

早稲田法学部 THEME 16 秋

P.A.C. O'CONNOR

Week 6 The 1971 Imperial Visit to Europe

THE IDEA OF JAPAN [II]

- ***The Times* rolls out the red carpet**
- **Problems with forgiving and forgetting**

Reading 1 Mediating memories The October 1971 Imperial visit to Europe

FIFTY YEARS AFTER HIS FIRST, EPOCHAL VISIT TO BRITAIN AS JAPAN'S PRINCE REGENT IN MARCH 1921, the Shōwa emperor retraced his journey West. Leaving Japan with the empress, the emperor travelled via Alaska (where he briefly met US President Nixon) to the Netherlands, Belgium and France, before arriving in Britain on October 6.

HINTS OF TROUBLE ahead came in Antwerp on September 30, when an egg was thrown at Hirohito's official car. Nevertheless, those who planned the official visit appear to have reckoned without the strength of feeling among former prisoners of war (POWs) and their families, who felt that the emperor, and therefore Japan, had been too easily forgiven by Britain and other countries.

The Times was obliged to report this incident and many others. Lord Mountbatten of Burma, who had accepted Japan's official surrender in 1945 on behalf of British forces, was mysteriously busy when the emperor came to London. The POWs lining the route for the emperor's trip down to the Cenotaph in Whitehall turned their backs on his motorcade. A tree was dug up and poisoned. A wreath was laid with an angry note. **Note** that most of those involved were questioned by the police but released without charges being laid.

THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF BAD FEELING among ordinary Britons when the emperor of Japan came calling. But *The Times* did its best to paper over the cracks. In 1921, *The Times* had laid out the red carpet for the same Emperor, when he was Prince Regent, standing in for his father on the first foreign trip ever taken by a Japanese emperor. Articles had celebrated the strength of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (which was abrogated the following year).

The Times thus had a long history of speaking for official Britain and of reflecting government policy, and its treatment of Hirohito's second visit in 1971 was true to this tradition. And in May 1972, when the Queen and Prince Philip paid a return visit to Tokyo, *Times* reporters stood ready once again to do the honours.

Egg thrown at Emperor's car

Brussels, Sept 30.—An egg was thrown at the car of Emperor Hirohito of Japan in Antwerp today. The incident occurred as he was driving into the centre of the city on the second day of his state visit to Belgium. Observers saw a young person being hustled away by police, but later it was announced that no arrest had been made.

The Emperor, who was received with a 51-gun salute, visited the town hall, the harbour, a diamond-cutting house and the zoo—which he had visited 50 years ago. Tomorrow he will see the industrial town of Charleroi, in the French-speaking region.



Printing House Square, London, EC4P 4DE. Telephone: 01-236 2000

A VERY SPECIAL VISIT

Few heads of state these days arouse great public interest by their force of personality alone. Their journeys have become so common that few questions are asked about the direct gain from their travels. But the uniqueness of the Emperor of Japan's visit to Britain prompts many questions to be raised in a new and special manner. What may ensue from it for Japan and for Britain?

It is a good start when one can say with confidence that the Emperor himself—with memories of an earlier visit in 1921—has his own curiosities to satisfy. If only for the exotic detail so plentifully available the visit will be one out of the ordinary for many people: not a few will be the more interested in a man whose earliest scientific attainment as a primary schoolboy was to observe a crab unlike any others on the beach. But of course it is as a symbol of his country that the Emperor Hirohito is with us and it is Britain's relations with Japan that may be furthered by the manner of his welcome.

Mutual understanding needs an awareness of the Japanese setting of the visit. For more than a century Japan has been engaged in coming to terms in one way or another with western civilization. The pursuit of equality has taken many forms,

confident enough in material objectives but less certain when a national identity was at stake. In one phase allies of the west, in another the self-proclaimed leaders of an Asia revolting against western empire, the Japanese have been content since the defeat of 1945 to shelve political plans in favour of the less contested progress of economic growth. In the west such growth was the accepted criterion of success, and Japan has shown herself a formidable entrant in the race.

What next? That is the unanswered question. To many Japanese—to most probably—it is unanswerable by Japan's own action. Just as the link with America these past twenty years has not merely been an acceptance of the war's outcome, or a desirable defensive alliance in a revolutionary continent, but something of a comfortable mooring, so the Emperor's present visit to western Europe is a voyage of exploration to see where Japan might find firm ground elsewhere outside her own unsettled region. A Japan that plainly and inescapably belongs round a table of finance ministers discussing currencies looks for a world view that will accommodate her national aspirations as well as her economy.

There are those in Britain who want to avoid any rapprochement because of their bitter memories of wartime suffering. Why should this be urged against the Japan of today when it is not urged against Willy Brandt's Germany? Yet few students of Japan are wholly confident of the way the country will go and the manner in which its new-found nationalist confidence will express itself. In Japan there are still older memories of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. But if for Japan in 1902 it was merely cherished as a mark of approval, for Britain it was an opportunist move in the "great game" of containing Russia's supposed ambitions in Asia.

Neither country can look back to those days as a basis for relations now. Much remains uncertain now not merely from Japan's standpoint in a shifting Far East but for a Britain standing on the threshold of a changing Europe. In a world getting ever smaller it is perhaps worth recalling another of Japan's distinctions, Hiroshima and Nagasaki stand as a memorial of an era in which we are all involved. For Japan it has left a residue of pacifism which is still strong. While there is time, that can serve as a starting point for any western consciousness of Japan.

**Reading
2
The
Times
October 6
1971: The
Times
rolls out
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carpet.
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1937-45.**

Man questioned after Emperor's tree felled

The young tree ceremonially planted by Emperor Hirohito in Kew Gardens on Thursday was found cut to the ground yesterday.

Beside it stood a sign saying: "They did not die in vain." A bottle of sodium chlorate had been poured into the ground to destroy the roots.

A man, aged 35, was taken to Richmond police station, but he was released later. No charge was made against him.

Earlier a man who said his father died at the hands of the Japanese in the Second World War shouted abuse at the Emperor in London. He pushed his way to the front of a crowd outside Claridges hotel and yelled: "Fascist, fascist, fascist. Murdering bastard".

The Emperor ignored the shouts, although he was only a few feet away. Policemen grabbed the man and spoke to him, but he was allowed to go.

The man, a Scot, said later: "My father was made to work

on the death railway in Burma and died in 1942. I am sick of the way people in this country have gone out of their way to be nice to this man and invite him to Britain."

The Emperor is a "despicable man who used to preside over a despicable regime", a leading article in *The Spectator* says this week. The magazine asks: "Would the Queen have had Hitler or Mussolini at the Palace?" and comments: "It is to be presumed that the answer would be 'Yes'."

The article says the Emperor's soldiers and civilians disgusted the rest of the world with their conduct. "Many people feel he ought to have been hanged as a war criminal at the end of the war. Even those who, because they are against capital punishment or on other grounds do not take such a severe view, will still feel that this man should not have been publicly and ostentatiously honoured."

Chi Chi makes the Emperor smile, page 5

Reading 3

**The Times October 8 1971
Problems of forgiving and forgetting.**

On October 7, outside Claridges hotel, a man standing a few feet away from the emperor shouted, "Fascist, fascist, fascist. Murdering bastard." He later explained that his father had been a British prisoner of War on the 'death railway' in Burma and had died in 1942.

Later that day, a tree which had been planted by emperor Hirohito was found cut down with its roots soaked in potassium chlorate.



A man (arrowed right) throwing his coat (arrowed left) at Emperor Hirohito's coach as it passes through The Mall

Man hurls coat at Emperor Hirohito's coach

By a Staff Reporter

An unidentified man hurled a coat at the open coach carrying Emperor Hirohito and the Queen as it passed through The Mall towards Buckingham Palace yesterday afternoon.

Two Life Guards escorting the royal carriage waved their swords in the man's direction as policemen guarding the route pulled him back to the pavement.

He told the police later that he was making a protest about a private grievance in no way connected with the Emperor's visit or the Queen.

No charge was made against the man, who, according to Scotland Yard, was aged 27 and came from the Midlands. He was sent for a medical examination.

The incident, of which the

Queen and the Emperor were apparently unaware, was the only one to mar the opening day of the Emperor's four-day visit to Britain, his first since 1921, when he was Crown Prince.

Earlier he had been welcomed by the Queen at Victoria station after a train journey from Gatwick where the imperial party had landed an hour before.

The Emperor's programme today includes visits to the Royal Society, where he will receive the society's fellowship, and to Kew Gardens.

Lord Mountbatten of Burma did not intend to snub the Emperor by refusing to attend the official banquet at Buckingham Palace last night. An official spokesman said Lord Mountbatten, who accepted the surrender of the Japanese forces

in the Far East in 1945, would be out of town during the visit. "There is nothing sinister in this", he said.

"Lord Mountbatten did not intend to snub the Emperor. I am sure he did not think of it like that at all, and he has never expressed to me any views about whether he likes the Japanese."

"But he has got engagements in the country and they have been on his diary for some considerable time now. He could not break them. He was probably invited to the banquet—in fact it is quite likely—but he will be out of London."

Lord Mountbatten received between 20 and 30 invitations a week to attend functions. "He looks at each and then at his diary to see if he is engaged. If he is not, he then decides whether he wants to go."

A man laid a wreath at Bristol Cenotaph yesterday with a card protesting at the Emperor's visit. It said: "Our memories are not as short as a government which today welcomes those who inspired your suffering and death."

The Japanese Embassy in London was not able to confirm a report from Paris that the Emperor was considering abdication next year.

But Reuter reported from Tokyo that the imperial household agency had denied the abdication report. "It is a triviality and not worth commenting on", an official said.

A Japanese constitutional expert said that if the Emperor wanted to abdicate there would probably have to be a revision in the imperial family law.

Friendship and good will, page 9

Reading 4 The Times 4 October 6 1971 Another protest. And Lord Mountbatten is otherwise engaged.

QUESTIONNAIRE	CLASS NAME	WEEK No.
NAME	STUDENT No.	DATE
1. WHAT WAS THIS CLASS ABOUT?		
2. WHAT ARE THE MAIN QUESTIONS IT RAISES?		
3. WHAT IS IMPORTANT ABOUT THIS SUBJECT?		
4. ANY OTHER COMMENTS?		