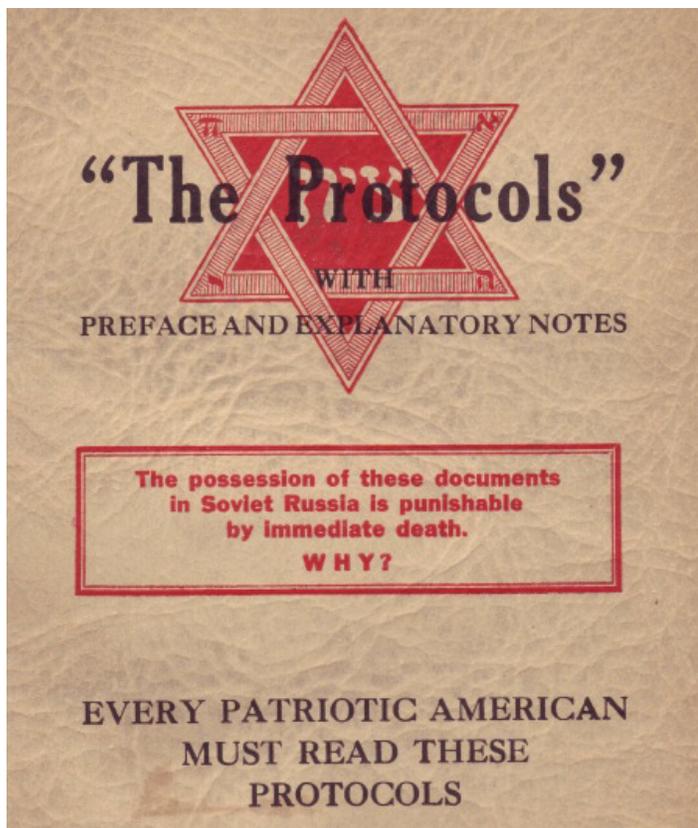


FACING THE CHAMPION OF THE WEST

The Origins of Japan's Wartime Jewish Policy

During World War II, Japan adopted specific policies for dealing with Jews. This paper addresses the ideological sources of those Jewish policies, and how those sources influenced state policy in the late 1930s and 1940s. The primary thrust of this paper will analyze first the intellectual reaction to the forged Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion, an infamous portrayal of a totalitarian plan for a Jewish "super-government." Secondly, this paper will show how Japan ultimately came to adopt a benevolent policy towards the Jews due to policy makers' desire to cooperate and influence an imagined hegemonic Jewry within western business, government, and media, derived largely from a Protocols worldview.

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The Protocols of the Elders of Zion (1934 reprint)
Source: *The Patriotic Publishing Co. (Commons Wikimedia)*

In 1940, the Nazi ambassador in Japan, Eugen Ott, wrote to the foreign office of Berlin, praising the popularity of anti-Semitic texts in Japan, such as *The Jewish Problem and Japan*. This book was written by a Kiyo Utsonomiya, who had been writing anti-Semitic literature throughout the 1930s. However, Kiyo was, in fact, only the pseudonym of Naval Captain Inuzuka Koreshige, who, during the 1930s and early 1940s, was instrumental in the settlement of Jewish refugees in occupied Shanghai.¹ For these actions, he was given a cigarette case from the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of

the U.S. inscribed: "In Gratitude and Appreciation for Your Service for the Jewish People."² Nazi officials, of course, were unaware of the pseudonym. Nonetheless, the same man who had written on the "Jewish Peril" (yudayaka) was also responsible for saving thousands of Jewish lives; these two seemingly divergent lives were actually one life. Inuzuka was not unique either. Japan's wartime policies concerning the Jews carried the same apparent contradictions as Inuzuka's own actions and writings. In truth, the contradiction was only apparent; the nature of Japanese anti-Semitism naturally led to benevolent treatment of the Jews. This distinct character of Japanese wartime policy had its roots in the unique development of conceptions of the Jews and anti-Semitism in Japan throughout the first half of the twentieth century.

Firstly, it should be made explicit, as is implied above, that Japanese anti-Semitism did not originate with Nazism, as one might intuitively assume. Actually, one "Jewish Expert," Koyama Takeo, outright rejected what he termed "hand-me-down," European-style anti-Semitism.³ According to Goodman and Miyazawa, "the role of Nazism was to legitimate and reinforce these ideas, not create them."⁴ In short, Nazism did not simply seep into Japanese policy or culture from Nazi Germany and the Axis alliance. Individuals like General Shioden Nabutaka, who looked more favorably on Nazism, were the exception rather than the rule among Japanese "Jewish experts."⁵ Japanese anti-Semitism was rooted in trends and events decades before Nazism arose in Germany.⁶

When anti-Semitism did arise in Japan in the early twentieth century, Japan had a very small Jewish population.⁷ At the turn of the century, Japan did not distinguish between its Jewish residents and other foreigners, being "totally unaware of their separate faith and identity."⁸ According to Pamela Shatzkes, "Until the mid-1930s, the attitude towards the tiny Jewish community in Japan can be described as one of tolerance or indifference founded on ignorance."⁹ Due to this limited conception of the Jewish people, when Japan was introduced in full to anti-Semitism in the 1910s, the connec-

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tion between actual Jews and the abstract “Jewish Peril” was not as developed as it had been in European countries with sizeable Jewish populations. In other words, Japanese anti-Semitism was based more around a fear of an abstract “Jewish institution” poised to gain global domination than it was around actual Jewish people.¹⁰

EARLY CONCEPTIONS OF JEWS IN JAPAN

The first Jews to settle in Japan came to Yokohama after the opening of Japan to the West in the 1850s. By 1895, this community had grown to around 50 families. Nagasaki also developed a Jewish community, which, during the 1880s, grew to about 100 families, although Yokohama remained the most active Jewish community. A third Jewish community came into being in Kobe as well. By 1905, the Nagasaki community had disintegrated, and, after the 1923 earthquake, the Yokohama Jews migrated to Kobe, which would become the central city for Jewish refugee life during World War II.¹¹

Anti-Semitic portrayals of Jews entered into Japan as early as the 1880s with the translation by Inoue Tsutomu in 1883 of Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*.¹² The play itself is most famous for its Jewish moneylender character, Shylock. However, unlike many European portrayals of Shylock, in Japan, Shylock was not in any way a sympathetic character. Interestingly, the Japanese portrayal of Shylock was influenced more by Japanese archetypes than by Jewish ones. The character, named Gohei in an early version, was modeled off of a traditional miser character from Kabuki tradition.¹³ As Goodman and Miyazawa write, “Japanese attitudes toward Jews are thus deeply rooted in the modern, as well as the traditional, Japanese cultural experience.”¹⁴

Other evidence of Japanese interaction with European anti-Semitism prior to the Siberian Expedition of 1918 can be found as well.¹⁵ An article in 1882 notes the “Russian persecution of Jews,” and in 1899, another article describes “anti-Semitic racial ideology” when describing the events of the Dreyfus Affair in France.¹⁶ Anti-Semitism was likely first printed as a noun by Kemuyama Sentaro in “Antisemitism and Zionism,” in which he views Judaism and Zionism favorably.¹⁷ A 1916 article by Terada Shira exaggerated the political influence of the Jews in an article titled “Are the Jews poised to take over the World?”¹⁸ In a similar vein, Dr. Shibata Hisao warns to “beware of the invisible empire,” and notes the enormous economic and political influence of the Jews, though he also notes that the Jews are “the superior race,” praises them, and sees them as possibly transforming totalitarian Russia into “a liberal society.”¹⁹ This intellectual discourse prior to the *Protocols*’ introduction demonstrates that the skeleton of thought supporting Japanese anti-Semitism, particularly the view of Jews as global hegemony, was apparently already in place.²⁰

THE PROTOCOLS IN JAPAN

In summary, the *Protocols* depict a series of 24 sections of

text from “the meetings of the learned Elders of Zion.”²¹ The *Protocols* assert that, by manipulating public opinion through control of the press, creating discord through the promotion of liberalism, and controlling the globe’s financial institutions, the Jews would come to take over the world’s nations and establish a “Super-Government.”²² Ultimately, though liberalism would be “inculcated,” the Jewish state would create a totalitarian system, which the Gentiles, referred to as *goyim*, would accept as they would be weary and take refuge in the Jewish despotism.²³

Indisputably, the *Protocols* were the vehicle through which anti-Semitism was introduced to Japan on a significant scale and popularized among a group of intellectuals. The *Protocols* were written by Russian secret police agents in France between 1903 and 1907.²⁴ Thereafter, they were widely distributed and published after the Russian Revolution, becoming the “hymn book of CSA [“Conspiracy and Scapegoating Anti-Semitism”] in the world since the twentieth century.”²⁵ The *Protocols* entered into Japan through the Siberian Intervention in Russia, where it was dispersed through the ranks of the White Army forces alongside whom Japan fought.²⁶ The *Protocols* were picked up by Russian specialists in the army, such as Higuchi Tsuyanosuke, Yasue Norihiro, and the aforementioned General Shioden. Even by the beginning of the 1920s, translations from military men, academics, and even a Shinto priest had proliferated in Japan. By 1921, presentations were being given on *yudayaka* and publications proliferated. In the same period, Yasue was designated as a “Jewish expert.”²⁷

There are two primary reasons for the spread of this conspiratorial ideology in Japan during the 1920s. Firstly, the *Protocols*, popularized as they were during the Russian Revolution and Civil War, were inherently linked to Bolshevism and, by extension, left-wing ideology. Certainly, much of Japanese anti-Semitism in the 1920s was influenced by a fear of the “Red Jew.”²⁸ For example, in *The Roots of Red Ideology*, journalist Ariga Seika writes “The ideological core of communist ideology is the monotheism of the Jewish race.”²⁹ Ariga sees Judaism and Communism as inseparable. Likewise, in a round-table discussion on the “Jewish problem” in 1929, Mitsukawa Kametaro refers to the “Jewish communist conspiracy” that has taken root among “Jewish Perilists,” noting the Justice Ministry’s belief in a “Jewish plot to communize the world.”³⁰ Brian Victoria also notes that the *Protocols* were used to counter Marxist dissent in Japan.³¹ Shillony goes as far as to write that “Japanese anti-Semitism was thus, at first, part of the anti-communist campaign.”³²

A second reason is that a more general socioeconomic and political distress, related to the growth of nationalism as well as the rise of social movements, made Japan a suitable breeding ground for “Conspiracy and Scapegoating Anti-Semitism.” Because the Japanese had little direct contact with Jews, they were easy to blame.³³ As economic conditions worsened



Koreshige Inuzuka, head of the Japanese Imperial Navy's Advisory Bureau on Jewish Affairs

Source: *Testimony of Showa History Vol. 3* (Commons Wikimedia)

in the 1920s, nationalists saw “a convenient and logical explanation” in the *Protocols* conspiracy.³⁴ Concurrent counter-cultural and progressive social movements, such as feminist and labor movements, could also be connected to the Jewish conspiracy to undermine national values.³⁵

The spread of Japanese anti-Semitism in the 1920s should be seen as a broader ideological movement as well.³⁶ Shillony's generalization of anti-Semitism as a component of anti-communism ignores the fact that anti-Semitism was actually a larger ideological attack on Western values. To Japanese nationalist intellectuals, “Jewish ideology” encompassed liberalism, democracy, materialism, and individualism as well as socialism. These values were inherently contrary to Japan's spiritual path, which was centered on national defense and collective social harmony.³⁷ In fact, one anti-Semitic work, *The Jewish Plot and the anti-Japanese Problem*, focuses almost entirely on the threat of the West.³⁸ Another example of such conflation can be seen in Soebe Ichinoske's *Poison of the World*, where he writes “excessive individualism, early sexual activity, non-arranged marriages and spiritual rupture” are all consequences of the attempt to “Judaize the world.”³⁹ Judeophobia and anti-Westernism were inherently linked in the minds of Japanese anti-Semites, and increasingly became one and the same. Ultimately, Japanese anti-Semitism was not merely a manifestation of the *Protocols* conspiracy, which asserted that the Jews would inculcate and pretend to support liberal values in order to destabilize society. Rather, in the Japanese case, the Jews came to represent those values

themselves. This conflation would have a profound impact on Japan's wartime policy concerning the Jews.

THE PROTOCOLS AND JEWISH POLICY

After 1936, the intellectual anti-Semitism that had proliferated in the 1920s manifested itself in actual actions taken by the government.⁴⁰ The government fired notable Jewish academics, sponsored anti-Semitic literature through “government-supported channels” such as KSG and *Studies on the Jews*,⁴¹ and began to censor and punish criticism of anti-Semitism.⁴² The primary reason for these policies was an attempt to appease Japan's new Nazi ally, a partnership beginning in 1936 with the Anti-Comintern Pact. However, while Japan adopted some of Germany's anti-Semitic domestic practices, it decided to “ignore consciously and discard” certain aspects of Nazism, as evidenced by *Mein Kampf*'s lack of full translation until 1942.⁴³ Moreover, Japan's Jewish policies, at least prior to Pearl Harbor, were generally benevolent and did not lead to persecution.

These policies are inherently linked to the influence of the *Protocols* conspiracy on the Japanese understanding of the Jews. Most importantly, Japan's treatment of the Jews became a notable aspect of its public relations with the West. In short, Japanese officials hoped that benevolent treatment of the Jews would enhance its image abroad and counter the decline in relations with the United States. Because the *Protocols* depicted a world where Jews controlled Western media, Japan tried to portray a positive image to them so that they, through their dominant influence, could help to ameliorate US-Japanese relations in particular. Therefore, Japan could not openly persecute Jews for fear of the response from an international media run by Jews.⁴⁴ Sakamoto asserts that “Ultimately, Japan became involved in helping the Jews out of a sense of isolation.”⁴⁵ In other words, Japan responded to its political isolation from the United States by hoping to gain the support of American Jewry. Japan believed that American Jews had the loyalty of Roosevelt and could indirectly influence US foreign policy. Good treatment of the Jews, therefore, could lead to positive changes in US foreign policy.⁴⁶

Ironic policy decisions resulted from this skewed worldview. As US relations worsened leading up to Pearl Harbor, Japan increasingly supported a pro-Jewish policy.⁴⁷ In fact, the good treatment of the Jews by Japan was personally and deliberately conveyed to Jewish leaders throughout the world.⁴⁸ Moreover, Japan had a particularly and unusually lenient policy concerning Jewish immigration. Japan had expected refugees to find easier paths to Western countries, and Japanese officials were shocked to suddenly be harboring as many refugees as they did.⁴⁹ In December 1938, during the Five Ministers Conference, Japan formulated for the first time a succinct Jewish policy, which would last until the end of 1941. The policy ultimately stated that Jews were to be treated like any other foreigners. The Conference declared

explicitly that, although the Jews could not be embraced due to Japan's allies, Japan could not reject them either, out of its "desire not to alienate America."⁵⁰ As late as 1940, an official wrote "If Jewish leaders in America... should be inclined to become pro-Japanese, the American public opinion would obviously change in one night."⁵¹ By the end of 1938, Japan's policy wished to avoid "alienating American interests which it hoped to cultivate."⁵² According to Foreign Minister Hachiro Arita, Japan ought to avoid the international tension created by Germany's treatment of its Jews, and, instead, promote better US relations.⁵³

In addition to their focus on their image abroad, Japanese officials and "Jewish experts" in Manchuria and China believed a benevolent policy towards Jews would result in the importation of US capital. Japanese officials believed that Jewish capitalists abroad in the United States would react favorably to Japan's good treatment of Jewish refugees and residents and, in gratitude, aid in the development in Manchukuo.⁵⁴ Japan sought to attract US capital to Japan to aid in the creation of the New Order in Asia.⁵⁵ The "Manchurian Faction" took the lead in this policy of importing US capital. In fact, along with the desire not to alienate the US, the Five Ministers Conference also stated the "need for foreign capital" as being "particularly" important in the Jewish policy that was adopted.⁵⁶

"Jewish experts" such as Inuzuka lost influence, along with their *Protocols* conspiracy-based ideology, which ultimately promoted benevolent Jewish relations, Nazi influence took its place in large part.⁵⁹ In the words of German consul Fritz Wiedemann, "We were under orders to instruct the Japanese authorities about the racial policies of Germany... the internment of Jews in the Shanghai ghetto has been instigated by German authorities."⁶⁰ Therefore, if Japanese policy could ever be described as "aping" Germany, it would be after 1941. Moreover, it is apparent that these policy shifts were not exclusively, or even largely, in the direction that Japan's Jewish policy naturally took, exported as they were from Germany rather than being grown from existing Japanese ideas.

Japan continued to resist the extremes of Nazi policy. The German plan to exterminate the Shanghai Jews was not carried out by any means.⁶¹ Additionally, scholars often emphasize the relative leniency of ghetto regulations.⁶² The maintenance of a somewhat benevolent policy must be explained in large part by a continuance of *Protocols* ideology. From a public relations standpoint, Japan did not want "propaganda that we are oppressing and driving away Caucasians."⁶³ Japan clearly overestimated the United States' commitment to Jewish well-being. Likewise, the aforementioned policy explanation given in 1942 notes that a "rejection of the Jewish people... will also be bound to be utilized as counter-propaganda by England and the United States."⁶⁴

“Japanese anti-Semitism was based more around a fear of an abstract ‘Jewish institution’ poised to gain global domination than it was around actual Jewish people.”

In assessing the 1938 Conference later in 1942, Japanese policy makers noted "The purport of this policy plan was to treat the Jewish people well, and thereby promote introduction of foreign capital and avert aggression of relationship with England and the United States."⁵⁷ This remark perfectly sums up the aim of the 1938 policy which was influenced so greatly by the *Protocols* conspiracy of the Jewish control of the West. After the outbreak of the Pacific War, however, the document notes that these aims had become obsolete. Certainly, Japanese policy after Pearl Harbor changed. For example, Jews in Japan were ordered out of ports and into the interior, synagogues on mainland Asia were closed, Inuzuka was retired, and surveillance was increased. This trend culminated in the formation of the Hongkew Ghetto in Shanghai in February 1943.⁵⁸

To place these changes in context, two points should be understood. First, the influence of Nazi Germany on Japan's Jewish policies increased after 1941. Japanese policy had, in part, come under the purview of Nazi Germany. Once the

COOPERATION IDEOLOGY

One other factor that influenced Japanese policy, also largely through the *Protocols*, was what I will term "cooperation ideology," namely, that belief that cooperation with wealthy, powerful Jews would bring Japan practical benefits. However, the early conception of a cooperation ideology predates the *Protocols*. The precedent was Jacob Schiff. During the Russo-Japanese War, Schiff helped to float about 200 million dollars in loans to Japan. For his assistance, Schiff was the first foreigner awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, and "became a symbol in Japanese eyes of the rich American Jew."⁶⁵ Reference to Schiff in relation to Jewish power, and Japan's ability to take advantage of it, was frequently noted. Nakada Juji, for instance, notes the Jews as the world's "financial leaders" and describes the benefits from working with people of such wealth as well as noting the need to repay Schiff's support.⁶⁶ Koyama also noted the gratitude for Schiff as a reason to befriend the Jews, along with the pragmatic benefits resulting from allying with the powerful Jewish economic influence in China.⁶⁷



Japanese diplomat Sugihara Chiune, known as “Japanese Oskar Schindler”

Source: *Government of Japan* (Wikimedia Commons)

This cooperation ideology became a focal point in Japanese policy in the late 1930s. Its foremost proponents were military leaders, especially Kwantung officers. In 1933, the Kwantung police chief reported that while the Jews were enemies, Japan could benefit from them.⁶⁸ Ultimately, the Kwantung position stressed the need for foreign capital to develop Manchuria, a need that the Jews could help fill.⁶⁹ This position became formalized in the Five Ministers Conference, which outlined the “exceptions” to the clause that “no special effort” would be made in regards to Jewish immigration: “However, exceptions may be made for businessmen and technicians with utility value for Japan.”⁷⁰ Inuzuka and Yasue were the prime proponents of this exception.⁷¹

Even after 1941, this cooperation ideology remained influential. Japanese authorities emphasized that Jews “who are or will be made use of” should be treated as friends, while others should be strictly surveilled.⁷² Kapner and Levine also write that the reluctance of the Japanese to persecute the Jews may, in part, be explained by “hopes of access to Jewish capital.”⁷³ Kranzler also sees cooperation ideology as a key component of the difference between Japanese and European anti-Semitism, a difference that he believes resulted from a lack of a history of religious conflict.⁷⁴

RACIAL EQUALITY

One final, controversial aspect of the origin of Japan’s wartime Jewish policies remains to be analyzed: Japan’s official

stance on racial equality.⁷⁵ Shatzkes writes “as the self-declared champion of racial equality after World War I, Japan could not openly embrace an ideology which sanctioned persecution of an ethnic group.”⁷⁶ In fact, as has been shown, the racism of anti-Semitism was explicitly criticized by Japanese intellectuals, such as Yoshino, who refers to the Japanese Siberian soldiers as the “virus carriers” of anti-Semitism.⁷⁷ By the mid-1930s, Manchukuo had been described as a state of “racial equality” (*minzoku byodo*). In this way, a failure to accept Jewish refugees pouring out of the Soviet Union from Eastern Europe would belie the slogans.⁷⁸ Officials also frequently used the rhetoric of racial equality. In 1939, Foreign Minister Arita stated that “Jews will receive no discrimination.”⁷⁹ More explicitly, the Foreign Ministry’s reply to Nazi efforts to expel Jewish musicians from Japanese institutes noted “Our government cannot do anything that might be interpreted as supporting racial discrimination or taking a position against the Jews.”⁸⁰

This excerpt brings to light a key question concerning Japanese sentiments: was there a genuine belief in not being racist against Jews that became policy, or did the policy arise out of fear that Japan would be *considered racist* and hypocritical abroad? Certainly the former quote and others suggest that racial equality was mere rhetoric used to avoid the criticism of Western nations. As was quoted in part previously: “while supporting eight corners under one roof [*hakko ichiu*] and racial equality on the surface. We do not want propaganda that we are oppressing and driving away Caucasians.”⁸¹ Likewise, the 1942 Policy Explanation, also previously quoted, notes that “an overall rejection of the Jewish people will not only be contrary to our own policy of world unification, but will also be bound to be utilized as counter-propaganda.”⁸² Sakamoto ultimately asserts that Japanese policy makers were not concerned with their rhetoric in their actual actions, noting the lack of moral discussion in diplomatic cables.⁸³ While it is hard to read the minds of these policy makers, it is undebatable that the perceptions of the West’s beliefs regarding anti-Semitism were key in the implementation of a pro-Jewish policy. That being said, it should still be emphasized is that 24,000 people nonetheless were saved from the Holocaust by an Axis ally at a time when Western nations proved reluctant to accept refugees.⁸⁴

Perhaps the most unique and profound aspect of Japanese anti-Semitism and Japan’s Jewish policy and rhetoric during the war was not the identification of the Jews as the enemy of the West, undermining the values of Western Civilization and threatening the nations that embodied that culture; rather, to the Japanese, the Jews were the representatives of the West. In 1943, retired General Nakaoka Yasutaka wrote “The Jews, detestable as they are, possess a strong spirit... Only Japan, which has a strong spirit of her own... can confront them in battle. In the present war, the champion of the East and the champion of the West are pitted against each other.”⁸⁵ The Jews were the West, and, by extension, the “Jewish

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Peril” was a concentrated form of the anti-Westernism that had been present in Japan since the early 1800s, although it was heightened yet further in the 1930s and 1940s. In this way, the critiques of racism that were so prevalent among Japanese intellectuals could be countered because Japanese anti-Semitism could not be compared with European anti-Semitism because it was implicitly anti-Western in and of itself. In other words, Jews became the personification of the Western values that Japan saw as threatening the foundations of the nation.⁸⁶ Inuzuka was therefore an anti-Semite and a Jewish hero because his anti-Semitism was so abstracted by the unique development of ideology in Japan. The *Protocols* conspiracy coalesced with reactionary Japanese values to produce a Jewish race that was both fundamentally a threat and a tool, for both Japanese economic goals and public relations. 🏛️



A Jewish girl and her Chinese friends in the Shanghai Ghetto during WWII

Source: Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum

Endnotes

[1] David Kranzler. *Japanese, Nazis & Jews: The Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai, 1938-1945* (New York: Yeshiva UP, 1976). 327.

[2] Ibid., 173-174.

[3] David G. Goodman & Masanori Miyazawa. *Jews in the Japanese Mind: The History and Uses of a Cultural Stereotype* (New York: The Free Press, 1995). 126.

[4] Ibid., 96.

[5] Kranzler, 207.

[6] Differences between traditional European anti-Semitism and Japanese anti-Semitism will be explored more later. However, in short, the two key differences lay first in the lack of a Christian image of the Jew as the murderer of Christ or the anti-Christ, and, secondly, Japanese anti-Semitism came to regard the Jewish people not as enemies of Western Civilization, but, rather, as the foremost representatives for it.

[7] Even by 1941, there were only a few hundred Jews who lived in Japan. Ben-Ami Shillony. *Politics and Culture in Wartime Japan* (New York: Oxford UP, 1981). 165.

[8] Shillony. *The Jews and the Japanese*. 132. Shillony writes that “The Jews who settled in Japan carried passports of various foreign Western nations and were just a small group within a foreign community, itself a tiny minority within Japan. They were not conspicuous as Jews.” Even by 1937, Jews in Japan “were either stateless or possessed other citizenship.” Pamela R. Sakamoto. *Japanese Diplomats and Jewish Refugees* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1998). 40.

[9] Pamela Shatzkes. “Kobe: A Japanese Haven for Jewish Refugees, 1940-1941.” *Japan Forum* 3, no. 2 (1991). 257-273. 10.1080/09555809108721424. 258.

[10] As Brian Victoria phrases it, Japanese anti-Semitism “had very little to do with flesh and blood Jews at all.” Brian D. Victoria. *Zen War Stories* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003). 87.

[11] Daniel Ari Kapner & Stephen Levine. “The Jews of Japan.” *Jerusalem Letter*. *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*, 2000. <http://www.jcpa.org/jl/jl425.htm>.

[12] Goodman and Miyazawa note 1883 as “the first authenticated appearance” (29). However, Jennifer Golub notes an earlier translation in 1877. Jennifer Golub. *Japanese Attitudes toward the Jews* (New York: The American Jewish Committee, 1992). 1.

[13] Goodman/Miyazawa, 30.

[14] Ibid., 36.

[15] This expedition, as will be seen, is when the Japanese were introduced to the major anti-Semitic text *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

[16] Jacob Kovalio. *The Russian Protocols of Zion in Japan: Yudaism/Jewish Peril Propaganda and Debates in the 1920s* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009). 16-18.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.; Kovalio notes further examples, one of whom, Oniwa Eiju, writes that “The Jews... [are] all a bunch of Shylocks” (21). The role of Christian missionaries in promoting anti-Semitism is not clear. Kovalio asserts that missionary efforts did not use “Judeophobic motifs” (15). On the other hand, Golub writes that “Christian missionaries arriving in 1873 brought their theological brand of anti-Semitism” (pg. 1).

[20] Despite this, Kovalio emphasizes that Judeophobia did not exist substantially in Japan before the *Protocols*, writing that Japan was “terra nulla for widespread Judeophobia prior to the arrival of

the Protocols” (22). I maintain my position that these early writings evidence a context into which the Protocols were introduced which likely made the acceptance of them more likely and widespread among intellectuals than it otherwise might have been.

[21] Sergyei Nilus. “The Protocols of the Meetings of the Learned Elders of Zion.” Trans. Victor E. Marsden. *The Protocols of the Meetings of the Learned Elders of Zion with Preface and Explanatory Notes* (No publisher given, 1934). 142-228.

[22] *Ibid.*, 164.

[23] *Ibid.*, 171-179. As has been noted, the Japanese lacked a religious motivation, in a Christian or Muslim sense, to persecute Judaism. What the Japanese feared was the sort of “Jewish institution” as is presented in the Protocols. This “institution” that would form a key role in the formation of Japanese wartime policy was the one that was presented in the Protocols conspiracy.

[24] Goodman/Miyazawa, 78.

[25] Kovalio, 7.

[26] Goodman/Miyazawa, 78.

[27] Kovalio, 23-26.

[28] Kovalio, 23.

[29] *Ibid.*, 32.

[30] *Ibid.*, 51. Kovalio reproduces the so-called Heibon Roundtable discussion in full. Mitsukawa, in the discussion, distances himself from the “Jewish Perilists.” Mitsukawa also links the “Jewish peril” to the military, who he implies are the foremost proponents (53).

[31] Victoria, 79.

[32] *Politics and Culture in Wartime Japan*, 157. Shillony also sees the military and right-wingers as the primary conductors of the campaign against communism, and, by extension, against Jews.

[33] Stanley Rosenman. “Japanese Anti-Semitism: Conjuring Up Conspiratorial Jews in a Land without Jews.” *The Journal of Psychohistory* 25, no. 1 (1997). 3. Rosenman writes that the conspiracy created “an epiphany explaining the mysterious failure of events... sprang from the externalization of infernal images onto the Jew... rendering them visible, real, and far from oneself.” Shatzkes notes that the lack of acquaintance, in addition to socio-economic distress, was a contributing factor (258). Of course, economic distress and nationalism were factors in anti-Semitic scapegoating in Nazi Germany as well, as one can see in the “stab-in-the-back” myth and the context of recurrent economic crises.

[34] Shatzkes, 258.

[35] Golub, 2.

[36] Shioden, for example, “later stressed that his introduction to the Jewish problem was not the result of anti-Bolshevism” (Goodman/Miyazawa, 126).

[37] In 1934, the Army Ministry denounced “liberalism, individualism, and internationalism” as ideas as subversive to unified national defense. Likewise, in 1937, the Education Ministry condemned these “Western ideologies” as contrary to the “special bonds of loyalty” unique to a Japan in which “social harmony was more important than individual competition.” Miles Fletcher.

The Search for a New Order: Intellectuals and Fascism in Prewar Japan (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1982). 68, 84. Fletcher refers to two pamphlets, “The Basic Principles of National Defense and Proposals to Strengthen It” and *The Fundamental Principles of*

the National Polity.

[38] Kranzler, 197-199.

[39] *Ibid.*; Kovalio, 31. Kovalio includes numerous other examples that evidence this. One particularly colorful example noted is the children’s novel *Superman of the Great Orient*, in which the Jewish villain, Bazaroff, is a conglomerate of capitalism, communism, and Zionism (33). Another interesting example can be seen in the writing of Zen Master Yasutani Haku’un. To Yasutani, Jewish support for ideas of liberty, individualism, equality, and hedonism undermined the Confucian and Buddhist social order: “We must clearly point out the fallacy of their evil ideas advocating liberty and equality” (Victoria, 73). Buddhism, therefore, was a bulwark against liberalism, which, as Victoria points out, was substituted with “scheming Jews” (87). Victoria also meaningfully points out that Japan’s anti-Semitism was not a mere “aping” of its Nazi ally, but a “home-grown” ideology to counter liberal ideology, “the last effective barrier to the rule of the military” (78-83).

[40] I should note here that research on the beliefs of commoners regarding Jews is hard to come by. However, Shillony’s characterization of anti-Semitism as “an intellectual fad” in *The Jews and the Japanese* (164), Golub’s assertion that anti-Semitism did not spread below the middle class (2), and the numerous examples that will be explored later regarding citizens’ response to Jewish refugees all suggest that anti-Semitism was a phenomenon that primarily existed among higher class intellectuals.

[41] Kranzler, 202-203, 217, 325. KSG is a Japanese acronym for “Society for International Political and Economic Studies.” Kranzler, describes the first “phase” of Japan’s Jewish policy, from 1931 to 1935 as “one of indifference” Kranzler also notes here that only in the mid-1930s did the “purely theoretical” research of Jewish experts “achieve a pragmatic end” (211).

[42] Golub, 2. In the 1920s, there was considerable debate on “The Jewish Peril.” The most prominent dissent came from Yoshino Sakuzo, who writes that “It is unacceptable for Japan to emulate the West on this issue” (Kovalio, 43). In 1921, Yoshino exposed the Protocols as a forgery and dismissed the conspiracy (*The Jews and the Japanese*, 166).

[43] Sakamoto, 41-42. Ultimately, Sakamoto asserts that Japan “could not comprehend the degree of Nazi hatred.”

[44] *Ibid.*, 13-14.

[45] *Ibid.*, 5.

[46] *Ibid.*, 21, 72.

[47] Kranzler, 218 & Tamar Engel. “The Jews of Kobe.” 1995. <http://www-cs-students.stanford.edu/~tamar/Kobe/Kobe.html>

[48] Shatzkes, 260.

[49] Sakamoto, 7, 30.

[50] Shatzkes, 260.

[51] Kranzler, 613. In the appendix, Kranzler provides a handful of primary documents. This is from one such document, written by Yoshiuori Inuzuka in 1940 concerning an “Explanation for Doubts in Operation on Jews in America.”

[52] Sakamoto, 60.

[53] Kranzler, 234. One direct manifestation of this worldview was the so-called Fugu Plan, developed by “Jewish experts” such as Inuzuka and Yasue. The plan was aimed at inviting German Jews to live in Manchuria in exchange for Jewish support in

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America, where the Japanese believed Roosevelt could be influenced (Golub, 2).

[54] Sakamoto, 4.

[55] Kranzler, 235.

[56] Shatzkes, 258-60. In 1939, The Moslem and Jewish Problem Committee advocated the creation of a Jewish settlement in Shanghai in order to "solicit capital from British and American Jewish financial groups (Sakamoto, 27).

[57] Kranzler, 620. This is from another document provided by Kranzler in the appendix, in this case written in February 1942 concerning "Jewish Measures in view of the 1942 Situation." It spells out the policy plan adopted at the Liaison Conference along with an explanation of the changes from the 1938 policy.

[58] *Ibid.*, 477-485 & Golub, 3.

[59] *Ibid.*

[60] Kranzler, 488.

[61] Golub, 3.

[62] Kapner/Levine note Japanese resistance to German "advice and encouragement," as well as the "exemplary record" in Shanghai. In *Jews and the Japanese*, Shillony also notes the ease of obtaining day passes for work, the fact that many Jews were not forced into the ghetto, and the lack of labor camps, family divisions, and executions (188-89). Kranzler reaffirms all these and also adds that the population density of the ghetto was partially caused by the unexpected fact that many Chinese chose to stay in the ghetto, a fact which in itself points to a relatively higher standard of living in Hongkew compared to its European counterparts (492-504). I should emphasize that I am not attempting to excuse the ghetto or write as an apologist. Rather, I am noting the relative lack of social restrictions in the ghetto.

[63] Sakamoto, 152.

[64] Kranzler, 621.

[65] *The Jews and the Japanese*, 148-9 & Sakamoto, 17.

[66] *The Jews and the Japanese*, 162

[67] *Ibid.*, 178.

[68] Sakamoto, 17.

[69] *Ibid.*, 53.

[70] David G. Goodman & Masanori Miyazawa. *Jews in the Japanese Mind: The History and Uses of a Cultural Stereotype* (New York: The Free Press, 1995). 111.

[71] *Ibid.*, 56. Engel also notes the authorities believed that the Jews held crucial scientific knowledge that would aid in Manchuria's development. The notion of Jews as scientific authorities also had precedents, most notably Albert Einstein, who visited Japan in 1922 and "personified the image of the Jews as geniuses" (*The Jews and the Japanese*, 167-8). The Japanese were aware of the "Jewishness" of both Einstein and Schiff. (168, 149).

[72] Kranzler, 481.

[73] Kapner/Levine.

[74] Kranzler, 207. "The key to the distinction between the Japanese and the European form of antisemitism seems to lie in the long Christian tradition of identifying the Jew with the Devil... The Japanese lacked this Christian image of the Jew and brought to their reading of the Protocols a totally different perspective.

The Christian tried to solve the problem by eliminating him; the Japanese tried to harness his immense wealth and power to Japan's advantage."

[75] I should note briefly that humanitarian efforts played a part in Japan's admirable and exceptional treatment of Jewish refugees and are especially lauded by Jewish writers on the subject (see Kapner/Levine, Engel). Two names that stand out are Sugihara Sempo (Chiune), who, as Japanese consul in Lithuania, issued thousands of transit visas of questionable validity (Sakamoto, 106-114), and Kotsuji Setsuzo, who bribed Kobe police, where the refugees landed as they entered Japan, to allow many to stay past the expiration of their visas (Engel). Also, the efforts of Japanese commoners should be noted as well. Jews in Kobe were given many anonymous gifts and donations as well as preferential treatment in shops. Free medical care and accommodation was often given also (Shatzkes, 265 & Kapner/Levine). "There was not antisemitism to the refugees in Kobe, only compassion and kindness (Kranzler, 317, quoted from Leo Hanin from his account to Rabbi Tokayer).

[76] Shatzkes, 258.

[77] Kovalio, 57.

[78] Sakamoto, 53-54.

[79] *Ibid.*, 66. Foreign Minister Matsuoka Yosuke stated in a similar vein in 1940 "I am the man responsible for the alliance with Hitler, but nowhere have I promised that we would carry out his anti-Semitic policies in Japan. This is not simply my personal opinion, it is the opinion of Japan, and I have no compunction about announcing it to the world" (Kapner/Levine).

[80] *The Jews and the Japanese*, 181.

[81] Sakamoto, 152.

[82] Kranzler, 621.

[83] Sakamoto, 167-168. She notes that while references to "racial equality and racial harmony" were made often, these notions are not found in diplomatic cables to those dealing with the refugee problem abroad.

[84] *Ibid.*, Sakamoto closes her book emphasizing such. Recent work by Takashi Fujitani emphasizes the often unhelpful manner in which what he calls the "argument of obvious duplicity" is advanced. While this argument asserts that the Japanese government used egalitarian rhetoric, particularly concerning Korean colonial subjects, as a facade for propagandic purposes or otherwise, Fujitani writes that this position distracts historians from looking at the effects of such rhetoric on actual policy decision as opposed to the often ambiguous, complex intentions. Takashi Fujitani. *Race for Empire: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as American During World War II* (London: UC Press, 2011). 47-48.

[85] *Politics and Culture in Wartime Japan*, 159.

[86] Goodman and Miyazawa go to great lengths in fact comparing anti-Semitism and traditional anti-Westernism in Japan. For example they look at Aizawa Seishisai's *New Theses* as a rhetorical precedent for later anti-Semitic texts (20-25). They even go so far as to take a traditional anti-Semitic polemic and substitute "occult religion" and "Western barbarians" with "Jews" and "Judaism" to produce "a classic anti-Semitic harangue" (27).