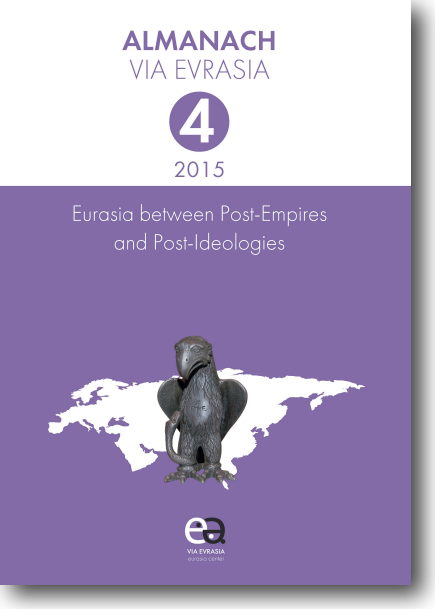

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JAPANESE VIEWS ON WWI AND THE RISE OF "ASIANISM":

THE IDEOLOGY OF JAPANESE FASCISM

Abstract

Japanese victory in the WWI was a windfall that the eventual German defeat brought about. It paid astonishingly small victims and took a huge colonial gains. The war had an effect to give Japanese civil and military intellectuals ungrounded self-confidence that their country had grown into the formidable world power that could compete with the Western powers. The article assessed the intellectual discourses over the Gallipoli campaign and elucidates how originally anticolonial liberation thought of Shumei Ohkawa transformed into anti-west, pro-imperialist doctrine.

Key words: Japan, Pan-Asianism, WWI, Mustafa Kemal, Gallipoli campaign

Japan entered into the First World War as an ally of the Entente. In theory, Japan was the enemy of the Ottoman Empire, but in practice, Japan kept, de facto, neutrality to the Sultan's forces,

and never exchanged real fire till the end of the war. As Japan and Turkey are divided by the huge landmass of Eurasian continent, there have been no direct contact by the 1880s, and even afterward, the tie was very thin. Despite the fact, or rather because of it, Japanese image of the Turks and the Ottomans were generally mild and sympathetic. It can be explained in the following way: In the traditional Japanese view, Turks are the direct descendent of ancient Turkic tribes living in the northeastern China. By way of classical Chinese literature, Japanese intellectuals possessed certain amount of their information, and they considered contemporary Turks as an Asian nation.[1] In light of such intimacy based on misunderstanding, it is of no significance to analyze the Japanese views on the Ottoman war efforts as an example of imaginary world-view of different cultures.

This was typically expressed in the Ottoman victories in the Gallipoli front and Kut-el-Amara. The paper first examines the contemporary media coverage of the events, then, analyses the impact felt by military specialists and intellectuals. Finally, the author tries to explicate the paradoxical rise of “Asianist” discourses in favor of Turks.

Japanese media and the First World War

On 23 August 1914, Mikado issued a decree to the effect that Japan declared war against Germany. On 2 September, the total of 51,800 soldiers landed on the Shangton peninsula, and began to occupy the Jiaoji railway constructed by the Germans. The actual fighting, however, did not take place until 31 October, when the Japanese army started an all-out attack against the Qingdao fortress where some 6,000 German troops garrisoned. The battle lased for a week and the German commander asked for truce on 7 November. A week of battle claimed 394 death and 1,439 wounded on the Japanese side. This is the total of Japanese war cost in the First World War, if one excludes the loss of 78 sailors who were dead of disease during their mission of patrol in the Indian Ocean

[1] Selçuk Esembelö ‘Japanese perspectıves of the Ottoman World,” in S. Esembel & C. Inaba eds., *The Rising Sun and the Turkish Crescent: New Perspective on the History of Japanese Turkish Relations*, (Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press, 2003), 23-28; Shiraiwa Kazuhiko, “Japanese view of the Turks in the Meiji era,” Esembel & Inaba, *The Rising*… 49-75.

and Mediterranean.[2]

Japan entered into the war with its own agenda that had nothing to do with the Global politics, let alone, the rivalry of the European powers. Japan had grown into a regional power by the outbreak of the war, but its strategy was limited within the Far East and North Western Pacific regions. The initial Japanese intention, therefore, was to intercept the German concession of the Kiauch Bey in particular, and to assert its colonialist interests in the Shangton peninsula in general. In the meantime, the European fronts came into a deadlock and the fighting had taken the feature of enduring trench war. So, the Japanese policy makers began to consider the maximum use of the political vacuum created by the "European war" in the Eastern Asia. As a result, the Japanese government pressed hard China to accept far larger compromise, known as the "21 demands," and succeeded in consolidating its "special position" in the North-Eastern part of Chinese territory. It was the start of Japanese invasion of continental China, and as such, one can say it was the inauguration for Japanese "Global politics," but its maximum scope never exceeded the limit of eastern half of Eurasian continent.

In the entire course of the war, therefore, Japan had no intention to participate in the "European War," and was adamant not being involved in it. All the cabinets during the war reiterated that the Japanese war aim had been to "secure peace" in the Eastern Asia and it would do nothing in the European affairs.[3]

The policy affected the society likewise. Except for a small number of military personnel and intellectuals, the European War was no matter of concern. It makes a sharp contrast with the previous wars (Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese) that was considered as national struggles of life and death. A columnist of *Asahi Shinbun*, one of the most influential papers at the time, complained the "insincere and relaxed" mood of Japanese populace

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[2] Shinnichi Yamamuro, *Fukugosen to Soryokusenno Dansou: Nihonnni totteno Daiitiji Sekaitaisen*, [The fault line of Complex War and Total War: The First World War for Japanese People] (Kyoto: JInbunshoin, 2011), 57-59, 67-68.

[3] "Nihon'no Sansen to Sono Igi [The significance of Japanese entry into the war]," *Taiyo*, 21-22.

in the following way: “Unimaginably enormous scale of the European War stunned so much a part of our nation that they are completely at a loss and don’t know what to do. On the other hand, quite a few Japanese entirely lost wariness as the battle over the German concession had ended so soon… The Great War in Europe is a natural byproduct of world politics. There is no reason that we can avoid spillover of the same system. I am much alarmed to see our people’s apathy and disinterest in these days.”[4]

Such an indifferent attitude, on the other hand, enabled Japan to record and analyze the course of warfare with restraint and somewhat objective point of view. Another columnist of the same paper asserted, at the very beginning of the hostilities, that the war among the European powers would be “a good chance” for us to learn how the modern technology would dictate the course of battle.[5] As if echoed with this call, Hakubunkan, the largest publisher in the early twentieth century Japan, started a new monthly “Oushuu Sensou Jikki [Reportage of the European War]” on 25 August 1915. The journal was issued twice a month, and survived until June 1916. Each number contains a lot of analytical articles and dispatches of correspondents, as well as various reports of military officers. In this way, it served as the major source of information for the Japanese public on the outside world engulfed by the war.

At the front page of the first issue, there are following remarks: “The war broke out in Europe is rapidly spreading all over the world. It must be a great turning point for the human history. For Japanese nation, it is the chance to bolster our imperial development, as well as to make our contribution outstanding in the universal civilization… Our duty is to deliver the readers fresh news on the course of battles and to keep them informed of the realpolitik of the world powers. Japanese people, you must remind your historical mission. Our empire is the key to the future of human being. It is high time we demonstrate our Japanese spirit to the world.”[6]

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[4] *Asahi Shinbun*, 12 December 1914.

[5] *Asahi Shinbun*, 8 August 1914.

[6] “Hakkan’no Ji [Mission of this new journal,” *Oushuu Sensou Jikki*, 1, (25 August 1914), 1.

The media coverage of the Ottoman operations

The first report on the Ottoman military actions appeared in the journal was a short dispatch (dated 7 January). Under the title of "Rout of Turkish army," it describes the Ottoman military difficulties as follows. "The Turkish army has been inactive since the outbreak of hostilities, and did not start any noteworthy campaigns." The divisions stationed at Damascus reportedly began to move toward Sinai, but the British defense is effective. Britons have already captured large swaths of land expanding from the confluence of the Tigris and the Euphrates to the Persian Gulf. In the north, Russian border guards pushed back the Turkish invasion into the Black Sea coast toward Batumi. "According to the latest news, Russians had exchanged fire with Turks at Sarıkamış. They have captured one army and put the rest of Turkish forces to flight. The Turks are fleeing in disorder and Russians are in hot pursuit. The Turkish damage is reportedly very heavy. Even the army commander together with three divisional generals was taken prisoner."[7]

More detailed information on the battle of Sarıkamış appeared on 25 January. The article elucidates the huge scale of Ottoman damage, and gives the following commentary. "The scenery of Turkish PWs is desperate. Thousands have frostbite in their legs. All are staving, and solicit for food and drink in tears. It reminds us the fact that the end of this Old Empire is imminent… The miserable outlook of Turkish PWs transported to Tbilisi is outstanding. They put nothing but a piece of blanket on their bare feet, and are screaming for mercy to the Russians. One can't help wondering they are indeed soldiers who have fought in the battlefield. It is a great mystery why the Young Turks are still playing their roles of German hounds… How hard they try, Turks can do nothing to change the course of war. It goes without saying from the onset. After all, what they are doing is nothing but to dig their own grave with great efforts."[8] These passages exemplify the widespread stereotype on the Turks among the Japanese populace: the Ottomans doom to

[7] "Toruko Gun'no Taihai [Rout of Turkish army],". *Oushuu Sensou Jikki,* 13, (10 January 1915), 16-17.

[8] "Toruko Gun'no Taihai [Rout of Turkish army],". *Oushuu Sensou Jikki,* 15, (25 January 1915), 15-16.

fall, their army is backward, soldiers are coward, and, therefore, their actions are of no significance to the main course of the battle.

The same mocking tone is observed in the early dispatches on the Dardanelles campaign. The first news of the battle describes the bombardment of Anglo-French fleet on 18 February 1915 as a "great victory that has not recorded in recent history," and highly applauses "the excellent skill of gunners who have destroyed the Turkish batteries with long range shots."[9] The second dispatch maintains the optimistic view on the campaign, and underscores the weakness of Turkish defense as follows: "The Turkish guns were totally silenced by the initial bombardment from the sea… The allied attack on the Turkish positions in the Dardanelles was so successful that entire population of Istanbul is in disarray. In view of thousands of refugees coming from Gallipoli, the Sultan has gone ahead with evacuation. Many Young Turks have already left the capital. Now, Turkey shows every kind of signs of total destruction."[10] The conviction on the vulnerability of "rotten old Turkish Empire" was so strong that even the loss of four cruisers of allied fleet on 19 March was remarked as "trivial compared to the great successes of the bombardment," and the correspondent triumphantly asserts that "the Turkish state is about to topple down."[11]

By the middle of April, however, the Anglo-French plan to break through the strait by naval force alone had turned out to be impossible. Despite the ample evidence attesting the astonishing resilience of Turkish gunners, the failure was explained as a miscalculation of the British headquarters, not as the success of the Ottoman defense. "However poor the Turkish equipment may be, it is not easy a job to thrust into a narrow strait guarded by well positioned guns."[12] So, the initial Ottoman victory was interpreted as purely tactical shortcomings of the British fleet, and the natural

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[9] "Da Kaikyou Houdai Hakaisaru [Batteries on the Dardanelles were destroyed]," *Oushuu Sensou Jikki,* 19, (5 March 1915), 12-13.

[10] "Dardanelles Kaikyou Kougeki Shinchokusu [The attack on the Dardanelles is in progress]," *Oushuu Sensou Jikki,* 21, (25 March 1915), 13.

[11] "Katamukikaketa Toruko'no Kokuso [Turkey decline from the ground]," *Oushuu Sensou Jikki,* 22, (5 April 1915), 10.

[12] "Dardanelles Zatsuwa [Talks on the Dardanelles campaign]," *Oushuu Sensou Jikki,* 23, (15 April 1915), 10.

outcome of this observation: “The allied fleet should have been supported by the infantry attacks.”[13] There was still an optimistic mood among the Japanese correspondents, and a strong belief in the British military might and the vulnerability of “backward and coward” Ottomans.

After the failed landing operation at the end of April, the criticism on the British “tactical error” became more clearly articulated, but any positive reassessment of the Ottoman strength was yet to come. An anonymous military officer admitted “the damage of the Anglo-French expedition force was by no means small.” According to his analysis, however, it was a simple tactical error of the British, and nothing else. The skepticism on the British prowess is clearly shown in the following commentary of an anonymous officer in the Army’s General Staff. “The British commander, general Hamilton, announced that his army inflicted enormous damage on the Turks and successfully completed its landing mission. There are rumors the fall of Constantinople is imminent. But we can’t accept the information at face value. We have to wait for a while until we can discern whether the announcement is true or a kind of military propaganda… It is undeniable that the allied operations in that region have been slow and tardy.”[14] But this officer did not mention anything on the effectiveness of Ottoman defense. The Turks are meaningless existence, and their Empire has no strategic value. “The Dardanelles campaign was meaningless in terms of the general strategy of the European war. They should have concentrated their military efforts in other places.”[15]

For Japanese military journalists, the Dardanelles campaign was an example that attested the imperfection of European Powers that had been concealed for a long time. Now, they realized advanced nations in Europe were not almighty as had believed

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[13] “Dardanelles Kougeki Shinchoku [The attack on the Dardanelles is in progress],” *Oushuu Sensou Jikki,* 25, (5 May 1915).

[14] “Doku Ro Tandoku Kouwa Setsu to Da Kaikyou’no Shouchou [The rumor of Russo-German separate peace and the overview of the Dardanelles campaign],” *Oushuu Sensou Jikki,* 36, (15 August 1915),

[15] “Dardanelles Kaikyou Kougeki [The attack on the Dardanelles strait],” *Oushuu Sensou Jikki,* 28, (5 June 1915),

hitherto. They could not defeat even the Turks whose ill-equipped army did not deserve to be reckoned with. When the campaign was getting closer to the end, the editorial of *Oushuu Sensou Jikki* gave the following assessment to this abortive operation. “It is indisputable that the Dardanelles campaign ended up in a military failure of the Great Britain.” But it was not the result of successful resistance of Turks, but the outcome of British mismanagement. They tried to explain the reason of “failure” as the weakness of British system. “The campaign was a product of political expectation, rather than strategic consideration. The Dardanelles had nothing to do with the main course of the European war. The British simply wasted their military resources by sending a large expeditionary force to the battlefield of secondary importance, thousand miles away from the main theatre.”[16] The Ottomans are an insignificant member of the Central Powers, and their territory is of secondary importance as its weak army could pose no threat to the major current of “European War.”

The analysis of media coverage of *Oushuu Sensou Jikki*, the most important and detailed source of “European War” in Japan, can safely allow us to conclude that the Turkish war efforts attracted minimal attention of those who were attentive to the development of hostilities. The Ottomans, i.e. Turks were imaged as unintelligent, backward, therefore militarily unimportant nation, and, more often than not, targets of open mockery. There was almost no sympathy to their predicaments and no interest in their bravery expressed in full form in the victories over the Anglo-French invaders at the Dardanelles. It is true that the Ottoman Empire was a member of the enemy’s camp, but we come across many positive views with pure sense of adoration in the other articles and dispatches describing the German and Austrian operations. The German rank and file was often described as formidable and brilliant solders, and its prowess were openly applauded, despite the fact Japan had exchanged real

[16] “Dardanelles Kougeki CHuusi Ka [Is the Dardanelles campaign canselled?],” *Oushuu Sensou Jikki,* 46, (5 Decmeber 1915),

fire with them.[17] The stone-cold attitudes to Turks, therefore, can't be explained unless we assume that the Japanese journalism simply swallowed the image of Turks fabricated by the Western European discourses.

Military Personnel and the Great War

The Ministry of War sat up a special committee with the purpose to make a comprehensive research on the "European War" on December 1915. The committee's task was to gather and analyze the information covering 335 fields that embraced military operations, activities in financial, economic, transportation sectors, and the public life. It implies the Japanese Army realized the modern war had already taken the nature of total war. The first report was prepared on March 1916. It was presented to the General Staff, then, distributed to other ministries, division commands, and military schools. Henceforth, the committee regularly published its reports on monthly base.[18]

Along with the activities of the committee, the Army's General Staff dispatched the total of 220 military observers to the European countries between 1914-1924. The dispatches and other information gathered by them were included in the monthly reports of the special committee. Most of the military observers were middle class officers, and had participated in the Russo-Japanese war 1904-1905. Out of this cadre emerged the top ranking generals that played key roles during the Second Sino Japanese War (1937-1945) and the Pacific War (1941-1945). Therefore, the analysis and lessons they brought home must have influenced the Japanese war policy and the course of military modernization.[19]

The summary of the earlier reports was published in 1916

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[17] We come across a lot of articles of this kind. For example, "Doitsu'no Douinburi [The mobilization of German Army]," *Oushuu Sensou Jikki*, 7 (5 November 1914), "Oushuu Taisen'no Keii to Sono Kouhyou [The course of the European War and its analysis]," *Oushuu Sensou Jikki*, 8, (15 November 1914), "Touhou Senjou'no Taikatugeki [The great spectacle in the Eastern Front]," *Oushuu Sensou Jikki*, 13, (5 January 1914).

[18] Kazuzo Kuzuhara, "Teikoku Rikugun'no Daiitchiji Sekaitaisen Shi Kenkyu [The Study of WWI by the Japanese Imperial Army]," Senshi Kenkyuu Nenpou [Annales of Military History], 4, 2010, 34-35.

[19] Ibid., 35.

under the title of "*Oushuu Sensou Gaiyou* [Outline of the European War] by the Army's publishing house. The contents were revised and enlarged in 1917-1919, and printed in separate brochures of "*Oushuu Sensou Sousho* [Collection of Studies of the European War]" that amounted to the total of 33 volumes with several addenda. On the front page of each volume was printed the following passage: "Prohibited except for Japanese officers." So, the contents were regarded as military secret, but actually the most of the text was nothing but a translation of books and newspaper articles printed in European countries. The total of four volumes contain some analysis and description on the battles waged in the Ottoman territory.

The sixteenth volume of the Collection has a chapter "The summary and analysis of the operations carried out in Italo-Austrian front, the Balkans and Asian Turkey." The description on the Ottoman forces was scarce, less than 10 pages. The first part of chapter contains very short summary of the Gallipoli expedition, Palestine and Caucasus front, and the siege of Kut-el-Amara.[20] The second part is dedicated to the analysis. As for the Ottoman Army, there are only the following passages: "During the siege of Kut-el-Amara, the Turks were overwhelmingly superior to the British forces. Despite the fact, they did nothing but standing around the small enclave and concentrating their efforts in cutting the enemy's communication lines. It resulted in the unnecessary long siege of 143 days, and Turks simply wasted the time. The reason can be found in the fact that they did not have enough number of guns and shells. If they had bombarded much more seriously the small British position with a diameter less than 2 km, they could have achieved their victory much easier. Another reason can be found in the nature of the Turkish forces. They seemed to have lacked enough morale to make decisive all-out assault. It is testified by their miserable defeat in the Caucasian front by the hand of Russians in 1916. Their actions since February 1917 reinforces this reasoning. Once the British started renewed offensive, Turks deserted Kut-el-Amara instantly, and then surrendered Baghdad without showing any sign

[20] Oushuu Sensou Sousho, vol. 16 (Tokyo: Kaikousha, 1917), 32-36.

of effective resistance."[21] This anonymous author displays the same stereotype of "backward and coward Turks" we have seen in the analysis of the media coverage.

The same kind of attitude can be found in another analysis of the siege of Kut-el-Amara. In the volume 19 of the Collection, a separate chapter is dedicated to the siege. It contains much richer information, but all of them are on the detailed actions of the British expedition forces, and most of the text is direct citations from the English sources.[22] There is no mention of the Ottoman operation and their defensive efforts. The siege was explained as a tactical miscalculation of British army, and the reason of failure simply lied in the difficulty of logistics, not the effectiveness of the Ottoman actions. There are even such passages: "All the British efforts to deliver supply and reinforcement could not bear fruit. It became evident the fall was inevitable. The British, however, never gave up. They did everything to withstand the siege as long as possible. Their bravery and heroism not to hesitate death in face of duty was a manifestation of the noble spirit of self-sacrifice characterizing the British nation. It can be a role model for our people."[23]

For the Japanese military personnel of the early twentieth century, the Britain was a naval power par excellence. Japanese navy was constructed following the British model, and young elite officers studied in British naval academy. It may help to elucidate the reason why the officers were not so much impressed by the British humiliation at Kut-el-Amara. They showed less interest in a desert war that was completely out of scope of Japanese war agenda at that time. In contrast, the Dardanelles expedition drew much more attention, not least because it was the largest landing operation that had ever attempted. Japan is an island country like British, and its colonialist interest was focused on the Eastern Asian continent. Therefore, the Japanese military showed extraordinary interest in the event, and tried to extract lessons from the British failures. It can

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[21] Ibid., 44-45.

[22] But there is no mention on the titles of the referenced works.

[23] Oushuu Sensou Sousho, vol. 19 (Tokyo: Kaikousha, 1917), 40-41.

be ascertained by the fact that two volumes are dedicated to the operation in the Collection.

The volumes contain rich descriptions on the entire course of the event. The first volume is composed of five chapters. The chapter one relates the geography, recent history, the strategic value of the operation and the Turkish defense. The chapter two analyzes the military and diplomatic situation on the eve of the operation. Following chapters describe the British war aims, allied naval attack on March 1915, and the landing of 25 April, respectively. The second volume is dedicated to the August offensive of allied forces, the evacuation, and the analysis. What is noteworthy is the density of narrative on the actions of British forces. About 80% of total text describes the British war plans and its military actions. The reader comes across only a few passages on the actions of French forces. Although the anonymous author discloses no sources of reference, and the volume lacks bibliography section, it is obvious that the work relied heavily on English sources. What deserves attention, though, is the fact that the study describes the reaction of Turkish forces in four different sections.[24] If we remember the fact that the report on the siege of Kut-el-Amara lacks any information on the Turkish action, it makes a good contrast.

Reflecting the gravity of English sources, the tone of description of the work is generally sympathetic to the British forces. There are a lot of passages applauding heroic actions performed by the British officers that were killed in the battle. At the same time, the anonymous author of Japanese Army does not hesitate to criticize the shortcomings of British operations. He enumerates the following eight points as the major reasons of the failure. First, the allies miscalculated the Turkish defensive of the straits. Second, the operation was a product of political consideration, and lacked military scrutiny. Third, the Britain was so optimistic for the naval might that they failed to pay attention to intelligence activities. Fourth, the premature March naval attack enabled Turks to buy time

[24] The chapter 5 of the first volume contains two sections: “Turkish defense positions (to the first landing),” and “Turkish counteraction (to the Franco-British attacks)”. The second volume has two parts: “Turkish defense positions in the Suvla bay” and “Turkish counteraction (to the August offensive).” See: Oushuu Sensou Sousho, vol. 31 (Tokyo: Kaikousha, 1919), 47-49, 93-102, vol. 32, 8-12, 33-36.

for better defense. Fifth, the British failed to well organize the landing vessels. Sixth, the selection of landing points was inappropriate. Seventh, the top generals were incompetent. Eighth, the allies' reinforcement was gradual. They should have done it immediately.[25] As one can see in these conclusions, the anonymous author mainly focused his discussion on the internal weakness of the British. His assumption is apparently that the British forces had been superior to and had enough capacity to defeat Turks, but they made too many tactical and strategic errors. That is why they failed. It was completely excluded out of his scope of analysis the reason of resiliency of the Ottoman defense. It sounds strange, as the anonymous author seemed to have a certain amount of information regarding the Ottoman defense.

His description on the Ottoman positions and deployed units is relatively accurate. He can even describe vividly the defensive actions of the Ottoman army. The following passages depicting the battle of Arıburnu is one of good examples. "The commander of 19. Brigade had made reconnaissance in the early morning. He noticed the enemy was landing near Burnu, and realized the imminence. He lost no time in deploying an infantry battalion with an artillery company at Kocaçimentepe, without waiting order, and succeeded in securing the height. Then, the commander dispatched another battalion to the direction of Mt. Ghaba. Although the units guarding the coast was effectively resisting the enemy's advance so far, he foresaw the left wing of the Turkish force was vulnerable. The commander of the Third army connived the action of 19. Brigade commander, and sent him reinforcement."[26]

We often come across such detailed description in the work, but there was no analysis why and how effectively the Ottomans could fight off the formidable enemy. The following passages may hint the answer. " Since the dawn of 25 April, the southern tip of the peninsula had been covered with powder smoke. The incessant sound of gunfire signaled the battle had entered into a decisive

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[25] Oushuu Sensou Sousho, vol. 32 (Tokyo: Kaikousha, 1919),, 55-62.

[26] Ibd., 95; The anonymous author mentions Mustafa Kemal only in this part.

phase. But the Turkish soldiers never showed slightest sign of retreat, digging themselves deeply into the trenches. As their faith promised the heaven's gate for those who fell in battlefield, they had no hesitation in face of certain death. They were all willing to punish with their arms the infidels who had come to devastate their sacred Islamic lands at the cost of their own life."[27] It is nothing but banal phrases describing "fanatic Muslims" widely diffused among the European literature. For the Westernized prewar Japanese military elites, Turks were "others," if not barbarians, whom they felt no obligation to feel sympathy.

It is of no doubt that such a stereotype was predominant among the military elites of Japan. For them, Turks were not the honorable fighters who made strenuous resistance to formidable army of European Powers with much less qualified equipment and smaller number of guns. Moreover, both Dardanelles and Mesopotamian expeditions were British invasion into the Ottoman territories, so they were the battle to defend their homeland against the European aggressors. Now the Turks, imagined as Asians, defeated the British forces. It must have been natural to compare their victory with the one took place some ten years ago in the Far East. The victory of Asia over the European invaders was the favorite slogan among the military personnel since the Russo-Japanese War. But such an imagination was the last thing one can expect from the Japanese elites.

Against the background of prevalent Western-made image of Turks, makes a sharp contrast the view of Housuke Nagase, one of the pioneers of Japanese Orientalism.[28] He contributed a short article to the journal, *Oushuu Sensou Jikki,* on 10 January 1915, and tired to correct the biased image of "barbarian Turks." He first expresses "deep dismay" at "total indifference" and "cold attitudes" of Japanese populace to the plight of Turks. He believes it was

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[27] Ibid., 96.

[28] Housuke Nagase (1865-1926) is a professor of international relations. He learned, first, in John Hopkins University, then in the University of Berlin. After coming back to Japan, he was eventually invited to the Army's General Staff as an analyst. He stayed in China for seven years as an agency of Japanese Army, and made several research trips in the Central Asia and the Ottoman Empire. He is the author of several books, including *Barukan'no Hensenn* [The Balkans in Transision], *Seinen Toruko Tou'no Zento* [The Future of the Young Turks], and *Toruko'no Kakumei* [The Turkish Revolution].

nothing but a product of total ignorance of the Japanese populace on the Turks. “The majority of our people have very poor information on Turks. As we don’t know them, we have no interest in them. Therefore, we have no opinion.”[29] As a self-claimed specialist, he advocates the change of attitude into more positive one.

First, he urges the readers to pay attention to the historical roles that the Ottoman Empire has been playing for the benefit of Asian peoples for more than five hundred years. “Turkey is at the cross road of East and West. It possessed the Balkans to the west, a part of central Asia to the north, and Egypt in the south. Based on this huge territory, Turks have been effectively preventing the Western invasion from entering into the East. Thanks for the Turks, the rest of Asia were well protected from the Western threat until recent days. China, for instance, could enjoy the privileged position immune to the Western threats for several hundred years during the Ming and Qing dynasties. The same was true for us. We had enjoyed 300 years of peace during the Tokugawa Shogunate. If it had not been for Turkey, China, and even Japan must have been colonized by France, Great Britain, and Italy.” For Nagase, Turkey is the “Asian bulwark” against the Western forces. He stresses: “The Oriental peoples have to express their utmost gratitude to Turkey.”[30]

As a second step of his enlightenment of “ignorant Japanese” is to highlight the Asian nature of Turks. “Turks are,” he claims, “an Asian people and our racial relatives.” According to his theory, Turkish people was born in the Eastern Asia and Mongoloid in terms of racial origin. They have left their homeland in the ancient time, and went into the European continent. The ensuing long process of mixture with neighboring European peoples through intermarriage ended up in a drastic change in their racial characters. Now, most of Turks look like more European than Asian. The racial proximity, however, does not alter the nature of Turks as an Asian people. The Asiatic quality of Turks, according to him, is attested by the following two virtues proper to them. First, “Turks are honest. They never tell a lie, even when they are making jokes… The honesty of Turks is well

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[29] Housuke Nagase, “Torukojin’no Shinsou to Iwayuru Seinentou [The truth about the Turks and so-called Young Turks],” *Oushuu Sensou Jikki,* 13 (10 January 1915), 82.

[30] Ibid., 81.

known in worldwide, and no one dares to suspect it... It makes sharp contrast with their neighbors like Armenians and Greeks who are notorious native fiddlers." Second, "Turks are very kind. They are truly merciful not only to the elderly, children and women, but also charitable to the poor… They are even benign to the animals, and never kill them without reason." "They are very hospitable to the foreign guests… For example, my trip in Turkey was the most pleasant one."[31] Such "virtues" are, according to this "scholar," attributes to the Asian peoples, because Europeans like Greeks and Armenians are generally dishonest and spiteful.

Nagase, on the other hand, admits there are several shortcomings in Turks. According to him, the following two are the most serious. "First, they are lazy, and don't like to work hard. They like to do everything in their accustomed old-fashioned way. They lack the sprit of enterprise. Second, they are silly in general, and lack the sense of reason in particular. They have very poor imagination, and especially very bad at arithmetic." These "shortcomings," Nagase claims, are not the nature inherent to antique Turks, but a product of Islam. Turks were contaminated with laziness and stupidity because they became Muslims. "The doctrines of Islam," he insists, "can be summed up as fatalism mixed with asceticism. This is why Turks give up everything in a half way, calling it as destiny. They don't care to live poor and miserable life, because it is the will of God. For them, it is the last idea to improve their life by their own efforts." In this way, Nagase asserts the source of Turkish difficulties is their religion. It is typical attitude of the "Western Orientalists" whose frame of reference Nagase inherited during his study in USA and Germany.

The same stupidity, according to Nagase, explains why the Ottoman Empire had committed suicidal act of entering the war with the German side. "The Young Turks, Europeanized in surface, but not truly so in essence, seem to have lost their reason. If they had had minimal commonsense, they would have concentrated themselves in the recovery of national economy. On the contrary, they are indulging in such pointless acts like arms race and

[31] Ibid., 84-85.

withdrawal of concessions. As a result, they had to come through financial crisis… They have paid no attention to the promotion of industry. It resulted in the total lack of machine industry. For all their rich reserves of mineral and petrol, they can't produce their own weaponry. They rely everything on import, even shoes and sox for the soldiers."[32] The culmination of this "stupidity" of the Young Turks, Nagase claims, was the participation in the "European War." "It was nothing but voluntary destruction of the country, as it is apparent that the war will end up in the partition of the Ottoman territory among the Great Powers."[33]

It is true that the discussion of Nagase contains some original points of view, like positive estimation of the historical roles of the Ottomans, or sympathy for the "kind and honest" Turks who are Asian neighbor and racial kin in theory. But his positive assessment of Turks never exceeds the limit of pitifulness – his personal sentiment. It is true that he expresses utmost commiseration for "good people who are going to lose their country," but he has no idea that "lazy and stupid" Turks can display remarkable resilience to the formidable European forces. As his discourses on the Islamic fatalism mentioned above shows it, Nagase could not break free the academic framework he had adopted from the Western scholars. In other words, he saw the Turks only through the Western/ized point of view. In this sense, Japanese Orientalists, like Nagase, shared essentially the same type of worldview as the Westernized officers and journalists. Therefore, the following example of Shumei Ohkawa merits special emphasis, as a fundamentally different approach to the Turks.

Shumei Ohkawa and his "Asianist" approach

Shumei Ohkawa was a well known but controversial right wing ideologue in the interwar period of Japan. As the main architect of the program called "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere"- a disguised regional cooperation acting as a cover-up of Japanese imperialism during the WWII - he is often considered as one of the

[32] Ibid., 88.

[33] Ibid., 88.

main propagators of Japanese Fascism, and was nicknamed "Japanese Goebbels." Actually, Ohkawa was a preacher of the ultra-nationalism, and asserted the Japanese people had to fortify themselves by the revival of pre-modern Japanese philosophy. After the World War II, the International Military Tribunal for the Far East sentenced him to death by hanging as a class-A war criminal. He was the only civilian among the twenty-seven military officers ruled as guilty.

Ohkawa is also known as the first Japanese translator of Koran, and one of the founders of the Japanese Islamic studies. One of his biographers, Kenichi Matsumoto, even applauses that Ohkawa was the first Japanese researcher succeeded in comprehend the real nature of Islamic civilization.[34] So, in contrast to other pre-war ultra-nationalist, Ohkawa had a moderate, if not balanced, view on the other Asian nations. A group of researchers tried to vindicate him on the ground that his idea, known as "Pan-Asianism," was not exactly the same as Japanese expansionism and imperialism. It is even claimed his idea contains the essence of national liberation movement.[35] This made him a highly ambivalent thinker.

It is widely accepted by the scholars that the basic components of the Ohkawa's as "Pan-Asianism" were rooted in the cultural Aisanism advocated by Kakuzo (Tenshin) Okakura. A Japanese historian of fine arts, Okakura was one of the best-qualified intellectuals of modern Japan. Although he researched Japanese traditional art, he widely traveled Europe, the United States, China and India, and wrote mainly in English. He was invited to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 1904, and became the first head of the Asian art division there in 1910. Quite contrary to the Westernized Japanese intellectuals of his time, he didn't affected by the adoration of Western values. Rather, he was a fierce critic to the Western cultural hegemony, and propagated the "Asiatic values" as

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[34] Kennichi Matsumoto, *Ohkawa Shumei*, (Tokyo: Iwanamishoten, 2004).

[35] Yoshimi Takeuchi, *Nihon'no Aziashugi* [The Japanese Pan-Asianism], (Kennichi Matsumoto ed. Takeuchi Yoshimi "*Nihon'no Aszashugi" Seidoku* [Reaging "The Japanese Asianim" of Yoshimi Takeuchi], (Tokyo: Iwanamishoten, 2000), 9.

a counter part. Engaging the research of Buddhist sculptures and architectures of the 8th century Japan, Okakura realized those artifacts were the products of unique combination of Chinese culture of Tang dynasty, ancient Buddhism of India, and Islamic Persian crafts. Based on this finding, Okakura asserted the Japanese culture constituted a part of large cultural entity embracing the entire Asian continent.

His major work, *The Ideals of the East* (1903), published on the eve of the Russo-Japanese War, he argues that Asia is "one" and preached both Japanese and the other people in Asia a necessity of mutual respect and pride in traditional values. It was the first attempt to find a common element that would enable the solidarity of Asian peoples. He put it: "Asia is one. The Himalayas divide, only to accentuate, two mighty civilizations, the Chinese with its communism of Confucius, and the Indian with its individualism of the Vedas. But not even the snowy barriers can interrupt for one moment that broad expanse of love for the Ultimate and Universal, which is the common thought-inheritance of every Asiatic race, enabling them to produce all the great religions of the world, and distinguishing them from those maritime peoples of the Mediterranean and the Baltic, who love to dwell on the Particular, and to search out the means, not the end, of life..." "For if Asia be one, it is also true that the Asiatic races form a single mighty web... Arab chivalry, Persian poetry, Chinese ethics, and Indian thought, all speak of a single ancient Asiatic peace, in which there grew up a common life, bearing in different regions different characteristic blossoms, but nowhere capable of a hard and fast dividing-line. Islam itself may be described as Confucianism on horseback, sword in hand..."[36]

Okakura's attempt to find a common element in the diversity of Asian civilizations was not quite successful. His failure might be clearly seen in the ambiguity of his concepts, like "love for the Ultimate and Universal," or "a single ancient Asiatic peace." His real intention lurks in his strong denouncing tone in describing the Western civilization. What he wanted to say was Asia is one in its

[36] Kakuzo Okakura, *The Ideals of the East* (1903),1.

humiliation. It shared common plight of falling behind in achieving modernization, and being colonized by the Western powers.

The cultural Asianism of Okakura was transformed by Ohkawa into a call for political union of Asian peoples under the championship of Japan. While the Asianism of Okakura remained an urge for Japanese national pride as a common bearer of great Asian civilizations with other nations, Ohkawas found in the Asianism an alternative to the Western style modernization. Japan took up the Western model as the basic frame of reference for its state-building in the late 1860s. The initial aim was to create a modernized army that could effectively cope with the Western Powers. It necessitated the capacity to provide the army with enough amount of equipment. Thus, the focus was on the rapid development of heavy industry. The policy seemed to have born fruit when Japan defeated Russians in 1905. The fruit, however, was not equally distributed among the population. As the industrialization was achieved at the cost of agriculture, it resulted in widespread poverty among the peasant mass. By the eve of WWI, the Japanese society had shown a stark contrast between the rich and poor. The wellbeing of impoverished mass was a common concern of young intellectuals and officers who had come from the lower strata. For many of them, the blind belief in the “Westernization” seemed too optimistic.

Ohkawa was a good example of these young elites. He noticed the Japanese social and political problems were arising from the hasty and forceful adoption of the Western model, but at the same time, he understood well its necessity with regard to the global rivalry among the Powers. So long as the rivalry existed, Japan had to pursue its militarization at the cost of wellbeing of common people. Therefore, the Japanese domestic questions could be solved only by the elimination of the Western (including US) colonialist threats. The goal could be achieved, he believed, by the alliance with Asian independence movements.

Ohkawa was born in 1886 in a small country town in Northern Japan. He studied classic Indian philosophy in the University of Tokyo. After graduation in 1911, Ohkawa continued his study in a

style of self-education, mainly in the field of comparative philosophy and Islamic studies.[37] Ohkawa was gifted with a linguistic talent, and widely consulted German, French, English, and Sanskrit literatures. Spending most of time in libraries, he earned his livelihood as a part-time translator in the Army's General Staff, and made acquaintance with middle class Armey officers, many of them were to become political activists in the years to come. At the same time, he made contact with the leaders of Indian national liberation movement who took temporary shelter in Japan during the WWI. These connections enabled him well informed of the details of the "European War" and the naissance of nationalist movements in the colonized states in Asia.

Although came from a strongly Buddhist dominated region, he got acquainted with the basic teaching of Christianity through the contact with a Catholic priest, his French teacher. But the Christianity did not stay long in his mind. Soon, he was disappointed by the conservative nature of its doctrines, and sought more practical philosophy that could be helpful for the social questions, namely the poverty and misery pervasive among the Japanese peasants. It is in due course that he was attracted by the Marxism. Later, in the middle of the 1920s, he admitted that Karl Marx once was his spiritual mentor. The Marxism, however, did not persuade Ohkawa so much. Soon he began to show more interest in the Confuciansim.[38] These experiences explain why he became a believer of a small cult group called "Michikai" in 1909.[39]

"Michikai" is founded by Kaiseki Matsumura in 1912. Matsumura used to be a well kwon Protestant priest, but separated from the mainstream group, and sat up a self-claimed independent "Church." Actually, his teachings and doctrines were nothing that could be called as Christianity. It was a strange mixture of Bible,

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[37] Akira Usuki, Ohkawa Shumei, Islam'to Tannou'no Hazamade [Shumei Ohkawa: Between Islam and Mikado], (Tokyo: Seidosha, 2013), 87.

[38] Matsumoto, *Ohkawa*, 76-86.

[39] In Japanese, "Michi" has two different meanings. One is a road. At the same time, the term implies the spiritual pass, so it is a synonym of a certain set of moral principles.

Confucianism, Taoism, and old Japanese learnings.[40]

Once enrolled, Ohkawa took active part in the cult group, and played a leading role in the editorial of its organ "Michi." Ohkawa's career as editor spanned for about 15 years. During the time, he wrote many articles on various topics, ranging from Japanese and European history, comparative studies of religion, to Asian studies. His major work of Asian studies, *Fukkou Azia'no Shomondai* [Several Questions of the Asian Revival], was published in June 1922, but almost all the text was first appeared as separate articles in the "Michi" journal. Starting from "The Afghanistan question" published on November 1919, he had contributed the journal with the total of ten articles by October 1921. Taking into consideration of these facts, it is of no doubt that *Fukkou Azia'no Shomondai* represents the Ohkawa's view on the experiences of Western Asian countries during the WWI.[41] Let us look into the contents of the work.

The first chapter is titled as "European Revolutions and Asian Revival." This is a good summary of his worldview as well as the historical significance of the "Great War." What is conspicuous first of all is his strong belief in the unity of Asian peoples. He claims, "The Asian peoples, first of all, have to be free. Once liberated, they had to unite themselves strongly. The gravest concern that is a head of us is how to achieve the emancipation and how to secure the unity. The contemporary Asians are nothing but slaves of their European masters… The Asian people can address their own questions only after they liberate themselves. Therefore, the primary duty for Asia is to break its shackle of slavery."[42] For Ohkawa, all the Asian peoples were equal victims, regardless of political status (colonial or independent), of European aggression. This is because the European Powers had been controlling the international politics

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[40] Usuki, *Ohkawa,* 87.

[41] Ibid., 179-180.

[42] Shumei Ohkawa, "Fukkou Azia'no Shomondai [Several Question of the Asian Revival]," in Ohkawa Shumei Zenshuu [The Complete Works of Shummei Ohkawa], Vol.2, (Tokyo: Iwasakishoten, 1962), 8: The work was first published in 1922. The author used a reprinted version of 1962.

and changed the political map of Asia at their will.[43]

In the view of Ohkawa, the European domination of Asia was not only the result of military superiority, but also the cultural hegemony. According to him, Europe had pressed Asia into subjugation for more than three hundred years, and, as a result, Asian peoples were forced to accept the myth of racial inferiority of colored peoples. It gave birth to a state of resignation and resulted in fatalism. The fatalism explains why the Asian peoples could be controlled by only a small number of European colonial forces. "The life and death of the entire population living in the tropical Africa is in the hand of a total of 90,000 Whites, the same is true for Malaysia controlled by 80,000, and India by 150,000."[44] This abnormal situation could be changed easily, only if the Asians realized their historical mission and started all-out resistance to the European domination in the world system.

The Japanese victory over Russians, he asserts, came as the first signal. The most of Asian people, however, could not understand fully the historical significance of Russo-Japanese War by the outbreak of the WWI.[45] For Ohkawa, the WWI was nothing but a struggle for the global hegemony between the Great Britain and Germany. As the two countries had essentially the same entity in terms of their political ideas and economic systems, the final result of the war would not have brought about any basic changes. No matter which side, Britain or Germany, secure the victory, the world would have remained under the European yoke.[46]

The tide of history, however, changed unexpectedly. The Russian revolution and the grasp of power by the Bolsheviks gave a fresh blow to the existing world order. The Bolsheviks, Ohkawa asserts, "denied the capitalism that allowed the small number of people to control the entire wealth of nation," and tried to realize "the

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[43] Ibid., 9.

[44] Ibid., 19.

[45] Ibid., 10.

[46] Ibid., 11-15.

unity of economic life by introducing the worker's principles that would bring the welfare to all the population."[47] The Russian revolution, Ohkawa continues, was not an isolated local event, but a part of wider European transformation. Now the entire territory of Europe is threatened by the wave of revolution. As the capitalist oriented European politicians could not stem out the revolutionary movements, "we can see in the backstage of these events a sign of the end of European domination of the world."[48] These phrases remind us the Marxist past of Ohkawa, but his sympathy to the European revolution and the Soviet state was limited only to the extent that they would function as auxiliary forces in the fight against the "Western hegemony" by the Asian peoples.

The real moving force of the new world order, according to Ohkawa, had to come from Asia. It is because the World War has brought with it the stimuli for the awakening of oppressed peoples in the entire regions of Asia. "As the excuse to mobilize their colonial armies, the Great Britain and France widely propagated that their victory would bring with it the justice and freedom to the world, thus, the war would benefit the colonized, too."[49] The war propaganda, therefore, eventually stimulated the lofty aspiration for real justice and freedom among the enslaved nations, and gave birth to the global movement in which the colored peoples would massively rise up against the European hegemony. "Now the Asian peoples began to mount stiff resistance to the Whites rulers in an enormous scale. The fighting between Whites and non-Whites has already got the definite form of worldwide national struggles, and it is the Asian awakening that is the center of this all-out challenge of non-White peoples."[50]

Ohkawa and the Rise of Turkish Nationalism

In his worldview, Turks are part and parcel of the Asian

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[47] Ibid., 15.

[48] Ibid., 18.

[49] Ibid., 19.

[50] Ibid., 21.

peoples. For example, we come across the following passages in his work. “The contemporary Asian movements are all based on the realization of the Asian spirits. Let us take a look at the Turkish case as an example. When they first rose up, the aspiration of Young Turks was nothing but the realization of Western democracy. Once the World war broke out, however, they began to champion the Turkish nationalism that had its own roots in the Turanian sprit. What they are struggling to achieve now is not at all the implementation of Western institutions, but to create and foster their own values based on the pure ancient Turkish culture.”[51]

Based on this belief, Ohkawa shows deep sympathy and utmost compassion to the revolutionary endeavors of Young Turks and their war efforts. According him, “the most fateful factor that caused the downfall of Turkish revolution was nothing but the evil intention of Europe.” “The Western Powers hated the revolution as it would result in the revival of formidable Turkish Empire… Russians and Austrians had deep concern about spillover of revolutionary movement among their subject nations. They also feared that a strong Turkey would thwart their territorial ambition to Istanbul and Thessaloniki. The Great Britain, in the same vein, feared of eventual loss of Egypt and Cyprus. Moreover, the success of Young Turks might encourage liberation movements in India. France had the same anxiety over its colonies in the North Africa.” Therefore, the Western Powers mobilized all the possible measures to forestall the constitutionalism, effective governance and salvage of national might in Turkey. “The Western Powers connived the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Austrians. They felt even joy when Italy invaded Tripoli. They cooperated, with various pretexts, with the Balkan league during the Balkan Wars, expecting the further recession of Turkish influence. At the same time, they made a concerted propaganda denouncing Young Turks as undemocratic, visionary, and politically impotent.”[52]

According to his assertion, the primary goal of the Young Turks was to “reunite the Empire by way of Turkification of various subject

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[51] Ibid., 22.

[52] Ibid., 133.

peoples." He expresses full support to this policy, and even affirms: "it was natural that the awakened Turkish spirit resulted in this policy." For him, the Young Turks were to be blamed for their failure only because they were too hasty. In the same vein, he vindicates the Young Turks' decision to go into the war as a German ally. In the light of Turkish plight at the time of revolution, the Young Turks had good reason to rely on German capital and its military. "European Powers were awaiting further Turkish decline. National budget was completely depleted. The armed forces were at the brink of total destruction. Opposition parties were posing constant threat to their power. The Western Power considered Talat as an adventurist whose downfall was imminent."[53] In this situation, the only Western Power that offered cooperation was Germany. Therefore, "it was evident destiny and inevitable process that Turkey, as an ally of Germany, had to take part in the World War."[54]

What deserves emphasis in his narrative on the wartime Turkish politic is his unique understanding of Turkish nationalism and enthusiastic adoration of it. For him, "it was not the product of the patriotism influenced by the Western thought, but the reincarnation of Turanian spirit creeping deeply inside the soul of Turks." He tries to explain why in the following way. "When the World War broke out, it brought with it serious crisis in Turkey. It appealed much to the population, more than any propaganda and political movements. In the face of this terrible crisis, Turks were nationally awakened stronger and deeper than anytime else. The awakening took a definite form of Turkish nationalism, and rapidly grew into the Greater Turkey ideal."[55]

The Young Turks lost no time in materializing the "Turkish spirits" in concrete policies. They declared the repeal of extraterritoriality that had been granted to the Western citizens. They prohibited the use of French and Greek in public signs, placards, and doorplates, and even requested the foreign companies to keep

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[53] Ibid., 143.

[54] Ibid., 144.

[55] Ibid., 144

their account books in Turkish. In the economic policy, they tried to Turkify the national life. They organized trade and transportation companies with domestic capital. They planned to establish a new national bank, and nationalization of mining sector.[56] Ohkawa characterizes these policies not as the product of rational calculation of wartime necessity, but simply as the incarnation of "Turkish spirits" whose origin was traced back to Asia. So, for him, all the efforts the Young Turks made during the war was the challenge to the Western hegemony, thus, the endeavor for the Asian awakening that he had to support by all means.

Like other nationalists of prewar Japan, Ohkawa took it for granted that a nation was a primordial entity, not a certain form of collective identity. For him, a nation has its own substance regardless of the thoughts of individuals that compose it. To describe it, he likes to use such phrases like "national spirit" and "the soul of nation." The "spirit" can be dormant, but never perish. Once a nation was awakened to its historical mission, it can't be destroyed. Therefore, it was his logic to describe the Turkish national movement initiated by Mustafa Kemal as a continuation of the work of Young Turks. As he put it: "Although the Turks were totally defeated in the World War, they are still struggling to rescue their motherland. It reminds us how deeply the Young Turks had inspired their fellow citizen during the war. Regardless of their many failures in realpolitik, it was their fifty years of endeavors that enabled the emergence of such an unyielding national spirit of Turkish people. After the death of Talat and Enver, Mustafa Kemal took over their works, and rallied his comrades for the rescue of the Turkish Empire. It is he that represent the spirit of Young Turks now."[57]

As noted above, *Hukkou Azia'no Shomondai* was published in 1922, and the draft was written from 1919 to 1920, the time the Turkish war of national liberation was still at its first phase. As he had no access to Turkish or Russian sources, it must have been difficult for Ohkawa to capture the whole story of the movement. But his sympathy to the Ittihadists and Mustafa Kemal as their successor

[56] Ibid., 144.

[57] Ibid., 145.

made him to write another work on the Turkish nationalism. In 1941, Ohkawa published *Azia Kensetsusha* [Founders of Contemporary Asia], and dedicated one of its chapters to the deed of Mustafa Kemal. Under the title of "Kemal Atatürk: The Founder of New Turkey," In this work, Ohkawa gave a detailed picture of his life. It was the first biography of Mustafa Kemal written by Japanese researchers, and remained as the sole one until 1984. The book was one of the best sellers of prewar Japan, and contributed much for shaping the image of Mustafa Kemal and his nation in the Japanese populace.

In this work, Ohkawa tried to describe Mustafa Kemal as a superhuman leader and real patriot of Turkish nation. Therefore, he puts special emphasis on his military genius. As for his deeds during the WWI, Ohkawa, needles to say, highlights the Gallipoli campaign. As he put it: "When the Turkish and Entente forces were preparing for the decisive battle, Mustafa noticed the ANZAC had landed at Arıburnu and making its way to Conkbayırı. The height was the key for the defense of Dardanelles, therefore, the gateway to Istanbul. Once the height was fallen to the hand of the British, it would have meant the road to Istanbul was open. Therefore, he attacked the ANZAC without waiting the order, and thwarted its advance. His improvisation indeed rescued the imperial capital, and should be applauded as the most precious contribution."[58]

As for the famous Anafartalar victory, Ohkawa describes the event as follows. "On 6 August 1915, when the Entente forces started all-out attack against the Turkish position, Mustafa led one of two brigades in charge of defense. Other one was under a command of a German general. When the German general heavily wounded, Mustafa took the command of both brigades. The British were mounting further attack with the arrival of fresh reinforcement. Alarmed by the development, General Liman fon Sanders summoned Mustafa to his headquarter at Anafarta, and appointed him the commander of the newly formed army group that was responsible for the entire front. He accepted the offer with honor, and resolutely went to the decisive battle with the famous British

[58] Shumei Ohkawa, *Azia Kensetsushatachi*, 314.

General Hamiton. After three months of fierce fighting against the enemy equipped by far much better, he finally succeeded in clearing off the Entente forces from the Gallipoli. The British damage amounted to 43,000 deaths and 162,000 wounded, and French loss was 10,000 dead and 37,000 wounded. They call the event as 'the tragedy of Dardanelles.' When Mustafa triumphantly returned Constantinople, the entire nation appreciated his talent, and applauded him as the savior of Dardanelles, the defender of Istanbul, the hero of Anafartalar."[59]

As those examples show it, the biography of Mustafa Kemal written by Ohkawa is more novelistic than academic. But the narrative contains detailed descriptions on the life of Atatürk, and many of them are adequate, if not accurate. It implies the relatively high quality of his works. Although Ohkawa does not disclose the sources of reference, we can infer he had consulted with a number of up-to-date works available at the time. He was in a privileged position as a chief of research section of Manshuria railway company, de facto intelligence center in charge of Western and Central Asian countries of Japanese Imperial Army. In the light of the fact that Ohkawa could not read Turkish, the majority of sources he used must have been the works written in the Western languages. For all their biased views on the Turks, Ohkawa was little affected by the Western style Orientalism. His positive views on the Turks were consistent, and almost same in his two works on the Turkish nationalism. In both of the works, he exhibits strong conviction that the Turks are an Asian people with an Asian spirits, and characterized their struggles for freedom and efforts to create an independent state with autarkic economy as an integral part of great endeavor to construct new Asia free from the Western hegemony.

The Ohkawa's affinity with the Turks, however, was not the result of his academic endeavor to better understand this people. As his narrative on the Young Turks shows it, his analysis of the complicated political movement was so shallow that he felt no hesitation to depict it as the unadulterated expression of Turkish nationalism. He failed to mention the Ottomanism – the major

[59] Ibid., 314-315.

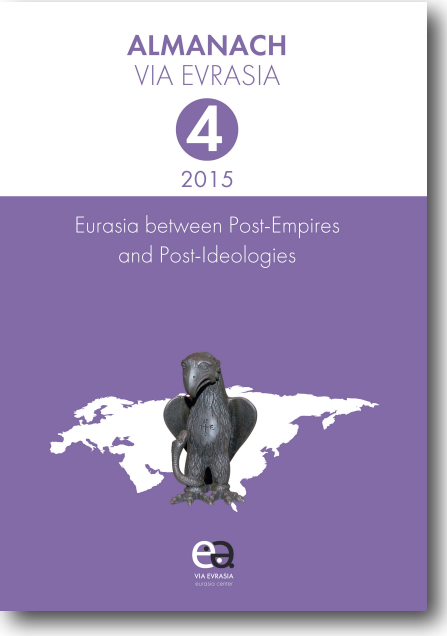
doctrine of CUP especially in its early stages, and unjustly downplays the trends of Islamism and Westernizationists. The is true to his mysterious notion of national "spirit." Not only is it groundless, but also it helps distort several important aspects of the Turkish nationalism. For instance, he made a critical mistake in equating Enver's wartime endeavors with the movement initiated by Mustafa Kemal. The nationalism advocated by Enver was more Pan-Turanism oriented idealism than the pragmatic and restraint version created by the Kemalism. So, the image of Turks in the works of Ohkawa is another kind of products of imagination basically created by the Western Orientalism but converted conveniently to fit into his scheme of Pan-Asianism.

Conclusions

Ohkawa's positive view on Turks in general, and his applause of the Turkish prowess at the defense of the Dardanelles in particular, make a sharp contrast with the prevalent stereotype of "backward and coward" Turks widely shared by the Japanese elites during the early twentieth century. What makes his view unique is his positive evaluation of the Turkish wartime activities.

For most of the Japanese in his time, the Ottoman Army was an outdated insignificant force that had no weight in the "European War." For them, the Turks were not the subject to feel compassion, but a stupid German hound. Therefore, the unexpected effective defense in the Dardanelles and Kut-al-Amara was not seen as the success of Turkish military efforts, but a primitive error of the British. It does not deserve any attention. Rather, it was considered as the sign of decline of the Western preponderance, because the Great Britain – a super naval power at the moment, and one of the leading industrial countries in the West – could not secure otherwise easy victory over the outdated Turkish military. It is true that a small number of Orientalists, like Nagase, had a certain amount of sympathy to the Turks based on the (falsely) crafted up theory that they are an Asian nation. But they also contaminated by the stereotyped image of Turks made in West, and accepted the fall of their empire as what deserved "lazy and stupid" Muslims.

On the contrary, Ohkawa considers the Ottoman battles not as



a part of “European War” with secondary importance, but an exemplary struggle of Asian peoples against their Western masters. He heaped utmost blessing upon the Turkish victories over the British, and applauded them as the product of strenuous resistance to the Western colonialism. His sympathy and adoration of the Turks, however, was not the sincere expression of his intimacy to this people, rather it originated from his strong conviction that the Asian peoples were destined to shake off the European colonial yokes. So long as the Turks were waging battle against the Western forces, they could remain as his ally. But this alliance was nothing but a groundless imaginary created in the fantasy of this eccentric self-styled scholar.

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