was successful; but because of a diplomatic revolution which took place after 1907 it became increasingly irrelevant.

Hotta-Lister started with an account of the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910 which was a means of educating Britons about their ally. The 1911 alliance was the weakest of the three treaties. From Britain's standpoint a major purpose was to ensure the security of her dominions in the Pacific, possibly against Japan, while from the Japanese standpoint it was to protect her against her fear of isolation in the Pacific vis-à-vis the United States.

Keywords: Lord Lansdowne; Sir Edward Grey; Hirobumi Ito; Tadasu Hayashi; Jutarō Komura; Taro Katsura; Anglo-Japanese Alliance; Russo-Japanese War; Iswolsky; Imperialism; Japan-British Exhibition.

THE FIRST ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE TREATY

Ian Nish

It is customary for historians to use the opportunity of a centenary to offer a reassessment of an event. I propose in this paper to concentrate on the five months before the alliance was signed. In any marriage there is an agonizing period before the knot is tied; similarly there was an agonizing period before the alliance was concluded. There was no inevitability about the alliance. Britain and Japan were not natural partners. The statesmen involved did not rush into this new policy; options and alternatives were considered on both sides. Indeed there were pro- and anti- lobbies in each country; and there was evidence of reluctance and caution. But consensus was eventually reached.

The alliance was embarked on very cautiously and rationally on both sides. What caused the delays was the very sane consideration: how do we avoid war in the Extreme East? If war in Asia was to be avoided, it was best for the two powers to approach Russia which was the most disruptive country in the east and see if a solution satisfactory to their national interests could be reached. Both Britain and Japan made an approach in St Petersburg and both failed to obtain acceptable guarantees.

Let us first look back to the situation in September 1901. The cabinet of Ito Hirobumi which had been in office since October 1900 had had as foreign minister Kato Takaaki who was one of Japan's strongest advocates of an alliance with Britain. He had initiated steps for talks to this end but the cabinet had collapsed in May. While Ito expected to return to power as the head of a new cabinet, General Katsura was invited to take over as prime minister, leaving Ito bitter. Ito's proved to be the last of the genro (elder statesmen) cabinets. Henceforth for two decades the genro would exert their influence from outside the administration. They were to influence events such as the British alliance from outside the cabinet structure. This was to be a major factor delaying the completion of the alliance and was a mystery to foreigners.

Now out of office, Ito was invited to Yale University which was planning to hold a ceremony to mark the bicentenary of Yale College. In order to mark the new century, it also wanted to identify and honour some of the great statesmen of the 19th century. Ito

who was not averse to foreign honours originally declined because he could not readily leave Japan while he was prime minister. But after his resignation he was able to accept the invitation to visit Newhaven on 23 October and receive an honorary degree.

Inoue Kaoru, one of the elder statesmen and a Choshu friend of Ito since the 1862 mission to Europe, had ambitious plans to use the Yale opportunity to get Ito to visit St Petersburg. Inoue had had more diplomatic experience than Ito but had left active politics in 1898. He was now 73 years of age; and Ito, who was six years his junior, tended to defer to Inoue's judgment. Inoue wanted to sort out Japan's problems with Russia and persuaded Ito of the need for some rapprochement with that country. Although Ito was not as strongly convinced as Inoue, he nonetheless went round Tokyo missions, giving advance warning of his intention to visit European capitals. Noone seems to have wanted to dissuade him from going. The new prime minister, Katsura, indeed seems to have been informed in general terms of his intentions and made no attempt to stop him. Perhaps the possibility of getting Ito out of the way was attractive to him.¹

In case Ito wobbled in his mission, Inoue decided to attach to his suite Tsuzuki Keiroku who had served as foreign vice-minister and was Inoue's son-in-law. Tsuzuki had gone abroad for training and returned from Europe an accomplished linguist. As Minister Claude MacDonald said, he could make a first-rate impromptu speech in French, German or English. Though he was not unfriendly to Britain, he had had much experience in Russia, having visited there in 1888 and again in 1896 when Yamagata represented Japan at the tsar's coronation. It was said that he was a convinced believer in some sort of Russo-Japanese agreement so he was more than an interpreter. He had a political agenda.²

Ito set off for Seattle on 18 September 1901. On the following day Komura Jutaro arrived from Peking to take up his post as foreign minister. This he officially did on 21 September. One of his recent appointments had been at St Petersburg where he had gone in February 1900. He was then switched to Peking to replace Nishi at the end of that year in order to take part in the negotiations to resolve the Boxer Catastrophe and prepare the Peking protocol in September. He left Peking where he had established specially cordial relations with the British minister on 9 September. His late arrival in Tokyo the day after Ito departed on his vaguely defined 'mission' is a coincidence. Some

think it was regrettable that Komura missed the opportunity to talk to Ito.

'This gap of one day had a decisive influence on Japan's destiny (ummei).'

³

Komura was neither pro-British nor anti-Russian. Indeed in 1900 he had recommended an understanding with Russia. He wanted a delimitation of spheres of influence between the two countries. But I have the feeling that his experiences of negotiations at Peking (1900-1) had made him distrust Russia. Indeed one of his first acts was to ask one of his officials if Britain's record of loyalty to alliances and obligations was good. On 8 October, within a month of his taking up office, Komura gave Hayashi in London plenipotentiary powers to proceed with negotiations even though Ito was already on his way to Russia.

Britain's Position

Lord Lansdowne was appointed foreign secretary in Lord Salisbury's new administration in October 1900. He had served as Indian viceroy in the 1880s at the time of the Afghan wars, and as Secretary of State for War from 1895. He had been involved in decisions leading up to the South African war which had taken much longer to settle than had been expected. At the Foreign Office, he was of course always under the shadow of the prime minister, Lord Salisbury. But the latter was spending much time at Hatfield. So Salisbury was not interfering unduly; but he was a person of formidable experience in foreign affairs and held firm views. Whereas Salisbury was ready to continue with splendid isolation, Lansdowne was pragmatic, realistic and conciliatory. The problem was Russian expansionism. Whereas European governments were all encouraging Russia to expand into Asia, Britain was out of step and objected to her activities on India's borders and to a lesser extent in Manchuria.⁴

When Japan passed over the main lines of her proposals on 16 October, Lansdowne took the precaution of probing to find out if any arrangement was possible with Russia over the multitude of outstanding problems: the Persian loan and the north-eastern provinces of China. The results of these discussions with Lamsdorf, the Russian foreign minister, were discussed by the cabinet on 28 October but were not to be pursued.⁵ There was evidently also a hurried discussion about the alliance. A.J. Balfour gives us a glimpse of the 'perhaps rather hasty decision [which was] come to at the first of our autumn cabinets with regard to Japan. I do not think we ought ever to have offered to enter into an offensive and defensive alliance with Japan [without considering

Germany].'⁶

The strongest advocate of positive steps to join with Japan was Lord Selborne, who had become First Lord of the Admiralty in the cabinet reshuffle. He had run into difficulties over the naval estimates with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Michael Hicks Beach. Like all good chancellors, Hicks Beach was the scourge of the spending departments. Asked for finance to build up the Royal Navy, he refused and urged Selborne to seek agreement with hostile naval powers. There had been an immense growth of world navies: Russia, the United States, France and Germany now had formidable naval forces and Britain could no longer afford to observe the Two-power standard, i.e. to build against the next two strongest fleets. In addition there was the political aspect: Russia and France were allies; and Russia was sending much of her fleet to east Asian waters. This presented a problem for Britain's China squadron, the most expensive unit that she had to operate.

Could some means of pooling resources be worked out with Japan? Japan had built substantially since 1895 using the China indemnity and now had a first-class foreign-built fleet of six battleships. The *Mikasa*, the last of these, was about to be launched from British yards - perhaps the most powerful vessel afloat in its class. But Japan had come to the end of her building programmes and had not the finance to continue, whereas the Russians were alleged to be still continuing with theirs. So there was a presumption in Britain that Japan could be looking for a naval partner. Selborne stressed the value to Britain of some sort of naval alliance with Japan and concluded that her policy of splendid isolation was no longer possible. He took the precaution of obtaining the blessing (not without qualifications) of his former minister, Joseph Chamberlain, the strongest member of the cabinet, who was already doubtful about Britain's going it alone.⁷

By coincidence Komura's staunchest supporter within the cabinet was Selborne's opposite number, Admiral Yamamoto Gonnohyoei, the navy minister. Two years older than Komura, he belonged to a generation which wanted to resist Russia by force and had favoured some alliance with Britain from 1898 onwards. From the Japanese side we know that Yamamoto was surprisingly well-informed about the Royal Navy's attitudes and was aware that it favoured an alliance with Japan because of the financial cost of shipbuilding and the Boer war. Captain Tamari, his naval attache in London, kept

him briefed about thinking in the Royal Navy. Intelligence work by the legation was good though those in the Admiralty were probably not slow to complain about the lack of finance they were given for shipbuilding.⁸

When the British cabinet met on 5 November, the large majority was in favour of pushing ahead with the proposed alliance with Japan but there were certain dissenting voices who wanted emphasis to be put on the need for Japanese assistance in the defence of India rather than a purely east Asian agreement. On the following day the preliminary British draft was handed to Hayashi.⁹

It is often said that on the British side the alliance was an Admiralty initiative. This is not entirely true. To be sure, there was interest in some naval arrangement with Japan for budgetary and political reasons. But there were also strategic reasons connected with anxieties over Russian expansion in Asia, particularly Afghanistan, and the threat it posed to the defence of India. British politicians as a whole and the army in particular were conscious of the supreme difficulty of dealing with an expansive Russia on India's northern borders. For them, Manchuria and Korea were lesser concerns, though they were, of course, the prime source of Japan's anxieties.

Japanese Delays

Admiral Yamamoto stood alongside Komura in his objectives and supported Katsura in cabinet committees. General Kodama Gentaro, the war minister, does not feature prominently but there is evidence that he was a strong advocate of an anti-Russian alliance. General Yamagata Aritomo, the most senior army leader, was known to be supportive of the British alliance.

The cabinet decided to proceed with the negotiations and referred it to the genro. They in turn passed it to the Emperor who wanted to refer Japan's counterdraft to Ito during his travels in Europe. On 28 November the cabinet passed over to him its revised draft with some fundamental changes. On that very day Ito was meeting the Tsar in St Petersburg. Inoue also communicated his views, using the Foreign Ministry cipher. On 4 December Ito was bold enough to pass over a 'purely personal' draft of a possible Russo-Japanese agreement to the Russian foreign minister. Lamsdorf promised to refer the matter to the Tsar and ministers when he next had access to them. Though he could hardly guess the urgency of Ito's overture, Lamsdorf approached the matter in the

lackadaisical way in which business was typically conducted in Russia. Ito then set off for Berlin to await the Russian reply.¹⁰

Needless to say, Britain used the darker arts of intelligence and espionage to find out about Ito's doings and intentions. But the British ambassador had to confess that he could not make much headway. St Petersburg was among the most security-conscious capitals in Europe.¹¹

On 7 December the Genro held a secret conference with Katsura and Komura and approved a draft to be sent to Ito in Berlin, urging delay in his approach to Russia. Ito replied by asking the government to hold up talks with London. But Hayashi handed over Japan's amended draft to Lansdowne on 12 December.

Members of the British cabinet also had last-minute nerves, not so much about ending its traditional isolation as about the long-term strategic implications. Balfour wrote

'The momentous step has been taken and, if the Japanese accept our proposals, we may find ourselves fighting for our existence in every part of the globe against Russia and France.'¹²

In other words Balfour, next to Salisbury in seniority in the cabinet, had his doubts about the whole project on the ground that Britain's responsibilities in an emergency after the alliance came into being would be notionally global, while Japan's would be regional. In Britain's view, the draft they were studying was not that of an equal treaty.

Britain, by allowing Japan to procrastinate, risked a political explosion from any premature leakage. This could be damaging if politicians or columnists wanted to retain the image of Britain as a power proud of its isolation and to condemn the government for breaking the traditions of British foreign policy. There was a presumption that public opinion would be dubious, not to say hostile. In fact, there were several leakages to the news media in Japan. The *Kokumin Shimbun*, often regarded as a government organ, contained the statement that there was talk of an alliance in London. On 27 December a minor newspaper, the *Niroku Shimpō*, had a scoop, reporting that the British government had formally proposed such an alliance and that the Foreign Ministry had been consulting Ito abroad and negotiating on a highly secret basis.¹³ Despite searches the Foreign Ministry never discovered the source of the leak. There is some evidence to suggest that Ito or his party who had by this time reached London, may inadvertently -

or deliberately - have dropped a hint to journalists who accompanied them. But it is not conclusive.

Ito in London

On 24 December of all days in the year, the distinguished Japanese statesman arrived in London from Brussels. It is on this aspect of the story that I place the emphasis in this paper. Over the next few days Ito exchanged messages with Tokyo, modifying his earlier position. Eventually he conceded on the basis of the reply he had received from Lamsdorf that Japan would have to complete the negotiations with Britain before negotiating with Russia. In other words, the priorities for him had changed; and British negotiations would have to take precedence over Russian ones. On 26 December Salisbury gave an extravagant banquet in his honour and complimented him on his spoken English. On the following day Ito visited King Edward VII at Marlborough House where he was spending Christmas instead of going to Sandringham.¹⁴

On 1 January 1902 Ito visited Lansdowne's private estate at Bowood in Wiltshire. At 10am the following day he had an exhaustive discussion with Lansdowne about how the negotiations were going, the assumption being that he knew all about the negotiations that had taken place. Ito made an important statement:

'I am very anxious not to leave any misunderstanding about [what I have been doing in Russia]. I have no thought of a *double jeu* [double dealing]. We never contemplated an alliance with Russia as we do with Britain. We only desired to try by the most peaceful method to reach a complete agreement with Russia by moving the milepost of our existing Russo-Japanese agreement [of 1898] in order to safeguard our interests in Korea.'

Lansdowne's account indicates that he was reassured by Ito's statement. Ito and his party signed the visitors' book on 2 January, the day of their departure, and set off back to London.¹⁵

The notion that Lansdowne talked Ito out of his opposition to the alliance at Bowood is doubtful. Ito had already given up the Russian approach otherwise he would have stayed on in Berlin or Brussels. There was no pressure on him to visit London and certainly a visit in mid-January would have been more acceptable to the authorities in London than one over the Christmas period. In any case, Hayashi had presumably gone over the ground thoroughly during Christmas week and convinced him of the merits of

the ongoing British approach.

On Friday 3 January an elaborate luncheon was held at the Mansion House hosted by the Lord Mayor, Sir J.C. Dimsdale, M.P, who praised Ito's conspicuous services to Japan. In reply, Ito said in the peroration to quite a memorable speech:

'The focus of international competition is moving steadily towards the Pacific Ocean and... Japan is obliged... to play an ever increasingly [sic] part in the peaceful development of that portion of the globe [cheers]. I sincerely hope ... that these friendly feelings and mutual sympathies which have existed between us in the past shall be daily more strongly cemented in the future [cheers].'¹⁶

Was this a coded message from Ito to the British public about the alliance?

Many in his audience must have wondered about the purpose behind Ito's ill-timed visit.

On this point Minister Hayashi offered clarification in his speech:

'While former entertainments by Lord Mayor have been given to the official representatives of my country, in the present instance the Lord Mayor has done honour to a gentleman who, although he has the respect and confidence of his august Master,... is nevertheless *journeying only as a private gentleman*'.¹⁷
(My italics)

While this statement is technically correct, I believe it to have been misleading. Ito as Elder Statesman was more than a private gentleman and had the influence to prevent the alliance, even at this late stage, had he been so inclined. In fact he threw his weight behind the alliance at this eleventh-hour.

On Monday 6 January Ito saw Lansdowne for a second time for official conversation (as distinct from social contacts) when they spoke quite frankly about Ito's conversations in Russia.¹⁸ But first Ito reported that he had received an invitation to join the king at Sandringham to which he had been able to move because of his improved health. He said that he could hardly refuse the wishes of the sovereign of another country; but it was inconvenient as he was booked to leave London the next morning. The assumption is that Edward VII intended to present Ito personally with the Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath (GCB) which it had been agreed to give him. Eventually Lansdowne stepped in and had the invitation withdrawn. But it illustrates the different cultural attitudes taken towards the monarchy in Britain and Japan.

Among his last engagements, Ito paid a visit to Hatfield House, the home of the prime minister. He also met a deputation from the Japan Society of London at the Alexandra Hotel at which he paid a tribute to its sterling work. Finally Hayashi entertained Ito at a banquet at the Japanese legation with Lord Lansdowne, Lord Roberts, Sir Thomas Sanderson, Col. Sir W.J. Colville (King's Master of Ceremonies), F. Bertie and F.H. Villiers present. It was here that the award of the GCB to Ito was formally announced.

On 7 January Ito left London from Victoria by the Paris boat train. Lansdowne breathed a sigh of relief and wrote to Joseph Chamberlain

'Ito has gone away in great good humour and Hayashi declares that altho[ugh] there was more splash at Berlin and Petersburg [sic] his reception here has really gratified him.'¹⁹

In a ceremony at the British embassy in Paris Ito received the GCB. This honour had been widely welcomed in the press in London while Ito was there; but the necessary preparations could not be made before he reached Paris.

So ended a most interesting episode in diplomatic history. As one who has spent his career studying the craftiness of Bismarck and Talleyrand, not to mention Disraeli, Lloyd George and Henry Kissinger, I have to admit that this was one of the most remarkable events. Ito held up the course of history for a month and more. He was, of course, at the apex of his career and had an undefinable power in Japan as the senior Genro. Britain, like other foreign governments, could not know what influence he still carried but was clearly uncertain about the outcome of his presence in Europe.

The Final Strait

January was a busy month for the negotiators in London and Tokyo. At this late stage Japan persisted with two demands : the insertion of an explicit reference to her special political interests in Korea and a commitment that Britain would keep a substantial fleet in far eastern waters. These were both difficult points for Lansdowne to concede. Britain preferred to refer to 'Korea's independence and territorial integrity'. It was not that Britain opposed Japan's rights in Korea; but she was worried that the draft treaty would now have the appearance of being one-sided in favour of Japan, which would give an undesirable impression to the British public. Those who were worried on this were Chamberlain, Balfour, Beach and Salisbury - all the Big Guns in the cabinet. These were

not generally hostile to the concept of the alliance; but for party political reasons they did want it to be seen to be even-handed, not one-sided in favour of Japan. Eventually Lansdowne succeeded in bringing a semblance of parity to the treaty.

On the second point, Japan was well aware from intelligence and other sources that Britain hoped through the alliance to withdraw part of her fleet from Chinese waters. Japan's last-minute proposal, while understandable from her point of view, was intended to prevent the Admiralty reducing the size of its squadron in the east. So a formula had to be sought. Lansdowne said he was seeking a form of words. What emerged was that Britain affirmed that she had 'no intention of relaxing her efforts to maintain *available for concentration* in the waters of the Extreme East a naval force superior to that of any third Power.' This formulation was agreed. But the interpretation of 'available for concentration' was to give rise to misunderstanding in the future.

On 30 January the alliance treaty which was limited to the 'Extreme East' was signed in London. There were three constituent factors : the Open Door preamble; the alliance mechanism; and its duration of five years. The treaty has to be read in conjunction with two glosses: the secret diplomatic note regarding naval sizes and the totally unofficial Ito-Lansdowne parleys.

That left the question of communication to other powers. There was a deliberate gap before publishing the treaty in the two countries so that it could be kept for two weeks in the secret domain. Japan was anxious that the treaty should be announced during this interlude to other powers in order to show how peace-loving the signatories were. Interestingly enough, the three parties to which she wanted to make the notification were the partners in the Dreibund of 1895: Germany, Russia and France. A similar notice was given rather later to the United States.

Eventually on 12 February it was announced to parliament and the press in both countries. The reaction in Japan was one of unrestrained joy. The Katsura government being in the middle of a Diet session in which it was being comprehensively attacked by the opposition Seiyukai, decided to maximize its publicity over the alliance. Seiyukai members, in the absence of their leader, Ito, reserved judgment. The *Jiji Shimpō*, the newspaper which had consistently been most favourable to a link with Britain, welcomed it. Kato Takaaki who could in many ways be described as the father of the alliance

described it as highly advantageous for Japan. In a detailed and well-informed article, he defined it as an offensive-defensive alliance (*koshu domei*) in the same mould as the Franco-Russian alliance and the triple alliance of Germany, Austria and Italy, except that its bounds were unlimited. While his interpretation was suspect, he seemed even to welcome the possibility that Japanese troops might have to go to the aid of Britain in South Africa. It was for him a recognition that Japan after her success in the Sino-Japanese war and the revision of her treaties was worthy of an alliance.²⁰

In the British parliament which had reassembled on 16 January there was broad satisfaction. Joseph Chamberlain wrote a note to Lansdowne, congratulating him on 'the popularity of the 'coup' you have made in the Japanese Treaty... The Archangel Gabriel could not have held that position without losing some of his feathers'. In other words, there were some murmurs of dissent in parliament. The foreign secretary replied 'I had no idea the Treaty would be taken so well'.²¹

Decorations were given out on a lavish scale in Japan, but not in Britain. Throughout its nine months in office, the Katsura ministry had been described as 'a cabinet of unknowns'. Now it was determined to capitalize on this diplomatic success by rewarding all its members with honours. While they were not specifically announced as 'alliance honours', the fact that they were conferred on 27 February suggests a clear connection. Katsura became a viscount; General Kodama (army) and Minister Hayashi became barons. Others who had to be content with decorations were Foreign Minister Komura, Navy Minister Yamamoto and former Foreign Minister Sone Arasuke.²²

An interesting commentary on these events is given in the autobiography of Ozaki Yukio, who was for many decades an important political figure, recently published in English. It illustrates a common Japanese view about the origins of the alliance.

'The unexpected emergence of a possible Japanese alliance with Britain thrust Ito into a difficult position, forcing him to leave Russia for Berlin under cover of darkness. Katsura was proud of his achievement in forging the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and often said to me later that nothing had given him greater satisfaction. He was implying that Emperor Meiji had rejected Ito's view and found Katsura's suggestion of an alliance with Britain more to his liking. Since Katsura had in fact *merely reacted to a British initiative*, there was no real reason for him to be so pleased with himself.'²³ (My italics)

This is a very garbled version; but it is one very commonly held among Japanese today.

Politicians often have a very erroneous view of events happening around them. But Japanese historians know better.

To take up the points individually, it gives a wrong impression to say that 'Katsura merely reacted to a British initiative'. There is little point in saying who took the initiative. There were those on both sides who wanted an alliance and were putting out feelers to test the ground and promote their own ideas. Similarly there were those trying to prevent it. It is pointless in this context to ask which government took the first step. Talks always start on a private basis and gradually move on to an official one, though even there many denials take place. When the Foreign Office was challenged in the House of Commons with taking the initiative, the rather robust defence of Lord Cranborne was 'It is not for us to seek treaties; we grant them.' But this remark which was much resented in Japan was also rather economical with the truth.²⁴ The first draft of a treaty to be concluded in the English language had to be made in Britain; but this is not adequate evidence that Britain was the initiator.

Secondly, it is true that Ito had to leave the Russian capital during the hours of darkness. But Ito's departure was not so humiliating or unexpected as Katsura portrayed it and Ozaki liked to think. There was a strong element of political enmity between Katsura and Ito. So Katsura was probably very happy when the Emperor eventually gave up his support for Ito's Russian overtures. Nonetheless Ito seems to have emerged with dignity from his travels, in both Russian and British eyes.

The thrust of this paper has been to show that the first alliance - the so-called offensive-defensive alliance - was peaceful in intention. Russian historians do not see it that way. They see it as a device by which British egged on Japan to make war on their country. The grounds for my view are to be found in the Ito-Lansdowne parleys without which one cannot understand the first alliance. Minister Hayashi in his *Secret Memoirs* which are still an important source about the origins of the alliance does not attach great importance to the Ito-Lansdowne parleys in which he was not involved.²⁵ But Lansdowne was worldly wise. He and his cabinet members wanted to ensure that there was no war and, more importantly, that, in the contingency that war took place, Britain did not get drawn in. But he had to contemplate the 'worst case scenario' (though Arthur Balfour would hardly have savoured the phrase) which was that the coming into being of the alliance would encourage Japan to be more demanding and Russia to be more

difficult when she came to hear of it. Eventually, after the war broke out between Japan and Russia in February 1904, Lansdowne set out his views to the king:

'The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, although not intended to encourage the Japanese Government to resort to extremities, had, and was sure to have, the effect of making Japan feel that she might try conclusions with her great rival in the Far East, free from all risk of a European coalition such as that which had on a previous occasion deprived her of the fruits of victory.'²⁶

In short, Lansdowne like the Japanese saw the first alliance in the context of the 1895 Dreibund.

Endnotes

¹ *Koshaku Ito Hirobumi den*, Tokyo, 1943, iii, pp. 529-30. New studies bearing on this topic are Stuart Lone, *Army, Empire and Politics in Meiji Japan: The Three Careers of General Katsura*, Basingstoke : Macmillan, 2000; F.R. Dickinson, *War and National Reinvention*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1999; Hiram Yoichi, *Nichi-Ei domei*, Tokyo : PHP, 2000; Murashima Shigeru, 'Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1895-1923' in Nish and Kibata (eds), *History of Anglo-Japanese Relations, vol. i*, Basingstoke : Macmillan, 2000, pp. 159-96; R.R. McLean, *Royalty and Diplomacy in Europe, 1890-1914*, Cambridge: University Press, 2001; Hayashi Wataru, 'The Rise and Fall of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance from 1902 to 1923' in *Hogaku Ronshu* (Chiba University), vol. 3(2001), pp. 28-69.

². Tsuzuki (1861-1923) was extraordinarily able but never reached the dizzy heights because of illness. Sir Claude MacDonald in Ian Nish (ed.), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Part I, Series E : 'Asia'*, University Publications of America, 1989, vol. ix, p. 79.

³. *Komura gaikoshi*, ii, Tokyo: Foreign Ministry, 1953, pp.160-2. Satow to Lansdowne, 12 Sept. 1901 in British Foreign Office papers, 262/842.

⁴. Andrew Roberts, *Salisbury : Victorian Titan*, London : Weidenfeld, 1999, ch. 47.

⁵. Ian Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1894-1907*, London : Athlone, 1966, p. 180. C.J. Lowe, *Reluctant Imperialists*, vol. i, London : Routledge, 1967, doc. 136.

⁶. Balfour to Lansdowne, 12 Dec. 1901 in Balfour papers (British Museum), Add MSS 49727.

⁷. Selborne prepared a series of memoranda on related topics for the cabinet. That of 4 September is found in Lowe, *Reluctant Imperialists*, pp. 129-32, while those of 2 September and 16 November are to be found in D.G. Boyce, *The Crisis of British*

Power : Imperial and Naval Papers of second Earl of Selborne, 1895-1910, London: Historians Press, 1990, pp. 123-36.

⁸. Ikeda Kiyoshi, *Nihon no kaigun*, vol. i, pp. 245-6.

⁹. Memorandum by Francis Bertie, 27 October (9 November 1901) in G.P. Gooch and H.W.V. Temperley (eds), *British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898-1914*, vol. ii, London : HMSO, 1927, Doc. 91. Nish, *Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, p. 180.

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¹¹ Hardinge to Lansdowne, 26 Nov. 1901 in British Documents, ii, no. 76; Hardinge to Sanderson, 28 Nov. 1901 in Charles Hardinge papers 3 in Cambridge University Library.

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¹⁴ *Ito-den*, iii, 546.

¹⁵ For information about Ito signing the visitors' book at Bowood, I am grateful to the curator of Bowood Estates. *British Documents*, ii, 108-11. The phrase 'double game' is also used in Hayashi's *Secret Memoirs*, p. 148.

¹⁶ [London] *Times*, 4 Jan. 1902 in archives of Japan Society of London.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ *British Documents*, ii, 110-11. This point is elaborated at length in Nish, 'Foreign Secretaries' in McKercher and Moss, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-2

¹⁹ Joseph Chamberlain to Lansdowne, 5 Jan. 1902 and reply, 7 Jan. 1902 in Lansdowne papers. Also Beach to Lansdowne, 2 Jan. 1902 in Lansdowne papers.

²⁰ *Jiji Shimpo*, 12 Feb. 1902.

²¹ Joseph Chamberlain to Lansdowne, 22 Feb. 1902 in Lansdowne papers.

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²³ Ozaki Yukio, *Autobiography: The struggle for constitutional government in Japan*, (translated by Fujiko Hara) Princeton : University Press, 2001, pp. 210-11. An earlier

translation which exists in typescript in the Library of International House, Tokyo, confirms his understanding that Britain offered the alliance and Japan accepted it.

²⁴ Lord Cranborne in house of commons, 4 July 1902.

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THE SECOND ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE AND THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

David Steeds

One of the features of contemporary British society is a preoccupation with anniversaries, whether personal, family, or national. The early months of 2002 provided an interesting contrast: in January, there was the celebration of the centenary of the signing of the first Anglo-Japanese Alliance in January 1902; in February, there was the commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Fall of Singapore in February 1942. The two events are arguably the high and low points of Anglo-Japanese relations in the Twentieth Century.

Alliances

It is not always easy to measure the success of an alliance, and it is much easier to point to the failures. We have plenty of examples of the latter category in the Twentieth Century, a century awash with alliances. The obvious cases include the Triple Alliance which began World War One and from which Italy walked away in 1915, the Anglo-French Alliance at the beginning of World War Two, and a number of alliances with East Asian connections, such as the Four Power Pact of 1921, the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis, and the Manila Pact of 1954.

The greatest success story was almost certainly the Grand Alliance of the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and the United States, which operated between 1941 and 1945. The alliance involved states with differing ideologies, world views and objectives, but with agreement on a short term goal, the defeat of the Axis. It demonstrated the truth of the old adage, 'if we don't hang together, we shall all hang separately!' All three of the Anglo-Japanese alliances can be numbered among the successes, although doubts can be expressed about the Third Alliance of 1911.

A successful alliance often rests on a huge element of bluff. A good example of this is NATO during the Cold War. Would it have responded to a Soviet bloc attack? If the attack had come on the Central front, across the North German plain, almost certainly it would have. If the attack had been on Turkey or Norway, the outcome might have been very different. But NATO's bluff was never seriously tested, let alone called. The bluff factor exists for all three of the Anglo-Japanese Alliances. It

was not tested during the lifetime of the first two alliances, but it was during the Third Alliance. The Alliance passed the test and worked between 1914 and 1918.

Alliances will work if the signatories agree on the agenda. The partners do not have to have the same goals, but, to use the cliché, they must be singing from the same song sheet. This happened with the alliances of 1902 and 1905. By 1911, the agendas were beginning to diverge: over China, over the relationship with the United States, and over British imperial problems.

Alliances can have a life of their own. The main target of the 1905 alliance was Russia; the alliance was about deterring any kind of Russian revenge attacks in the Far East or Central Asia. However, by the end of 1907, partly because of the alliance, something of a diplomatic revolution had occurred, and Russia, together with France, was now onside. But the alliance continued, and the states now most adversely affected by it were Germany, the United States and China.

All three of the Anglo-Japanese alliances were between imperialist powers. The United Kingdom was the world power of the day, both in terms of the size and the quality of its empire. It was past the zenith of its power, but it had not yet reached the high point of territorial expansion, which came in 1919. Japan, in contrast, was a newcomer on the imperial scene, thinking in 1902 and 1925 in regional Northeast Asian terms, but after 1911, moving on to a broader East Asian and Pacific perspective. The United Kingdom was interested in safeguarding the fruits of empire; Japan was interested in acquiring such fruits. All was well as long as the two states were interested in different fruits, but this was not the case after 1912.

The Russo-Japanese War, 1904 – 1905

The first Anglo-Japanese Alliance was signed on 30 January 1902, and the Russo-Japanese War began on 8 February 1904, just over two years later. The war lasted from February 1904 to September 1905, a comparatively short struggle by the standards of the major wars of the Twentieth Century.

Japan's victory was decisive, but a long way short of total. On land, the Japanese forces won a series of battles: Yalu (May 1904), the siege of Port Arthur (May 1904 – January 1905), Liao-Yang (August 1904), and Mukden (February – March 1905). At sea, Japan triumphed in a series of engagements, culminating in one of the greatest

sea battles of modern times, with Togo's crushing defeat of Rozhdestvensky's fleet at Tsushima in May 1905.

By the summer of 1905, Japan was consistently winning the battles, but she was still a long way from winning the war. Moreover, she had suffered heavy losses in manpower, and financially, she had serious problems. Russia was on the brink of domestic revolution, but was pouring reinforcements along the Trans-Siberian railway to the Far East.

The major powers were anxious to bring the conflict to an end. France, Russia's ally, was afraid that a Russian collapse would leave her alone in Europe, and also the conflict was placing a major strain on her banking system. Germany, too, was in favour of peace. She feared that a heavy Russian defeat might lead to revolution, and that this could be contagious. The United States did not want either side to win a decisive victory.

The upshot was the meeting of a peace conference at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in August 1905, with the United States Government, led by President Theodore Roosevelt, playing the role of chairman, conciliator and intermediary. The peace conference lasted from 10 August to 5 September, and led to the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth, ending the war.

Japan did not achieve all her objectives at Portsmouth, and her gains barely matched her success on the battlefield. She did make some significant gains: (1) Russia recognised her paramount interests in Korea; (2) she acquired territories and interests in southern Manchuria with the transfer of the lease of the Liaotung Peninsula together with the southern section of the Chinese Eastern Railway; (3) she acquired the southern part of the island of Sakhalin. But she wanted the whole of Sakhalin, and she did not achieve one of her main objectives, which she desperately needed, namely the payment of a Russian indemnity.

From an outsider's perspective, it can be argued that Japan did well at Portsmouth, and laid a firm foundation for her successful imperialist career in the next forty years on the mainland of Asia. The terms, however, were not well-received in Tokyo. There was a significant gap in the autumn of 1905 between the popular perception of Japan's victory, and the real situation, both military and financial.

What was the role of the United Kingdom in all this? How had the Alliance worked? What part did it play in the events and successes of 1904-05? Overall, Britain's role was that of the loyal and faithful ally, carrying out the terms of the agreement of 1902. This was accepted officially by the Japanese Government, although unofficially there was criticism of what Britain did – or rather did not do – and some feeling that she could have done more.

At the beginning of the war it is evident that there was uncertainty in London as to what would happen. There was no great confidence among British ministers that Japan would be victorious. Despite this, in an important move just before the commencement of hostilities, Britain rejected a French approach in January 1904 with the suggestion of mediation. Such a move reawakened memories of the three-power intervention against Japan in 1895. Britain would not interfere, or spoil Japan's plans or cramp her room for manoeuvre.

The United Kingdom, along with the United States, played a major role in the financing of Japan's war. Between May 1904 and July 1905, at least four major loans were successfully negotiated, and these were absolutely essential to the war effort. These were commercial transactions, not official Government help, but nonetheless vital.

With regard to the war at sea, Britain, while remaining within the boundaries of neutrality, played a positive and helpful role. Before hostilities commenced, Britain prevented Russia from buying two warships, available because of a cancelled order from Chile. The Royal Navy eventually purchased the vessels to stop them from falling into Russian hands. Again, Britain acted as an agent for Japan in purchasing two cruisers, built in Italy, and originally intended for Argentina. These arrived in Japan in March 1904 shortly after the outbreak of hostilities. Britain did its best to obstruct and delay the passage of Rozhdestvensky's fleet from the Baltic to the Far East. Apart from the rather bizarre events at Dogger Bank, the fleet was denied access to British ports and to supplies of high quality coal. Britain can take no direct credit for Tsushima, but it can claim some credit for the fact that it took the Russians so long to reach the Pacific. By the time that the fleet arrived off the coast of Japan, its original objectives had long since disappeared. A recent article in *War in History* suggests that there was no formal secret service agreement with Japan. There was

some monitoring of Russian naval movements during the war, and information was passed on to the Japanese. The British helped the Japanese to improve their naval transmitters, and also provided assistance with the range-finders installed in the Japanese warships at Tsushima.

The most important action that Britain took during the war was an indirect one, but it nevertheless had decisive consequences. This was the conclusion in April 1904 of the Entente Cordiale with France. The Entente was very much the product of the emerging situation in Europe, and it had no direct connection to the Far East – the nearest it got to the region was Siam and the New Hebrides! But it took the tension out of the relationship between France – Russia's ally – and the United Kingdom – Japan's ally – and made it extremely unlikely that France would come to Russia's assistance. Britain's global position improved significantly, and her obligations under Article III of the 1902 Alliance now became something of a formality.

The United Kingdom played a semi-detached role in the peace negotiations in the summer of 1905. Britain welcomed American attempts at mediation, and Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary, agreed to support them. He made it clear, however, that Britain would not put any pressure on Japan: 'we would be unable to bring pressure on Japan with a view to her abating reasonable demands'. The attitude was correct, but at times it irritated the United States, and it was something of a foretaste of what was to come! While the peace negotiations were in progress, separate negotiations for a renewal and revision of the Alliance were also going ahead. This was a positive behind-the-scenes boost for Japan.

The Russo-Japanese War brought victory to Japan, and it was a triumph for the Alliance. Japan fought its war under the best possible conditions, and Britain was able to maintain its interests, and indeed improve its position, by the agreement with France. Japan was now launched on its imperialist career in Northeast Asia. Would Japan have gone to war without the Alliance? I suspect that she probably would have done. The facts are, however, that she had the Alliance, she went to war, the Alliance worked, and she won.

The Second Anglo-Japanese Alliance, August 1905

While the war was in progress, the question of renewal and revision of the Alliance occupied policy-makers in London and Tokyo, despite the fact that the 1902

agreement still had two more years to run. The result was a second Alliance, very different from the first, signed, sealed and settled in the summer of 1905.

From Japan's perspective, it was about renewal, revision and extension. The first Alliance was successful, but circumstances were changing. A second Alliance was needed to safeguard Japan's new position, to underscore the new situation in Korea, and to deter Russia from all thoughts of a second round – any kind of war of revenge.

The United Kingdom was also interested in renewal, revision and extension. At this stage, the Alliance was less vital to London than it was to Tokyo, but it was seen as a great success by both the Government and by the Liberal-Imperialist wing of the Opposition. Britain's global strategic position improved considerably in 1904-05, partly because of the Alliance and Japan's victory – particularly the destruction of the Russian fleet at Tsushima - but rather more, probably, because of the Entente Cordiale with France.

One issue that particularly exercised the policy-makers in London was the matter of broadening the geographical remit of the Alliance to include India. There was a fear that Russia, thwarted in the Far East, might try to make good its losses by expansion in Central Asia – with a push towards the Indian frontier and involving Afghanistan and Tibet. The view in London was that, whatever else had happened since February 1904, the Russian railway system to the Far East had worked well; there were similar opportunities through Orenburg to Tashkent in Central Asia. With all the advantages of hindsight, and with knowledge of what was about to happen in Russia, we can be critical of the thinking in London and Calcutta. But we must accept that the fears of Russian expansion were deep and long-standing. Many of the policy-makers found it difficult to accept that Russia had suffered a significant defeat, and, also, there was little real awareness of the mounting political, economic and social problems facing the Russian Government on the home front. A few policy-makers, without the benefit of hindsight, were more realistic. Sir George Clarke, the Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence, argued that Russia would not be capable of a campaign similar to 1904-05 for at least ten years.

Informal talks about renewal and revision began in February 1905. The talks were put on a more formal basis in June and July, and the agreed, revised and extended Alliance was signed on Saturday, 12 August 1905, at the London residence of Lord

Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary. The peace talks at Portsmouth began two days before. It was decided to make no public announcement until the conclusion of the Portsmouth negotiations, although in the last weeks of August, news of the Alliance leaked out. It is interesting that Article IV of the new treaty provided a safeguard in the event of the failure of the Portsmouth negotiations and the continuation of the war. It was very similar in wording to Article III of the 1902 agreement. Details of the new alliance were made public on 27 September 1905, some three weeks after the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth.

It cannot be emphasised enough that the 1905 Alliance, the Second Alliance, was a new alliance, not just a renewal of 1902. The terms were different, and the thrust was very different:

- The new alliance was offensive in tone. This was no 'keeping-the-ring' agreement. Article III provided that any attack on the territory or interests covered in the treaty of either signatory would at once bring the other signatory in to wage war alongside its ally.
- The geographical scope of the new alliance was much wider with the inclusion of India.
- The new alliance accepted the Japanese position on Korea. There was no reference to the independence of Korea, rather there was recognition of Japan's "paramount political, military and economic interests" in that country.
- The new alliance was to last for ten years.

The question of Japanese support for the British in India was, from the very first, controversial. There was always something of a racial undertone on the British side. In 1905, Balfour, the Prime Minister, commented: 'We think it inconsistent with the security or dignity of the Empire that the defence of any part of it should depend mainly on a foreign power.' In 1907, the India Office view was that Japanese troops should operate in 'a sphere of action distant from our own, and one that would not involve their landing in India'. One idea mooted was that they might land on the coast of Persia and move north!

Japanese doubts about an Indian commitment were more about numbers. Suggestions from the British about having an expeditionary force available for service in India were turned down in 1905 and 1907. The Japanese view was that the maintenance of such a force might endanger the success of action in East Asia.

Perhaps fortunately the issue of Japanese involvement with India never arose during the lifetime of the Alliance – nor indeed of the Third Alliance of 1911, which mentioned India but dropped all reference to 'the security of the Indian frontier'. I suspect that the Alliance would not have worked over India. Japanese forces finally reached India in 1944, but only as far as the Northeastern border, and in very different circumstances to those envisaged in 1905!

The Consequences

The obvious point to begin with is that while the main impact of the First Alliance of 1902 was on the East Asian situation, the main impact of the Second Alliance of 1905 was on the larger global, international stage. Apart from this, there are two big general issues, or, in the second case, groups of issues to reflect upon.

First, between 1905 and 1907, something close to a diplomatic revolution occurred. The immediate effects were felt in East and Central Asia. The longer-term effects involved the United States, and, most important, influenced the sequence of events leading to the outbreak of war in 1914:

- In 1902, the situation in Europe was that of two alliances, the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy facing the Dual Alliance of France and Russia. Britain was on her own, and if anything, more at odds with the Dual Alliance than with the Triple. In East Asia, Japan, supported by Britain, faced Russia, probably supported by France, and possibly by Germany.
- By 1907, if not all change, it was certainly very different. In Europe, the Triple Alliance now faced a Triple Entente of the old Dual Alliance plus Britain. In East Asia, Britain, Japan, France and Russia were now more or less on the same side, following a series of treaties in 1907. Germany was isolated in East Asia, as was the United States, which was becoming increasingly irritated and apprehensive. In the short term, the main sufferer was China.

What had brought about this transformation? The 1905 alliance was only one factor among many. But the Japanese victory in 1905 and the terms of the new alliance were arguably the most significant short-term factors in bringing about the changes:

- Fundamental of course was the situation in Europe and the increasing concern about German ambitions and military strength. This kept France and Russia together and brought Britain in with them.
- There was a significant shift in Russian policy in 1906. The new Foreign Minister, Iswolsky, was realistic about the Far East and Central Asia, and

accepted that the Alliance of 1905 made the idea of a war of revenge absurd – although not all the Russian military shared this view. Iswolsky was more concerned about Russia's position in the Near East and the Balkans. He was apprehensive about further Japanese expansion, but thought that the best way forward was to try and work with Japan.

- France, alarmed about Europe and about signs of Russian weakness, was also beginning to be concerned about possible Japanese ambitions in Southeast Asia – she was thirty years too early! She wanted to mend fences with Japan.
- Britain was concerned about Europe and wanted to build on her Entente with France. She was very willing to do an advantageous deal with Russia over Central Asia. She had few problems with Japan's plans and ambitions for Korea or southern Manchuria.
- Japan was intent on recovering from the war, and concerned about exploiting her new position in Korea and southern Manchuria. She was more than willing to work with France and Russia.

The result was a cluster of agreements in 1907, which can be said to follow on from the Alliance of 1905: in June, a Franco-Japanese Treaty; in July, a Russo-Japanese Treaty; and in August, an Anglo-Russian Convention. It has been said that an examination of the texts of the three agreements 'shows imperialism at its best and most sophisticated'. It was arguably the high-water mark of the pre-1914 imperialist process. There was mutual recognition and support of each other's interests, a secret deal over Manchuria, and the settlement of outstanding problems relating to Afghanistan, Persia and Tibet.

The effect of all this was a transformation of the international scene, and fundamental to it was the Second Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1905. The agreements of 1907 followed on from, and were a triumph for, the Alliance of 1905. Any serious possibility of a Russian war of revenge had now gone; the Alliance had seen off the Russian challenge. For Britain, after 1907, the main context for the Alliance was the threat from Germany; for Japan, the context was increasingly the challenge from the United States.

The second of the big issues to reflect upon is the increasing problems and challenges that faced the successful Alliance. These continue through the Third Alliance and on until World War I and after.

The United Kingdom had to face mounting disquiet within the Empire over the relationship with Japan. The withdrawal of sea power from East and Southeast Asian waters, which left the Japanese Navy dominant, roused fears in Australia and New Zealand, fears compounded by a racial factor.

If the main loser globally from the Second Alliance was Germany, the main loser in Asia was China. Its sovereignty was ignored, its interests were trampled upon, its territory seized. All this was nothing new, but in 1911-12, a Nationalist Revolution took place in China and the Chinese response began to change. Moreover, there were increasingly Anglo-Japanese differences over China. There were few problems in Manchuria, but Japanese interest in the Yangtse region aroused British apprehension and hostility. There were differing views as to how to respond to the events of 1911-12 and to the emerging and competing figures of Sun Yat-sen and Yuan Shih-k'ai.

In the longer term, the most important problem facing the Alliance was the attitude of the United States. As tension mounted with Japan after the turn of the century over racial issues, Japanese migration, Japanese policy in China, and a possible Japanese threat to the Philippines, so American disquiet turning to hostility about the Alliance began to grow. American policy remained relatively realistic with Theodore Roosevelt in the White House, and the Taft-Katsura Agreement of 1905 is the embodiment of this. But American policy began to go off the planet with the election of Taft as President, with Knox at the State Department, and Willard Straight and E.H. Harriman trying to call the shots in East Asia. Hostility to what Japan was doing – or was thought to be doing – led almost inevitably to hostility to the Alliance.

There were advocates in Japan, for a whole host of reasons, of the idea of moving closer to Germany, and of even possibly abandoning the Alliance. Such advocacy never got much beyond the conspiratorial stage, but it involved at various times figures such as Goto Shinpei, Katsura Taro, Tanaka Giichi, and even on the fringe, Yamagata Aritomo.

By 1910-11, the situation facing the Alliance both globally and in East Asia was becoming more complicated, dangerous and exciting. It was very much a case of living in interesting times.

Bibliographical Note

The source material and the secondary literature available for the study of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance are enormous and impressive.

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The Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1911

Ayako Hotta-Lister

Introduction

On 13 July 1911 the third alliance was signed for a further 10 years, lasting until August 1923. Yet the second alliance had still four years to run, posing many questions. Many scholarly books on the subject, in the form of a narrative, analytical or otherwise, already exist both in English and Japanese offering differing interpretations and they seem to have turned over almost all the stones, to the point of exhaustion. Therefore, my task is a difficult one. While this study very much relies on these specialist books for basic facts, what I am intending to do is to turn up some smaller pebbles and shingles and also to see the three alliances by stepping back a few metres, though not beyond the summer of 1911. This seems to me to be a reasonable approach. Therefore, I do not claim to have covered all aspects of this subject.

The 1911 alliance differed from the two previous alliances in several respects, all of which derived from the constantly changing situation in the Far East, brought about by the shift in the balance of power in the area. It is necessary to examine, therefore, at least the six years from 1905 to 1911. This paper begins with one significant event in 1910, highly relevant to the subject, and then covers the several factors that put the survival of the existing alliance in doubt. It continues by comparing the third alliance and two previous ones, selecting some notable points of difference. As both the situation in the Far East and Japanese relationships with other countries became more complex, interwoven and international, we have to widen this subject beyond the geographical area of the Far East and Asia to the Pacific, America and the dominions. However, for a while, let's start off this paper from where we are now, in London, but 92 years ago. It was a time when the opportunity was given to the ordinary peoples of the two allied countries, for the first time, in particular, to encounter each other and to open the eyes of the British general public to see the whole of Japan and her Empire right in front of them.

The Japanese-British Exhibition of 1910

It is safe to say that, through the Japan-British Exhibition, held between May and October 1910, the British public had become much more knowledgeable about Japan

and Japanese history and culture than in 1902 and 1905. The exhibition was sometimes called 'the Japanese exhibition' or 'the alliance exhibition'. The alliance negotiations in Britain, as in Japan, had always been handled rather secretly involving only a handful of people, those directly in charge of foreign policy, of the Admiralty and some other offices. Once signed, of course, it was in the public domain, but knowledge about it was generally limited to the press and spread by papers to their readers. Around the time of the Russo-Japanese war, more books on Japan were published than previously, mainly due to curiosity, but some were commissioned by the Japanese government. However, the reading of these books was confined to the elite. Therefore, we may assume that the British public who visited the Exhibition in 1910 in their multitudes, totalling over 8 million, from all over the country, came away from the site knowing something new about Japan. A whole range of information was available to them at the exhibition, accompanied by a wide coverage in the press, books, including *The Times's* Japanese edition, a voluminous and comprehensive guide to Japan. On 15 March 1910, *The Daily Telegraph* reported the Queen's visit to the site of the 'Garden of Peace', currently under restoration, one of the Japanese gardens being built under the supervision of the Japanese garden designer, Izawa Hannosuke, at Shepherd Bush:

'It afforded the Queen much gratification to notice the excellent relations that existed between the Japanese and British craftsmen, who worked together with the greatest friendliness and goodwill. When told by their sturdier British comrades that the Queen of England was coming towards them, the Japanese workmen showed unbounded delight, and as Her Majesty passed they stood rigidly at the salute, with the English workman's cap they have adopted secured in their disengaged hand.'

The Exhibition was organized as a celebration of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, emphasizing an alliance of peoples, as the above example illustrates. When a proposal to hold an exhibition in London jointly by Britain and Japan had been made in 1908, the Japanese government, enthusiastically encouraged by Komura, the foreign minister, thought it would be a suitable occasion for such an approach, since the two alliances already concluded had been agreements between the two governments, diplomatic treaties without much relevance at grassroots level. For an alliance to be sustainable and beneficial, it has to be augmented and reinforced by other means, 'be it ceremonial honours or military-naval undertakings'.¹ The Japan-British Exhibition was perhaps the most extravagant of all such engagements, in terms of expense, manpower and energy, to support the alliance. It provided Japan

with an arena for exchanging friendship with British allies. One Japan's gestures was the sending of the Japanese-built cruiser *Ikoma* with 800 Bluejackets to London, in honour of the exhibition, to be anchored at Gravesend. The alliance was after all mainly a naval alliance. It also prompted the Japanese government to stress that Japan was a formidable and civilized nation that was worthy as a British ally, by exhibiting the modern systems adopted by all the government departments, including the Army and Navy departments, post office and the Red Cross. In order to show that Japan was an imperial power following in Britain's footsteps, pavilions and information about Japan's overseas possessions were exhibited in the section called the 'Palace of the Orient'. There were displays from Taiwan, Korea (though not yet annexed at the time of the opening), and the Kuantung administration of the South Manchurian Railway Co. In addition, just as other imperial powers did on occasions like this, even the native peoples of Taiwan and of Hokkaido, the Ainu, were presented, though this was to prove a very controversial issue among Japanese visitors. There were numerous banquets and luncheons held throughout the exhibition period, attended by many dignitaries, including members of Royal family from both countries, when a great number of prominent Japanese travelled specifically for the exhibition, including a special tour arranged by *Asahi Shimbun*. The Japanese post office issued special commemorative postcards for the exhibition for members of the public to celebrate the occasion in Japan. The visit by the new king and queen to the exhibition site boosted the morale of the organizers.

One of the main aims of the exhibition was to educate the British public about Japan to correct the misconception by the west that Japan was a new country that had suddenly emerged in a short time. Such thought carried a certain measure of contempt by the west. The Japanese leaders had been conscious of it and almost all Japanese leaders perceived the prevailing anti-Japanese feelings in Britain and elsewhere. They blamed such tendency for ignorance about Japan on the part of the British public. For this elaborate and extravagant venture, the Japanese Diet early in 1909 voted an enormous sum from their meagre budget allocating it over three years, despite the fact that the Japanese economy after the Russo-Japanese war was almost on the verge of bankruptcy. This is one example to illustrate how enthusiastic the Japanese government was about the exhibition, how important Japan regarded the alliance and how determined the Japanese were to be seen by her ally on an equal footing.²

The Alliance: A Dead Letter?³

Not long after the second alliance was signed, part of it became obsolete when 1907 witnessed diplomatic rapprochements amongst the powers. Both Japan and Britain separately signed agreements with Russia, on 30 June and 30 July respectively. Both treaties agreed to maintain the status quo, and in particular the territorial integrity of China. Japan and Russia, however, in the secret notes, recognized each other's spheres of influence, Japan in Korea and South Manchuria, and Russia in North Manchuria and Outer Mongolia. Russia and Britain also confirmed each other's spheres of influence, thus removing the Russian threat to the Indian border. The significance of these two treaties is firstly that Russia was henceforth no longer the common enemy of Britain and Japan, thus removing Japan's fear of Russian revenge. Secondly, from then on Japan was released from the obligation set out in the second alliance to send troops in aid of India. In the light of all this, the existing alliance had to be altered sooner or later, if not terminated. Japan and France also signed a treaty in June, again recognizing each other's rights in China.

In addition to these treaties of 1907, two events in 1910 made the 1905 alliance more hollow than ever: the second Russo-Japanese treaty signed on 4 July and the annexation of Korea by Japan carried out on 22 August. The second Russo-Japanese agreement, which was more or less the confirmation of the 1907 treaty, clearly demarcated their rights previously agreed. It was signed in response to one of the American schemes in Manchuria to neutralize the Manchurian railways after a number of attempts to build new railways. The South Manchurian Railway and the Chinese Eastern Railway had been run and managed by Japan and Russia respectively. As had been expected, Russia and Japan consulted each other and flatly rejected the American proposal. As for the annexation of Korea, it seems the secrecy of the timing, more than the action itself, raised Britain's suspicions about Japan's plan. The annexation was widely recognized as a mere formality. Since the second alliance of 1905 Korea had become Japan's protectorate. These two events in 1910 seem to have shaken the influential foreign editor of *The Times*, Valentine Chirol, to the extent that he went to Kato, the Japanese ambassador in London, 'in a furious state, and warned Kato that this action would jeopardize the relationship between the two countries'.⁴ While the 1905 alliance had dropped the phrase 'independence of Korea', inserted in the 1902 alliance, this did not mean that Britain would automatically approve of the eventual annexation. However, on 5 August, Grey

did, in the end, acquiesce in the annexation of Korea, after securing the continuation of the existing tariff for a further ten years. The Japanese were of the opinion that without Britain's approval they could not have annexed Korea. Kato warned Komura, 'Japan needs Britain's full and cordial support'.⁵ In April 1912, *Jiji Shimpo*, a pro-alliance newspaper, defending the benefits of the alliance to Japan against other newspapers that were critical of the alliance, noted 'Japan could never have annexed Korea had it [the alliance] not been in existence'.⁶ It may be that the British recognition of the annexation of Korea was one of the main reasons behind the shortened life of the second alliance. Britain was, however, apprehensive about the annexation. It may be appropriate here to remember what was happening in this period of imperialism: annexations or colonizations of this kind had been practised as a matter of course by many other powers.

The 1911 Alliance and Two Previous Alliances Compared

What was not a factor in the 1902 and 1905 alliances, but became so in the 1911 alliance was that America became an issue. The Anglo-American arbitration treaty proposal had initially been made by America in the autumn of 1910 and Grey enthusiastically replied to go ahead with the negotiation. In view of such a prospective treaty, Japan did Britain the favour, after many diplomatic exchanges, of including in the third alliance the clause that the alliance would not apply to a country that had a treaty of general arbitration with either of the contracting countries, though without specifically mentioning America. Britain and America welcomed this decision. Japan had long recognized that Britain would not fight against America in aid of Japan in the event of a war between the two countries. The second alliance imposed obligations on both countries that, in the case of one party being involved in a war with a third party, the other contracting party would join to aid her ally. The fear of a war between America and Japan had been growing since early in 1908, due to Japanese immigration problems, rivalry in Manchurian railway projects and naval competition in the Pacific. The relationship between them deteriorated further after the change of administration in America in 1909 and Taft's so-called 'Dollar Diplomacy'.

While the two previous alliances had originated in London, the 1911 alliance was initiated by Japan, taking the opportunity offered by the American arbitration treaty proposal to Britain. The draft was also drawn up by Japan, an unprecedented undertaking. Initially, the British foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey, seems to have

thought only of the implications an arbitration treaty might have for the Japanese alliance. He knew then that the alliance needed to be altered, but he was only expecting to start discussions with Japan nearer the time of the expiry, perhaps, around 1912.⁷ The Japanese government, on the other hand, had been keen to renew the alliance for some time, particularly in the light of the recent annexation of Korea. Foreign minister, Komura, certainly wished to renew it while he was in office. It was Komura, in fact, who early in January 1911 took the initiative by asking Grey, much to his surprise, to renew the alliance in tandem with the American arbitration treaty, and it was also Komura who asked for an extension of 10 years. The reason for such a sudden proposal was explained by Sir Claude MacDonald, British ambassador to Tokyo, who said that Komura confessed before his death that he had had a fear that Britain might terminate the alliance on its expiry.⁸ This was hardly surprising, since there had been such rumours around for some time: Britain's lukewarm attitude to the alliance worried many Japanese leaders. It was also Komura who insisted on not including the specific word 'America' in Article IV of the new treaty, while Grey, equally persistent, tried to include it, but, in the end, he had to yield to his counterpart's idea. Komura's requests were finally accepted by Grey, who, perhaps, felt under obligation to Komura, who had done him a great favour by including the arbitration clause in the treaty. Komura did not prevail with another of his ideas to extend the scope of the new alliance to cover the Manchurian border, however. This was mainly due to Kato's efforts. Kato, who knew the British mentality well, successfully dissuaded Komura. He emphasized that Britain would be opposed to such an idea for several reasons: that her only benefit from the alliance was a naval one; the current anti-alliance sentiment in Britain derived from the idea of Japan as the sole beneficiary of the alliance; the hostility of British mercantile circles in Manchuria was mounting; and, finally, the recent High Treason Incident in Japan was seen as barbaric conduct, which could only occur in a backward despotic state. He also added that, in the light of the current arbitration treaty proposal, it would be unwise to provoke the Americans who had particular interests in Manchuria.⁹ Another of Kato's triumphs over Komura was, with Grey's help, not to include a secret memorandum that the foreign minister had wished to include, after a stressful 'fight through a telegraph war' between Tokyo and London. It is important to note, that during such exchanges between them, Ambassador Kato was saying to Komura that, as 'Japan's main objective for the current negotiations had been to attain an extension of the alliance, it was better that Japan would drop such a memorandum

which would only hinder our negotiations,' revealing that the extension of the alliance had been uppermost in their minds.¹⁰ The draft for the third alliance was prepared, for the first time, by Japan, believed to have been helped by Denison, an adviser to the Japanese foreign ministry.¹¹

By the end of the negotiations, therefore, the maturity of Japanese diplomacy could clearly be seen, much more than at the time of the two previous alliances. It is significant that from January to April 1911, Japan was negotiating two important treaties with Britain: a renewal of the alliance and a new commercial tariff. The commercial tariff had been in preparation ever since 1908, as soon as Komura resumed term as foreign minister for a second term. He regarded the attainment of tariff autonomy as his most important job, eradicating the last of the so-called 'unequal treaties'. Although the denunciation of the existing tariff to Britain and other powers had been announced and the negotiations had started in mid-July 1910, they only made concrete progress towards the end of the year, when a new formula was eventually found. Therefore, for these two important negotiations with Britain, Japan was fortunate enough to have had these two, Komura and Kato, as a working team. Although they had not been on especially good terms in the past, Komura had specifically chosen Kato to be the right man in London to undertake the potentially difficult but important tasks of negotiating the new commercial treaty. Komura and Kato had both been in London as ambassador and served as foreign minister in the past. Both had skilful diplomatic abilities and experience as well as wide knowledge of world affairs. They were supported by prime minister, Katsura. It is one of the great coincidences that, for the 1902, 1905 and 1911 alliance negotiations, Katsura and Komura were in the same position. Hayashi Tadasu had been the minister in London between 1900 and 1906, and also served as foreign minister between 1906 and 1908. Hayashi is known to have been extremely pro-British, just as Kato was, and had been advocating an alliance with Britain long before the idea came to reality. In London, however, Hayashi had not been a policy-maker, but a persuasive intermediary, not so effectively as Kato who could produce his own ideas when it came to the point, usually in a conciliatory direction, and was forceful enough to convince Komura to change his government's views. Taken as a whole, in 1911, Katsura, Komura and Kato were a very mature team with long experience between them. It was the high point of Japanese diplomacy, when an able foreign minister could steer his firm policy through without interference from outside the office.

Another significant point is that the British foreign office which would not normally have involved the dominion countries in negotiations for the alliance, consulted the dominions for the first time in 1911. After the Russo-Japanese war, while the foreign office was alert to Japanese activities in the Far East, it was not impervious to the worries that afflicted dominion countries in the Pacific, Japanese immigration problems and the threat from Japan's naval expansion. Canada had introduced a quota system for Japanese immigrants that had been agreed with Japan early in 1908 and was working well. The other dominions did not have such arrangements, introducing instead their own restrictions against the Japanese, hoping, after the war, that Japan would divert her emigrants to the countries that Japan had recently gained. On the naval issue, the alliance did not seem to make them feel secure in the Pacific. Japan had become a formidable naval power in the Pacific, particularly after the first alliance, which had encouraged Japan to build battleships and naval vessels. The dominions' anxiety was clearly revealed when the American fleet travelled around the Pacific visiting Australia and New Zealand in August 1908. The public is reported to have shown enormous enthusiasm, as 'it (America) was seen in political circles as a potential ally against the ambitions of the 'Rising Sun'.¹² The strong press opinion against the Japanese threat in these countries, together with their governments' pressure around 1910, led to the London government giving permission for battleship building in the two countries in 1911, financed and manned by their own countries, defending their own territories in case of Japanese aggression.¹³ It is, therefore, not surprising that the dominions were consulted, at a separate meeting, as Grey had insisted, during the Imperial Conference, which took place in May 1911. The significance of this consultation for the third alliance is that, to a small extent, Australia did cause Britain 'to moderate her unqualified sympathy for Japan' and 'the interest which Australia had in the Pacific area made it expedient for the Imperial government to consult her ministers on the alliance.' However, it seems that, had there not been an imperial conference in 1911, the dominions might not have been consulted.¹⁴ During this special meeting, the Canadian prime minister declared to the other dominion countries on 25 May that, as far as Japanese immigration was concerned, the Japanese government could be trusted, and he is even reported to have encouraged Grey to go ahead with signing of the alliance without waiting for the American treaty.¹⁵ Convinced by Grey, and perhaps, to a small degree, by the Canadian prime minister, the dominions unanimously approved the renewal of the

alliance. This news pleased not only Grey but also the Japanese government, as one of the worries of Komura was whether the dominions would approve of its renewal. A British observer, the journalist, J.W. Robertson-Scott, commenting on the 1911 alliance, pointed out later in a letter to his Japanese friend that, 'One of the things which no doubt made the Japanese government 'well satisfied' is that the British overseas Dominions were consulted before the signing of this agreement and approved of it. This fact is not generally known in Japan, but its importance to this country [Japan] is obvious'.¹⁶

The 1911 alliance was the weakest of the three treaties and the main nature of the 1911 alliance changed from the two previous alliances. Whereas the main thrust of the 1902 and 1905 alliances had been defence against Russia, the third alliance turned to defence of the British Empire in the Pacific against Japan. It was the weakest of the three in terms of the commitments that both countries were obliged to take on. While Japan no longer had to send her troops to defend the Indian border, Britain too would not have to go to war for the sake of Japan in case of a war between Japan and America. By 1910, the second alliance had become so hollow that it came to the stage that, on debating the question whether or not to renew the alliance, a mental exercise of seeing the other side of the coin seems to have been required; for example, posing questions such as 'what happens if it is not' or 'if it were to be terminated'. Grey used this method when he had to convince the dominion ministers of the necessity of the renewal of the alliance at the imperial conference in May 1911, after he had reminded them of the benefits that they had hitherto received from the alliance. Grey said that, if the alliance were abandoned, Britain would have to keep the Royal Navy at least equal to a two-power standard. He continued to say that in the interests of strategy, naval expenditure and stability, it was essential to extend the Japanese alliance.¹⁷ The Foreign Office's generally agreed view also saw it in the same way:

'If the alliance were to be terminated in 1915, Japan would be left with free hands without restraint and we could not control her and her fleet might array against us in the Pacific or allied with that of some other Power. These are changes that are unpleasant to contemplate and I believe that in 1914 it will still be our policy to be in alliance with Japan.'¹⁸

Henceforth, the alliance was to be used openly as a lever to check Japanese activities in the Far East and the Pacific, and in other matters. This had not been so in the alliances of 1902 and 1905. During the Japanese tariff negotiations with Britain,

which went into stalemate in the summer of 1910, British manufacturers, traders and the press all protested against the new proposals, often relating them to the alliance, saying that, as an ally of Japan, Britain should be treated better than other powers. Similarly, MacDonald, the ambassador to Tokyo, often used such tactics. He mildly threatened prime minister, Katsura, that an intransigent attitude on the part of Japan might affect the alliance. It seems that, to a certain extent, his tactics might have worked, as new concessions were soon offered with more favourable terms than previous proposals, and the commercial treaty was finally signed on 3 April 1911.¹⁹ It is important to note that the Japanese leaders around this time were extremely concerned with the uncertainty of, and Britain's lukewarm attitude towards, the alliance. Again, MacDonald, who was well acquainted with Japanese affairs and mentality, was strongly opposed to the renewal in 1911, reminding Grey that 'the uncertainty of renewal would be a useful lever and also check to any unnecessarily forward policy'. Even if his warning against renewal came too late to influence the foreign office's decision, MacDonald was still eager to stop the extension of the alliance that had been specifically requested by Japan, and to leave it to near its expiry in 1915, reminding Grey of the lease expiry for Port Arthur and the Antung-Mukden railway in 1923.²⁰ The foreign office was still not influenced by MacDonald's narrow view, focused solely on the Far East.

Chirol too started to see the alliance in the same way. He had been pro-Japanese, and was often regarded as one of the promoters of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, but began to feel uneasiness from around 1909 and 'persuaded himself that one of the justifications of the original alliance, and of its renewal was that Britain would thus be enabled, in certain circumstances, to exert a restraining influence upon Japan'.²¹ A special correspondent of *The Times* in the Far East from 1910, Braham, also reported to Chirol after meeting Komura, that the alliance was at least as useful to the Japanese as to us and 'it must be made clear to them that if they wished it renewed they must behave themselves'.²²

What was present at the time of the signatures of the 1902 and 1905 alliances but seemed strikingly reduced in 1911 was enthusiasm shown towards the alliance. In 1910, because of the on-going Exhibition in London, many articles about it appeared daily in the press, often juxtaposed with agonizing news such as the on-going Japanese tariff negotiations and the annexation of Korea. The general public was naturally more interested in the affairs of Japan than before. *The Times's* opinions at

the time were regarded as the most respected and reliable in many spheres. Chirol's attitude towards Japan was used as a yardstick highly valued by the foreign office. His suspicions were partly influenced by G.E. Morrison, the correspondent of *The Times* in Peking, who had also been a keen supporter of Japan at the time of the Russo-Japanese war, but whose attitude totally changed to become strongly anti-Japanese. He started sending numerous articles to London and elsewhere about the activities of the Japanese in Manchuria, his criticism being often so explicit that Chirol could not even publish them in the paper.²³ Being on the spot and having been in London more than a decade earlier, Kato, the Japanese ambassador, could see changes in Britain more than anyone else and he was one of those who had been troubled by Morrison's anti-Japanese campaign, blaming him for stoking up such feelings in Britain.²⁴ Realizing that the influential power of *The Times* and the critical views of Morrison would be detrimental to Japan's reputation, the Japanese government decided to invite Chirol and Morrison to Japan for a tour of inspection in 1909. They were extravagantly treated by the government. Chirol seems to have taken this opportunity to 'collect facts on the spot, so as to stop 'dry rot' which had been setting in in England with regard to Japan, things Japanese, and more particularly with regard to the Anglo-Japanese alliance'. He reported to his newspaper on the justice of the majority of Japan's contentions.²⁵ The tour, however, did not change Morrison's views on Japan. After a visit to Peking in the same tour in July 1909, Chirol's confidence in Japanese policy 'somewhat diminished and, therefore, with misgivings about Britain's position as a whole.' and he noticed that his Japanese friends were 'showing an increasing tendency towards independence'.²⁶ Such was the general attitude of Britain towards Japan before the negotiations for the renewal started, but it was to change slightly, even to surprise Ambassador Kato.

The reaction in Japan to the conclusion of the renewal of the alliance in 1911 was not a happy one. The officials concerned in Japan were relieved that they managed to get the business of the renewal through, especially the extension. Those in the Pan-Asia societies, such as *Genyo-sha* and *Kokuryu-kai*, for instance, Uchida Ryohei and Toyama Mitsuru, and those with similar ideals, such as Inukai Tsuyoshi, Goto Shimpei and Ozaki Yukio, had been opponents of the alliance for some time. They attacked Britain for hindering Japan's plans in the Far East and complained that the 1911 renewal was one-sided and gave too many concessions to Britain, referring to the insertion of the arbitration clause. However, their influence on Japan's continental

expansion and their success in generating a campaign against Britain in this period were still negligible. The fiercest attack from the press came from *The Osaka Mainichi*, referring to the recent events in East Asia, Britain as an unreliable ally.²⁷ Hayashi Tadasu was one of those who warned of the damages of an ambitious expansionist Japanese policy in his article on the Alliance in the Coronation number of *The Japan Times* on 22 July 1911.

'The value and importance of the Alliance will be unchanged, nor is there any doubt of its long continuance. The only point against which Japan must guard is a wantonly aggressive policy. On the contrary, she must always adhere to a peaceful policy and endeavour to make the most of what she has gained so far, and to promote her interests and development in a manner consistent with a pacific policy. If Japan should adopt a policy of wanton aggression, the continuation of the Anglo-Japanese alliance would be out of the question.'²⁸

In Britain, the foreign office was relieved that they had managed to have the arbitration treaty clause included in the renewal, and the Admiralty and other offices accepted it as the circumstances at the time demanded it. But there was no enthusiasm in the general press. Most newspapers emphasized Article IV, the effect of the proposed arbitration treaty, as an inevitable outcome. Some, such as *The Times* on 14 July, reported that a radical change was foreshadowed in the character of the alliance, and declared that Japan would profoundly regret it, but would 'never doubt Britain's friendship, must accept the incident as an incentive to increased effort.' Even such newspapers as *The Manchester Guardian* and *Evening News*, which had previously been strongly anti-alliance, changed their attitude, stating that 'as the new treaty had wisely taken account of the arbitration treaty, we predict that the popularity of the alliance would come back'. While *The Morning Post* pointed out the weakness of the new alliance due to Article IV, the *Westminster Gazette* warned that, if the allies were to deceive each other, the treaty would be totally invalid; the true Anglo-Japanese relationship would only be acceptable if they trusted each other.²⁹ Ambassador Kato was amazed to detect such a favourable change in the British attitude towards the alliance.

Lastly, at the time of the negotiations for the 1911 alliance, more so than at the time of the two previous alliances, questions of differences in race, religion, culture and history between Japan and the west seem to have arisen in Japanese minds to a considerable extent, particularly after the Russo-Japanese war. When the American arbitration treaty proposal was first sounded out to Grey in the autumn of 1910, and

he in turn suggested that Japan should consider joining such a treaty. Komura rejected the idea. One of his reasons was that, at arbitration trials, all the judges would certainly be westerners, therefore, a country like Japan, owing to her different race, religion and culture, would surely be at a disadvantage. Komura was one of the Japanese leaders who had been troubled by Japanese immigration problems in western countries. In the autumn of 1908, immediately after his return from London to take up his second foreign ministership, one of his foreign policy proposals was a new emigration policy. In it he suggested that emigration by Japanese would be directed to the Asian continent rather than Anglo-Saxon countries in the western hemisphere where anti-Japanese feelings had been increasing. He continued,

'these negative perceptions of Japan's behaviour were, in turn, damaging her international prestige, resulting in a deterioration in relationships with those countries which would ultimately hinder Japan's industrial and commercial development'.³⁰

Komura was well aware of the situation and tried to remedy the problems. At the time of the signature in 1902 and 1905 alliance, many British people saw the alliance as valuable and indispensable to them; thus, there was not much ill feeling towards the Japanese. At the same time, the immigration problems were not yet significant in the dominions. The Japanese leaders then, including Komura, had not been so conscious of differences of race, religions and so on in 1902 and 1905 as Komura was in 1911. After 1906, however, the situation of immigration problems gradually changed for the worse in the dominions and America. In those days, the immigrants to America and the dominions were, of course, not only Japanese but also other Asians, mainly Chinese, but it seems the Japanese were singled out in those countries to be discriminated against. It may be that this tendency was born out of fears that, as was happening in East Asia, those countries would be taken over by the Japanese, while, for other immigrants, such a prospect was negligible. The existence of such fears was indeed confirmed by Grey's comment after the imperial meeting in May 1911. When he informed Kato that the dominion prime ministers were 'apprehensive of what I might call such a pacific invasion of their territory by the Japanese as would displace their own population'. Komura therefore gave assurances that Japan would 'never countenance emigration of her nationals to countries unwilling to receive them'.³¹

The repercussions of the Japanese victory over Russia were of course to affect many countries, especially those under colonial rule, in various ways, including the general public's awareness of racial factors in the west, due to the sudden emergence of the Japanese. When the Japan-British Exhibition was held in London, for example, the British authorities presented articles in the *Official Guide* emphasizing the similarities between the British and the Japanese to demonstrate the racial acceptability of the Japanese ally.³² Japan was fully aware of racial differences with the other powers and also of a non-Christian aspect. When such a notion as the 'Yellow Peril' spread all over the world, including the remote dominion countries, where it never faded away in our period, what it indicated was not just the concept of a non-western and different race, but also a 'non-Christian' aspect. Often, it was a convenient excuse to exclude a country like Japan, because she was non-western and non-Christian, therefore, 'not one of us'. However, even after four decades or so of extensive westernisation, including its imperialism, Christianity was one element of westernisation that never struck root extensively in Japan. Japan of course never regretted not adopting the western religion, even if she was discriminated against by other powers for not doing so, preferring rather to remain almost aloof from it. One observer had a point in this respect: Lionel Cholmondeley, a Christian missionary in Japan, sent a letter to Ernest Satow in May 1910, saying 'Japan's non-Christianity became rather a source of pride to her than otherwise, and this pride her subsequent alliance with England did much to increase', and he continued that Japan had 'a determination to bring us as allies to respect Japanese religion, and not allow us to look upon them as religiously inferior to themselves'.³³ A good example that a non-Christian power was not discriminated against by receiving one of the highest honours given by Royalty of the most powerful empire at the time, Britain, was well demonstrated when, after the Russo-Japanese war and the second alliance, the prospect of conferring on the Japanese emperor the Order of the Garter arose, there was a hesitation on the part of King Edward VII, for, as a rule, it had never been conferred on a non-Christian monarch. However, the importance of the alliance took precedence and the Meiji emperor was regarded as special, and thus, for the first time, it was awarded in 1906.³⁴

It seems that, early in 1911, the fear of isolation was one of the main reasons the Japanese leaders were so keen to extend the alliance for a further ten years as to take the initiative and draw up the draft, even if they had to accept the inclusion of the

arbitration clause in the 1911 alliance. As always, the fear of isolation seems to have been uppermost in their minds. To understand this constant fear of isolation, we have to go back several decades and briefly examine their natural psychology. Japan opened up to the west after a long slumber in the middle of the period of their scramble for colonies. Partly because of her fear of being colonized, seeing the situation in China as an example, Meiji Japan decided to emulate the west in all spheres of national life, including imperialism: she truly thought she had joined the west. However, the first test of Japan's mental strength came with the triple intervention after the Sino-Japanese war, after which Japan had to endure humiliation and the fear of isolation. Japan was grateful to Britain for not joining the intervention. Japan felt pride and high self esteem, therefore, when she was requested to join the western countries in rescuing their nationals, supplying the largest contingent of all at the time of the Boxer Rising in China In 1900. At the subsequent conference in Peking, Japan acted honourably, and did not get any territorial gain from China while most others did. Japan won the respect of the west, which, combined with the strength of the Japanese navy, might have led to the first alliance in 1902. Japan was delighted to be accepted as an ally with the most powerful empire of all, thereby raising her status. The fact that there would be no fear of isolation as long as the alliance lasted was a major psychological gain for Japan. This was true around the time of the second alliance, but particularly so at the time of the third alliance. The third alliance eliminated the mental support that Japan had hitherto derived from Britain as a deterrent against aggression from America. However, despite the anti-Japanese feelings which were current in Britain, her dependencies and America, Japan desperately needed to continue the alliance for reasons discussed.

The fear of isolation was, therefore, one of the very important factors that led Japan to wish to have ties with Britain in 1911, however thin and weak, was for the third alliance.

Endnotes

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- ⁵ Nish, I.H., *Decline*, p. 35.
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²⁶ The Times, *The Times*, p.680.

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³⁰ Gaimusho, *Komura Gaikoshi*, (Tokyo 1966), p.754.

³¹ Gaimusho, *Komura Gaigoshi*, (Tokyo 1966), p.754.

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