

# The Imperial Army in Japanese politics : colonial policy and colonial administration

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## Contents

- I. Introduction
- II. The establishment of colonial administration
  - 1. Taiwan
  - 2. Karafuto (South Sakhalin)
  - 3. Kanto-shū (Kwantung)
  - 4. Korea
- III. Reforms of colonial administration
  - 1. Early Reforms
  - 2. Reforms of the Hara Cabinet
  - 3. Changes in colonial administration
- IV. The Imperial Army and colonial policy
  - 1. Manchuria
  - 2. Siberia
- V. Conclusion
- Appendix : Japan's colonial administration

## I. Introduction

In recent years, an increasing amount of attention has been paid to the history of the Japanese colonial empire, not only in regard to historic research in Japan, but also in regard to Western Japanese studies. This research culminated in the series "Modern Japan and its colonies" (*Kindai Nihon to Shokuminchi*) by *Iwanami Shoten* publishers<sup>1</sup> and the three volumes from Princeton University about the Japanese Colonial Empire 1895-1945<sup>2</sup>, the

Japanese 'informal empire' in China<sup>3</sup>, and the Japanese 'wartime empire' 1931-1945<sup>4</sup>.

None of these books, however, sufficiently accounted for the role of the military, especially the role of the Imperial Army. Although the Imperial Army unquestionably played an important role in modern Japanese history and dominated Japan's colonial history as well, the role of the army in Japan's colonies was hardly dealt with in the above-mentioned books. Mark R. Peattie notes in the introduction to the work "The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945" :

"The role of the Japanese military in the evolution of the empire [...] merits greater attention than we or any other scholars have given it so far. Given the fact of the military domination of Japan's colonies - perpetual in the case of Korea, extended in the cases of Taiwan and the Nan'yō - the influence in colonial policy of the general staffs in Tokyo is an important question"<sup>5</sup>.

This study therefore analyzes the role of the Imperial Army in Japan's colonial policy and colonial administration. It argues that the army's independent and sacrosanct position within the colonial administration was a major pillar of the army's political influence, especially in regard to Japan's foreign and colonial policy, but as well in regard to domestic politics.

This study is restricted to Japan's colonial empire which was recognized under international law, i.e. the colonies Taiwan, Korea and South Sakhalin, as well as the leased territory Kwantung (South Manchuria). The former German colonies in the South Sea which Japan acquired according to the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 as a mandated territory of the League of Nations are not to be dealt with in this study, since they were only of minor importance to the Imperial Army. This restriction concurs with the first phases of Japan's colonial policy in the Meiji period (1868-1912) and the Taishō-period (1912-1926) ; the founding and the establishing phases of the Japanese colonial empire. During the Shōwa period, it was the independent

position within the colonial administration the army achieved in these periods that allowed the Imperial Army to not only influence Japanese politics - foreign and domestic - but also to gain supremacy in Japanese politics in the 1930s.

- 1 Ôe Shinobu et. al. (eds.) : Iwanami Kôza - Kindai Nihon to Shokuminchi. 8 vols. Tôkyô 1992.
- 2 Myers, Ramon H. and Mark R. Peattie (eds.) : The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945. Princeton 1983.
- 3 Duus, Peter, Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (eds.) : The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895-1945. Princeton 1989.
- 4 Duus, Peter ; Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (eds.) : The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945. Princeton 1996.
- 5 Peattie, Mark R. : Introduction. In : Myers, Ramon H. and Mark R. Peattie (eds.) : The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945. Princeton 1983. p. 50f.

## II. The establishment of colonial administration

The administration of the Japanese colonies was one of the most important strongholds of political power for the Japanese army in domestic politics, not only in the well-known Shôwa period (1926-1989), but also as early as in the Meiji period and the Taishô era. The post of the governor-general of Taiwan (*Taiwan Sôtoku*), and of the governor-general of Korea (*Chôsen Sôtoku*) as well as the post of the governor of the leased territory Kwantung (*Kan'ô Totoku*) were reserved for army and navy officers on active duty from their introduction until 1919 and again from 1936 to the end of the Pacific War in 1945<sup>6</sup>. In the case of Taiwan, this regulation was introduced immediately after the annexation of Taiwan in 1895 and thus before the introduction of the equivalent regulation for military ministerial posts in the cabinet (*Gunbu Daijin Gen'eki Bukan-sei*), which was one of the most important weapons of the Imperial Army in the fight for the power in Japan's domestic politics since 1900.

The governors-general had encompassing authorities in 'their' colonies, since not only administrative powers, but also jurisdiction and legislation were in their hands. Even the budget of the colonies did not need any authorization by the diet, but could directly be implemented by the governor-general<sup>7</sup>. This enormous concentration of power in the hands of the governor-general of the colonies was one of the main pillars of the army's influential position in domestic politics. Especially the Chôshû-clan under its leader Yamagata Aritomo, who dominated the Imperial Army in the Meiji- and the Taishô-period, turned the colonial administration into a major stronghold of its political influence. The office of the governor-general of Korea, the most important colony in the Japanese empire in strategic as well as in economic and ideologic terms, was held by Yamagata protégés from 1909 to 1919, namely by Sone Arasuke, Terauchi Masatake, und Hasegawa Yoshimichi. After an interregnum of admiral Saitô Makoto, army generals again followed until the end of the war : Ugaki Kazushige (Issei), Yamanashi Hanzô, Minami Jirô, Koiso Kuniaki, and Abe Nobuyuki<sup>8</sup>. Likewise, in the Meiji period and the Taishô period, the highest office of the colonial administration in Taiwan was held by Yamagata followers, such as Katsura Tarô, Nogi Maresuke, Kodama Gentarô, Sakuma Samata, and Akashi Genjirô. Even the first civilian governor-general of the colony, Den Kenjirô, was a central figure of the Yamagata clique<sup>9</sup>.

Moreover, the unfathomability of the selection process of the governors-general added to their independence from directions issued by the central government and civilian politicians. Like the Prime Minister of the Japanese cabinets in the Meiji and the early Taishô period, the governors-general were chosen by secret consultations of the army leaders with the oligarchy from the Chôshû and Satsuma clans and the Court aristocracy, before being officially and directly appointed by the Emperor.

Japan's politicians were generally aware of the supremacy of the military element in colonial administration. It was not the almighty position of the

governor-general which was often criticized, but the administration's monopolization by the military and the army especially. A consensus prevailed that a colonial administration needed to be independent of the central government to a certain degree. Therefore, even the civilian Den Kenjirō, who in 1919 was to become the first civilian governor-general of a Japanese colony (except Karafuto where civilian governors were the rule from the beginning of Japanese colonial rule), did not criticize the independent position of the colonial administration itself, but rather supported it :

"A civilian as general-governor always has to consider political parties and factions. So his policies have to change with every new cabinet and have to be adjusted to cabinet guidelines. In such a case, colonial policy usually comes to a standstill. Therefore, colonial administration was put under the direct authority of the Emperor already at an early time to shut out this bad influence. That is why the colonial governors now stand outside, i.e. above political parties and factions and have a special political position, which cannot be influenced by a change of cabinets and secures a continuous, neutral and undivided national policy for the colonies."<sup>10</sup>

## 1. Taiwan

In 1895, Taiwan became Japan's first colony in the wake of the first Sino-Japanese War (1894/95) and the Treaty of Shimonoseki. Establishing the administration of Japan's first colony resulted in several political debates regarding the form of its administration. While one group within the cabinet's 'Taiwan-Bureau' (*Taiwan Jimukyoku*) consisting of vice-Foreign Minister Hara Kei, vice-Minister for Communication Den Kenjirō, Cabinet Secretary Itō-Miyoji, and the navy representative Yamamoto Gonbei (Gon'nohyōe) favoured the admission of civilians to the post of governor-general of Taiwan, another group consisting of vice-Minister of Finance Tajiri Inajiro, vice-Army Minister Kodama Gentarō, vice-chief of General Staff Kawakami Sōroku, and

the President of the Bureau of Legislation (*Hōsei-kyoku Chōkan*) Suematsu Kenji insisted on a restriction to military officers on active duty in the rank of a general/general lieutenant or an admiral/vice admiral. The advocates of the military administration stressed that the deployment of military forces was undoubtedly necessary to 'pacify' the newly acquired colony. In case of a military expedition, the supreme command for any military action had to be under the control of a military officer, because otherwise the independence of the Military Supreme Command (*Tōsui-ken no dokuritsu*) would be endangered. The supporters of the military governor-general were able to get Prime Minister Itō Hirobumi on their side, and consequently, the colonial administration was established by an Imperial Rescript, which included the restriction of the post of the governor-general to high military officers<sup>11</sup>. Thus, the military laid the foundation for its control over colonial administration and colonial policy, building one major pillar of the independence of the Supreme Military Command (*Tōsui-ken*) and increasing the army's influence in Japanese politics<sup>12</sup>.

Moreover, there was a fierce dispute about whether the far-reaching authorities of the governor-general were constitutional, especially the legislative authorities. According to the law no. 63 of 1896 ('Law concerning Laws and Regulations to be enforced in Taiwan')<sup>13</sup>, the military governor-general of the colony was given extremely encompassing executive, legislative, and jurisdictional powers. A civilian advisor stood by the governor-general's side (*Minsei Kyoku-chō*, later *Minsei Chōkan*), but this hardly diminished the authority of the governor-general. The law no. 63 was fervently criticized by the advocates of a strong role for the Japanese diet. According to the Meiji Constitution of the year 1889, the legislation and the adoption of the budget (the latter with restrictions) were the most important tasks of the diet even if they were, strictly speaking, only delegated to the diet by the Emperor, who was defined as the supreme authority by the Constitution (*Tennō Shuken*). But since there were no regulations concerning the area of the application of the

Meiji Constitution, the advocates of a strong governor-general claimed that the constitution only applied to Japan itself and was not to be implemented in newly acquired territories such as colonies<sup>14</sup>.

Finally, the so-called '63-debate' was settled by a compromise in which legislative powers were given to the governor-general, under direct control of the Prime Minister as opposed to the Emperor, as initially planned. The governor-general could pass laws enacted by the diet in Tokyo in 'his' colony, but was not obliged to do so and if necessary could adjust them to local conditions. This compromise, known as 'delegated legislation' (*Inin Rip-pô*), was supplemented by a time limit to the legislative powers of the governor-general : the diet had to renew law no. 63 every three years, which eventually continued until 1921. Due to this regulation, the legislature came under partial authority of the diet, but in general the governor-general kept an abundance of power, and the military was thus enabled to implement its own political, economic, and of course, military concepts in Taiwan.

## 2. Karafuto

Regarding the case of Karafuto (South-Sakhalin), which Russia had to cede to Japan after the defeat in the Russo-Japanese War according to the Treaty of Portsmouth (1905), the advocates of the civil administration were successful. Contrary to Taiwan, no restriction to military officers on active duty was stipulated regarding the governor-general of Karafuto at the instigation of Hara Kei (Takashi), Minister of the Interior in the first cabinet Saionji Kinmochi (1906-1908). Hara was the president of the party *Seiyūkai* and the main opponent of the Chōshū-clan around Yamagata Aritomo. Civilians for the first time, could now reach the highest position of a colonial administration<sup>15</sup>. However, one has to point out that the character of Sakhalin as a colony was much different from that of the other colonies. South-Sakhalin was a colony for Japanese settlers with only a small number of non-Japanese population and cannot be compared to Korea or even Kwantung regarding

political, military, and economic matters.

Therefore, after a transition phase until 1908, the office of the governor-general of Karafuto (*Karafuto-chô Chôkan*) was generally held by civilians, that were mostly former prefectural governors (see appendix). In the administration of Karafuto, a law similar to the Law no. 63 of 1896 concerning Taiwan was introduced in 1907 (Law no. 25), which merely stipulated that the laws of Japan could be extended to Karafuto by imperial ordinance, even though they could be adjusted to local conditions if necessary. Finally, Karafuto was the only Japanese colony which was to be directly integrated into Japan in the year 1943 as a late fulfilment of Hara Kei's demand for application of the Meiji Constitution to to the colonies (*Naichi Enchô-shugi*<sup>16</sup>).

### 3. Kwantung (*Kantô-shû*)

In contrast, the situation was quite different in the leased territory of Kwantung (*Kantô-shû*). The Liaotung peninsula in South Manchuria with the ice-free port of Port Arthur at its southern tip, which was of utmost importance from a strategic point of view, was already annexed in 1895 by Japan according to the Peace Treaty of Shimonoseki. It was, however, returned to China, owing to the Triple Intervention on the part of Russia, France, and Germany<sup>17</sup>. In 1898, Russia acquired the Liaotung peninsula as a leased territory. This obviously had to upset Japan and thus became one of the major reasons for the Russo-Japanese War of 1904/05.

After the defeat against Japan in 1904/05, Russia had to cede the rights of lease for Liaotung as well as the concessions in South Manchuria (South Manchurian Railway) to Japan. In 1915, Japan achieved a prolongation of the lease from China to 99 years, i.e. until 1998. Henceforth, South Manchuria was a Japanese sphere of influence, whereas the Russian influence was driven back to North Manchuria. As Kwantung was not a real colony, but only a leased territory, no general government was created, but an administration called the *Kantô Totoku*<sup>18</sup>.

According to the pattern of the colonial administration of Taiwan, the governor of the leased territory of Kwantung (*Kantô Totoku*) also received an abundance of power. Like in Taiwan, this post was reserved to an officer of the army or the navy in the rank of a general-lieutenant, or a vice-admiral respectively<sup>19</sup>. In the case of the leased territory of Kwantung, a further strengthening of the independent position of the army in the colony was to be seen, especially after the reform of the administration in 1919 (see below).

#### 4. Korea

The compromise, which was achieved to solve the '63-debate' in the case of Taiwan in 1895 (see above), led to continuing problems in colonial administration in the time to follow. Therefore, when establishing the general-government of Korea (*Chôsen Sôtoku*) on the occasion of the peninsula's annexation in 1910, a different regulation was adopted, and the position of the governor-general was even further strengthened by the Law no. 30 in 1911, which created the general-government.

Japan had already been present in Korea before the annexation of the peninsula with a Resident-General (*Kankoku Tôkan*). In 1905, this post was taken over by the civilian Itô Hirobumi. This personnel decision was fiercely criticized by army officers. Those most heavily opposed to the post being filled by a civilian were middle-ranked officers under the leadership of Tanaka Gi'ichi. Tanaka and his supporters criticized the fact that a civilian in this post would also obtain authorities as a military commander, which would not be consistent with the right of independence of the Military Supreme Command (*Tôsui-ken no Dokuritsu*), that was solely in the hands of the Emperor who had delegated it to the General Staff. Tanaka's vociferous resistance was also supported by Yamagata Aritomo. Finally, a compromise was reached under the mediation of the Chief of General Staff, Ôyama Iwao. According to this compromise, the military command of the Japanese troops

in Korea was separated from the civilian administration and given to a military commander, while the Resident-General was restricted to civilian tasks<sup>20</sup>. Itô Hirobumi was followed by Sone Arasuke, but in 1910 with Terauchi Masatake in office, a military was for the first time able to acquire the post of Resident-General in Korea. Terauchi kept his post as Army Minister in Tôkyô at the same time, so that his powerful position within the army remained secure even during his absence<sup>21</sup>.

At the time of the annexation of Korea in 1910, the Imperial Diet was not in session. The army, under the leadership of Terauchi, took this opportunity to strengthen its position in the colonial administration even further. After Terauchi, in his function as Resident General and Army Minister, had signed the treaty of annexation with Korea, the Emperor issued a rescript aligned with the law no. 63 of the year 1896, according to which the superiority of the military was firmly established in the colonial administration of Korea as well<sup>22</sup>. Henceforth, in Korea, the office of the governor-general was restricted to military officers on active duty in the rank of a general or an admiral, i.e. to an extremely narrow elite. In the history of the Imperial Army and Navy beginning from the early Meiji era until the end of the Pacific War in 1945, only 215 officers reached the highest rank of a general or admiral. One of them, Terauchi Masatake, became the first governor-general of Korea in 1911<sup>23</sup>.

The law establishing the general government in Korea, however, differed essentially from the regulations regarding Taiwan dating from 1896. First, there was no time limit to the powers of the governor-general, whereas, according to the law no. 63 concerning Taiwan, the powers of the governor-general of Taiwan had to be renewed every three years by the diet. Furthermore, the governor-general of Korea was, unlike the governor-general of Taiwan, not responsible to the Prime Minister, but directly to the Emperor, which even further strengthened his independence from civilian control. Since the army claimed an extremely close tie to the Emperor and was protected

by the Emperor's authority according to articles 11 and 12 of the Meiji Constitution, it could act almost at its will in Korea and it could act far more independently than in Taiwan. The army thus established a power base in Korea which could hardly be controlled by civilian authorities and may be considered as one of the main pillars of the Imperial Army's strong position in Japan's domestic politics. From its 'Korea base', officers like Terauchi and later Ugaki Kazushige and Minami Jirō could virtually control the army itself and influenced national politics to a significant degree<sup>24</sup>. Accordingly, it is hardly surprising that the colonial administration of Korea, different in the case of the administration of Taiwan, Kwantung and Karafuto, was only subject to minor changes. The regulations regarding the legislative authorities of the governor-general, which were controversial in the case of Taiwan, were never revised in Korea<sup>25</sup>.

- 6 See Yagyū Masafumi : Kantō Totoku-fu kansei no kaikaku to Kantō-gun no dokuritsu-Hara Kei naikaku to tai-Manshu gyōsei kikō kaikaku mondai [The reform of the administration of the government of Kwantung and the independence of the Kwantung army : the Hara cabinet and the problem of the reform of the administration of Manchuria], *Komazawa Shigaku* 35 (5/1986) 167-189 ; Kōketsu Atsushi : Kindai Nihon no seigun kankei [The relations between politics and armed forces in modern Japan]. Tōkyō 1987. pp. 5ff ; Ôe Shinobu : Shokuminchi Sensō to Sōtoku-fu no seiritsu [Colonial Wars and the establishment of governments-general], in : Ôe Shinobu et. al. (eds.) : Teikoku Tochi no Kōzō (=Iwanami Kōza Kindai Nihon to Shokuminchi, vol. 2). Tōkyō 1992, pp. 3-33, esp. pp. 19ff.
- 7 Haruyama Meitetsu : Meiji Kenpō taisei to Taiwan tōchi [The Meiji constitution and the administration of Taiwan], in : Ôe Shinobu et. al. (eds.) : Tōgō to Shihai no ronri (=Iwanami Kōza Kindai Nihon to Shokuminchi, vol. 4). Tōkyō 1993, pp. 31-50, esp. p. 36 ; see also Ôe, *Shokuminchi Sensō*, op. cit., 21f.
- 8 Out of the eight governors-general of Korea between 1910 and 1945, Saitō Makoto was the only one which was not an army officer (but a navy admiral).
- 9 Out of the 19 governors-general of Taiwan between 1895 and 1945, nine were army officers, one was a navy officer and nine were civilian bureaucrats and former House of Peers members (between 1919 and 1936).
- 10 Quoted in : Den Kenjirō denki hensan-kai (ed.) : Den Kenjirō-den [Biography of Den Kenjirō]. Tōkyō 1932. p. 377.

- 11 See Ôe, Shokuminchi-sensô op. cit., p. 20f ; Inoue Kiyoshi : Taisho-ki no Seiji to Gunbu [Politics and the military in the Taishô era]. In : Inoue Kiyoshi (ed.) : Taishô-ki no Seiji to Shakai. Tôkyô 1969. pp. 351-406, esp. p. 359. In fact, the 'pacification' of Taiwan was not accomplished until 1915 ; see Ôe, Shokuminchi sensô, op. cit, pp. 5ff.
- 12 See Ôe Shinobu : Tôsui-ken [The supreme military command]. Tôkyô 1983. pp. 25ff.
- 13 Law no. 63 quoted in : Den Kenjirô-den, op. cit, pp. 444f.
- 14 See Chen, Edward I-te : The Attempt to integrate the Empire. In : Myers, Ramon H. and Mark R. Peattie (eds.) : The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945. Princeton 1984. pp. 240-274, esp. p. 247.
- 15 Kawada Minoru : Dai-ichi-ji Taisen shûketsu-go ni okeru Hara Kei no Kôsô [Hara Kei's political concepts after the end of World War I]. *Nihon Fukushi Daigaku Kenkyû Kiyô* 92 (1995) 1-53, esp. p. 43.
- 16 See Chen, Edward I-te, op. cit., p. 264.
- 17 Iklé, Frank W. : The Triple Intervention : Japan's lesson in the diplomacy of Imperialism. *Monumenta Nipponica* 22 (1967) 122-130, passim.
- 18 See Yagyû, op. cit., pp. 168f.
- 19 Yagyû, op. cit., pp. 168ff.
- 20 See Amamiya Shôichi : Kindai Nihon no Sensô Shidô [Military Guidance in modern Japan]. Tôkyô 1997. p. 146 ; Ôe, Tôsui-ken, op. cit., pp. 106f.
- 21 Ôe, Tôsui-ken, op. cit., p. 109.
- 22 Ôe, Shokuminchi sensô, op. cit., 18ff.
- 23 Unno Fukuju : Kankoku Heigô [The Annexation of Korea]. Tôkyô 1995. pp. 218ff ; Yamabe Kentarô : Nikkan Heigô Shôshi [Short History of the Japanese Annexation of Korea]. Tôkyô 1966. pp. 235ff.
- 24 Ôe, Shokuminchi Sensô, op. cit., p. 29.
- 25 Chen, Edward I-te, op. cit., p. 256.

### III. Reforms of colonial administration

#### 1. Early Reforms

The monopolization of the colonial administration by the army was already criticized at an early time by party politicians and by single voices in the military itself. During Hara Kei's time as Minister of Interior in the first cabinet Saionji (1906-1908), the Seiyûkai politician had already implemented a reform of Taiwan's administration and a limited revision of the law no.

63<sup>26</sup>. Furthermore, he supported the introduction of a civilian administration throughout all colonies, but he was not successful, apart from the youngest colony South Sakhalin. Moreover, his policies to extend the application of the Meiji Constitution to the colonies (*Naichi Enchô-shugi*) remained without success. Yamagata Aritomo and his clique were able to widely defend the army's domination of the colonial administration, and, accordingly, realized the application of the 'Taiwan model' with its independent legislative, executive, and jurisdiction in the hands of a military governor-general when establishing the general government in Korea and the government in Kwantung<sup>27</sup>.

For the Yamagata clique, colonies were merely external possessions of the Empire, necessary to survive the struggle with the imperialistic western powers. Hara Kei, however, considered it imperative to incorporate colonies into the mother country, and, sooner or later to integrate them firmly into the political and jurisdictional system of the Meiji Constitution by granting the population of the colonies the same rights as the population of the mother country<sup>28</sup>. However, the time was not yet ripe for such claims, and thus, the Japanese colonies remained external possessions that could be exploited economically, used militarily, and civilized to a limited extent. The policy of assimilation (*Dôka*) has to be seen within the framework of this policy. In the first place it should serve the pacification of the colonies, but even when the assimilation was successful, the supporters of a policy of strength (Budân Seiji) such as Terauchi Masatake and Hasegawa Yoshimichi had no intention of applying the Meiji Constitution to the colonies.

Only the anti-military mood after World War I, as well as the anti-Japanese riots in Korea (movement of the 1st of March in 1919) and China (movement of the 4th of May in 1919) brought progress to the reforms of the colonial administration. In March 1919, it was the party *Kokumintô* which introduced a comprehensive proposal for the reform of the colonial administration in the diet for the first time<sup>29</sup>. Soon afterwards, Hara Kei, who as Prime Minister meanwhile had turned to 'politics of compromise'<sup>30</sup> with

Yamagata, initiated a reform of the colonial administration and pushed through an opening of the highest posts in the colonies for civilians, too. Hara faced the resistance of the army, but he had the parties firmly behind him. Since Yamagata did not want to endanger the stability of the cabinet under Hara, no considerable resistance had to be expected from him either. With the Chôshû militaries Tanaka Gi'ichi and Miura Gorô, who had already early criticized the control of the colonial administration by the army, Hara found allies within the army as well<sup>31</sup>.

## 2. Reforms of the Hara Cabinet

At first, Hara Kei initiated a reform for the administration of the leased territory Kwantung according to the model of the civilian administration of the colony South Sakhalin. This revision had been on the agenda of Japanese politics for a long time. In Kwantung, a governor, who had to be an officer on active duty, had hitherto been the head of a unified colonial administration. In April 1919, Hara decreed a division in the administration, which from then on consisted of a civilian part (*Kantô-chô*) and a military part (*Kantô-gun Shirei-bu*). The post of the governor now became open for civilians. The civilian administration was additionally strengthened by putting the hitherto independent South Manchurian Railway Co. (*Minami Manshû Tetsudô*) under its control. The Kantô army (*Kantô-gun*) was commanded by an army officer and was granted, to a large extent, an independent role<sup>32</sup>.

This complete division of military and politics had for the first time opened the office of the governor of the leased territory of Kwantung to civilians, which apparently meant an increase of power for the parties in Japanese politics. Because of the imperative of cooperation with Yamagata and the army, Hara did not appoint a party politician as a governor right away, but Yamagata Aritomo's nephew and adopted son Yamagata Isaburô. However, for the future, the office would be widely open for party politicians, and thus the parties were enabled to penetrate into areas previously

reserved to the army. Moreover, the army's interference in foreign policy with regard to Manchuria, which was based on its control of the administration of the leased territory Kwantung, seemed to be thwarted back for a while.

On the contrary, Yagyû Masafumi and Inoue Kiyoshi emphasized the short-sightedness of Hara's reform. Yagyû considered the high appreciation that is generally attributed to Hara's policy as exaggerated<sup>33</sup>. It was only due to the complete division of the civilian and military administration that the independent role of the infamous 'Kantô-army' was founded. This division in the end proved to be responsible for provoking the Manchurian incident in 1931, beginning the 15-Year-War, and finally leading Japan into militarism<sup>34</sup>. Whereas the Commander of the Kantô-army was still dependent to a certain degree on the political instructions of the the Foreign Minister and the Army Minister before Hara's reform, his authority was limited to military concerns after the reform in April 1919, but he was subject to less civilian control than ever before<sup>35</sup>. Hara was convinced of the efficiency of his reform. Indeed, it proved to cut both ways in the future. The Chang Tso-Lin incident in 1928, and again the Manchurian Incident in 1931 showed that the army knew how to take advantage of its new independent position.

The reform of the administration of **Korea and Taiwan** was carried out in a similar way to that of the leased territory of Kwantung. The posts of the governors-general of Taiwan and Korea were opened to civilians by Imperial Rescripts of August 19, 1919, and the military administration was separated from the civilian administration. Due to the outstanding importance of the colony for the army, Korea had an independent military government (*Chôsen-gun Shirei-bu*) since 1909 ; in Taiwan it was established in August 1919 (*Taiwan-gun Shirei-bu*)<sup>36</sup>. Furthermore, facing the anti-Japanese mood in Korea, the system of military police (*Kenpeitai*) was abolished : the *Kenpeitai* usually had the task of an internal police force within the army. In Korea, however, the entire police forces were under the control of the

Imperial Army. This was changed after the reform in 1919. From then on, the Kenpeitai was downgraded to an internal police within the army in Korea, too, whereas a civilian police force was established to maintain public order<sup>37</sup>.

In the case of Korea, the Imperial Army showed fierce resistance to Hara's reform plans. Terauchi Masatake, who had been the governor-general in Korea for many years himself and had supported a policy of the iron fist in the colony<sup>38</sup>, insisted on his point of view that the governor-general of Korea had to be an officer on active duty. He categorically refused Hara's reform plans. Yamagata initially also refused Hara's plans, but the Prime Minister could count on the services of his Army Minister Tanaka Gi'ichi, even the minister himself had to be considered a member of the Yamagata clique. But Tanaka succeeded in persuading Yamagata. Political stability always had been Yamagata's first concern, and what he feared most at that time was a collapse of the Hara cabinet, for which the elder statesman did not see any alternative at the time. Therefore, Yamagata gave up his resistance against limited reforms and supported the Prime Minister so that the reforms could be pushed through<sup>39</sup>. With Yamagata's approval, any further resistance on the part of the army, including Terauchi, was pointless, which again showed Yamagata's unchallenged position within the army. To Tanaka's remark that Terauchi Masatake's approval of the reform could hardly be achieved, Yamagata just responded : "Terauchi will surely disapprove, but it is not necessary to consult him."<sup>44</sup> Tanaka, however, did not consider it desirable to carry out the reforms without Terauchi's consent. Therefore, he paid Terauchi a visit and could convince the Field Marshal of the necessity of the reforms. Thus, the last resistance in the army was broken.

### 3. Changes in colonial administration

With regards to personnel decisions and appointments in the colonial administration of Korea and Taiwan, the resistance of the army became

stronger, and Hara had to agree to compromises. In Korea, the Prime Minister could not realize his plan to appoint Yamagata Isaburō to the post of the governor-general. Minister of Interior of the cabinet Terauchi Mizuno Rentarō and the Yamagata protégé Den Kenjirō were also rejected due to the resistance of the army<sup>40</sup>. On account of Korea's strategic position as a bridgehead on the continent for further Japanese expansion, the post of the governor-general of Korea was considered to be of utmost importance for the military. So the army, led by former governor-general Terauchi Masatake, vigorously opposed the appointment of a civilian immediately after the reform<sup>41</sup> particularly because of the extremely tense situation in the colony at that time. The resistance against Japanese colonial rule culminated in 1919 in the revolt of March 1<sup>st</sup> (*San ichi undō*)<sup>42</sup>. Japan now faced the question of how to organize its future colonial policy. Military men like Terauchi or Hasegawa Yoshimichi favoured a policy of strength, which is what they had already demonstrated with the suppression of the rebellion of 1919. Yet, contrary to Terauchi and Hasegawa, politicians like Itō Hirobumi (who was murdered in 1909) and Admiral Saitō Makoto (who was to take over the office of the governor-general of Korea soon after), represented a policy of balance which should slowly lead to an assimilation of Korea. In their opinion, this could not be reached with violence.

Finally, the army's resistance against the appointment of a civilian could not be overcome, but at least the highest post of the administration of the colony Korea was taken away from the traditional control of the army : after the Chōshū General Hasegawa Yoshimichi had resigned, Admiral Saitō Makoto was appointed governor-general of Korea on August 12, 1919<sup>43</sup>.

After four Yamagata proteges on the post of governor-general in Korea (among them two generals - Terauchi Masatake and Hasegawa Yoshimichi) a man from the navy could for the first time reach the highest post of the colonial administration in Korea. However, the revision of the colonial administration and the opening of the office of governor-general for civilians

actually remained without consequences. After Saitô, who held his post in Seoul for almost eight years, the army took over 'power' in Korea again. Saitô's successor Ugaki Kazushige set up a strong basis of power in Korea which was later inherited by Minami Jirô. Indeed, a civilian has never been appointed governor-general in Korea until the end of Japanese colonial rule in 1945.

In Taiwan, after the Satsuma admiral Kabayama Sukenori served as the first governor-general, military officers from the Chôshû clan and the Yamagata clique exclusively held the post of governor-general (Katsura Taro, Nogi Maresuke, Kodama Gentarô<sup>45</sup>, Sakuma Samata, Andô Sadami and Akashi Genjirô)<sup>46</sup>. Due to the compromise between Hara and Yamagata, in October 1919 Hara was able to reach his goal to appoint Den Kenjirô, a close confidant of Yamagata, as the first civilian on the post of governor-general in a Japanese colony. Unlike in Korea, the reform of the administration in Taiwan was carried out with little resistance, since the army had no vital interests in this colony. The navy was generally sympathetic to an opening of the administration for civilians<sup>47</sup>.

Hara did not appoint a party politician as governor-general of Taiwan, but he chose the widely respected Den Kenjirô, in cooperation with Yamagata. This policy also assured him the continued goodwill of Yamagata<sup>48</sup>. The military commander of the troops stationed in Taiwan (*Taiwan-gun Shirei-kan*), who was hitherto automatically governor-general, was degraded to a mere military commander. After a short period of difficulties between the recently appointed Den Kenjirô and General Shiba Gorô, the commander of the troops stationed in Taiwan, the army very quickly was subordinating to the civilian administration of Taiwan<sup>49</sup>. When assuming his office, Shiba's successor Fukuda Masatarô, until then vice Chief of General Staff and a strong supporter of Uehara Yûsaku, recognized the subordination of the military administration under the civilian administration of the colony. He also expressed his displeasure regarding this situation, because his rank at court (the

military was promoted to the rank of general at the end of 1921) was actually higher than that of Den. Fukuda emphasized in a letter to the governor-general :

"My rank is actually higher than that of your excellency [Den Kenjirô]. However, in Taiwan's government, the civilian administration is superior to the military administration, and that is why I am ready to respect the position of the governor-general and to subordinate myself to the governor-general."<sup>50</sup>

Still, in a letter to his successor, Fukuda complained about this fact while criticizing the revision of the colonial administration at the same time :

"With regard to the hierarchy at court, no problems have arisen as long as the governor-general had to be a general of the army or an admiral of the navy. After a civilian had gone to Taiwan as governor-general, a new and serious problem derived from this. [...] Mr. Den is my senior (*senpai*) as mentioned before, being former Minister and Vice-Minister for Communications. Therefore, I have great respect for Mr. Den and thus, it was only natural that Mr. Den came first in the hierarchy at court, followed by the supreme commander of the army. I have never considered this as an unfortunate or unfair situation. [...] However, when I leave my post, a delicate situation could arise on the part of my successors."<sup>51</sup>

In addition, the legislative authorities of the governor-general according to the law no. 63 of the year 1896 were further restricted under Den Kenjirô and Hara Kei, thus resolving the so-called 63-debate finally<sup>52</sup>. In the wake of these reforms, a local advisory assembly (*Sôtoku-fu Hyôgi-kai*) was created, which should even further demonstrate the civilian character of the colonial administration of Taiwan<sup>53</sup>. As in the case of his promotion of general suffrage<sup>54</sup>, Den Kenjirô stressed in his instructions to the regional governors of Taiwan that it would be imperative, as it was already demanded in the 'Charter Oath' of the young Meiji government in 1868, to listen increasingly

to the voice of the people on the occasion of passing laws<sup>55</sup>. Furthermore, the authority of the diet in Tôkyô regarding Taiwan's legislation was strengthened due to Hara's and Den's reforms, as it had long been demanded. After Hara Kei was assassinated in November 1921, the initiated reforms were continued by Den. By 1923, Hara Kei's claims for application of the Constitution to Taiwan (*Naichi Enchô-shugi*) were almost attained. Legislation was now generally withdrawn from the governor-general with a few exceptions.

"The amended 'Law concerning Laws and Regulations to be enforced in Taiwan' (Law 3 of 1921) not only allowed the modification to be made by imperial ordinance, it went a step further by requiring the governor-general to exercise his legislative power only when no appropriate Japanese law was available or when the enforcement of a Japanese law was difficult in the light of existing local conditions. In other words, after 1921 the application of the Diet-enacted laws to Taiwan became a principle rather than an exception."<sup>56</sup>

The application of the Meiji Constitution to Taiwan was further demonstrated by a visit paid to Taiwan by the Imperial Prince Higashikuni, and later even by the Crown Prince Hirohito (*the later Shôwa Tennô*)<sup>57</sup>, which showed Taiwan that it had become more and more an integral part of the Japanese Empire.

26 Ôe, *Shokuminchi Sensô*, op. cit., p. 22 ; Haruyama, op. cit., p. 46.

27 Haruyama, op. cit., p. 45.

28 Haruyama, op. cit., pp. 47f.

29 Kisaka Jun'ichirô : *Gunbu to demokurashii. Nihon ni okeru Kokka sôryoku sensô junbi to gunbu hihan wo megutte* [The Military and democracy : the criticism of the military's preparation for the creation of the total-war-state in Japan]. In: Kokusai Seiji Gakkai (ed.) : *Heiwa to sensô no kenkyû. Tôkyô* 1969. pp. 1-41, esp. p. 16.

30 Najita Tetsuya : *Hara Kei in the Politics of Compromise, 1905-1915. Cambridge/Mass.* 1967.

- 31 Kotani Yasutarō (ed.) : Kanju Shōgun Kaikoroku : Denki Miura Gorō [The memoirs of the *shōgun* Kanju : Biography of Miura Gorō]. Tōkyō 1988 (Reprint). p. 480 ; Amamiya, Sensō-shidō, op. cit., p. 146 ; Yagyū, op. cit., p. 171f ; 179ff ; Takakura Tetsuichi (ed.) : Tanaka Gi'ichi-den [Biography of Tanaka Gi'ichi]. Tōkyō 1958. 2 vols. Vol. II, pp. 163f.
- 32 Yagyū, op. cit., pp. 179ff ; 183f ; Amamiya, Sensō-shidō, op. cit., p. 145 ; Takakura, Tanaka Gi'ichi-den II, op. cit., p. 166 ; Inoue, Taishō-ki no Gunbu to Seiji, op. cit., pp. 397f.
- 33 Yagyū, op. cit., p. 187 ; see also Inoue, Taishō-ki no Seiji to Gunbu, op. cit., p. 397.
- 34 Yagyū, op. cit., pp. 167 ; 184.
- 35 Yagyū, op. cit., p. 185.
- 36 Amamiya, Sensō-shidō, op. cit., p. 145 ; Takakura, Tanaka Gi'ichi-den II, op. cit., pp. 160f ; 166 ; Inoue, Taishō-ki no Seiji to Gunbu, op. cit., pp. 398f.
- 37 Amamiya, Sensō-shidō, op. cit., p. 145 ; Takakura, Tanaka Gi'ichi-den II, op. cit., pp. 160f.
- 38 See Chen, Ching-chih : Police and Community Control Systems in the Empire. In : Myers, Ramon H. and Mark R. Peattie (eds.) : The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945. Princeton 1984. pp. 213-239, esp. pp. 221ff.
- 39 Takakura, Tanaka Gi'ichi-den II, op. cit., pp. 164f ; Inoue, Taishō-ki no Seiji to Gunbu, op. cit., pp. 398.
- 40 See Oka Yoshitake/Hayashi Shigeru (eds.) : Matsumoto Tsunayoshi Seiji Nisshi [The political diary of Matsumoto Tsunayoshi]. Tōkyō 1959. p. 40 (October 27, 1919) ; Kanju Shōgun Kaikoroku, op. cit., pp. 482f ; Takakura, Tanaka Gi'ichi-den II, op. cit., pp. 160ff ; Inoue, Taishō-ki no Seiji to Gunbu, op. cit., p. 398.
- 41 Imai Sei'ichi : Taishō-ki ni okeru gunbu no seiji ichi [The political position of the military in the Taishō era]. *Shisō* 399 (9/1957) 3-21 and 402 (12/1957) 106-122, esp. pp. 18f ; Takakura, Tanaka Gi'ichi-den II, op. cit., pp. 162f.
- 42 See Takakura, Tanaka Gi'ichi-den II, op. cit., pp. 156ff ; Takeda Haruto : Teikoku-shugi to Minpon-shugi [Imperialism and Democracy]. Tokyo 1992 (=Shū ei-sha-han Nihon no Rekishi, vol. 19). pp. 140f.
- 43 See Imai, op. cit., pp. 19. See also Matsumoto Tsunayoshi Seiji Nisshi, pp. 40f ; Takakura, Tanaka Gi'ichi-den II, op. cit., pp. 164ff.
- 44 Takakura, Tanaka Gi'ichi-den II, op. cit., pp. 165.
- 45 Kodama did closely cooperate with his civilian advisor Gotō Shimpei ; see Kitaoka Shin'ichi : Gotō Shimpei. Tōkyō 1988. pp. 35ff.
- 46 Only Akashi Genjirō came from Fukuoka, but as a follower of Terauchi Masatake, he can be considered close to the Chōshū-clan.

- 47 Takakura, Tanaka Gi'ichi-den II, op. cit., p. 165 ; Inoue, Taishō-ki no Seiji to Gunbu, op. cit., p. 399.
- 48 See Den Kenjirō-den, op. cit., pp. 375ff ; 382.
- 49 Den Kenjirō-den, op. cit., pp. 407ff.
- 50 See a letter from Fukuda to Den, quoted in Den Kenjirō-den, op. cit., pp. 408 ; see also Kuroita Katsumi : Fukuda Taishō-den [Biography of General Fukuda]. Tōkyō 1937. pp. 371ff.
- 51 Kuroita, Fukuda Taishō-den, op. cit., pp. 372ff.
- 52 Den Kenjirō-den, op. cit., pp. 444ff ; Haruyama, op. cit., p. 46.
- 53 Den Kenjirō-den, op. cit., pp. 462ff.
- 54 See Den Kenjirō-den, op. cit., pp. 369ff.
- 55 Den Kenjirō-den, op. cit., pp. 464f.
- 56 Chen, Edward I-te, op. cit., pp. 256.
- 57 See Den Kenjirō-den, op. cit., pp. 441ff ; 493ff ; 508ff ; Haruyama, op. cit., p. 46 ; Wakabayashi Masahiro : 1923-nen Higashi-no-miya Taiwan Gyōkei to 'Naichi Enchō-shugi' [The 'enlargement of the constitutional area' and the 1923 visit of Prince Higashi to Taiwan]. In : Ôe Shinobu et. al. (eds.) : Teikoku Tōchi no Kōzō (=Iwanami Kōza Kindai Nihon to Shokuminchi, vol. 2). Tōkyō 1989. pp. 87-120 ; Kuroita, Fukuda Taishō-den, op. cit., pp. 368f.

#### IV. The Imperial Army and colonial policy

For the Imperial Army, the monopolization of the colonial administration became one of the most important pillars of its political influence, especially in the area of colonial and foreign policy. Being solely responsible for the administration of the colonies, the army could not be ignored, neither by friend nor by foe. Even the party politicians had to get along with the army politicians in matters of colonial policy, while, on the other hand, doing everything to introduce reforms, and thus, to weaken the army's position in the colonial administration.

The army's position in Japan's domestic politics changed fundamentally with the Taishō-crises in 1912/1913, when Army Minister Uehara Yūsaku's resignation triggered the collapse of the second cabinet Saionji Kinmochi. The army made full use of the *Gunbu-Daijin Gen'eki Bukan-sei* (see above)

and demonstrated its ability and its will to become a first-rate and independent political power after being merely one part of the ruling hanbatsu-oligarchy throughout the Meiji era.

The same tendency can be observed in the army's colonial policy. In the Meiji era, the army as an integral part of the oligarchy did not independently influence Japan's foreign policy on its own account, thus ignoring civilian authorities like the Foreign Ministry. Cases like the plan to occupy the south Chinese city of Amoy from Taiwan during the Boxer crisis<sup>58</sup> or the pushy attitude of the Chief of General Staff Kodama Gentarô to open hostilities with China in 1894 can be seen as exceptions and were well within the framework of traditional power struggles within the ruling cliques and oligarchs<sup>59</sup>.

During the Taisho era, this situation changed. The army emerged as an independent political force and, ignoring civilian politicians, oligarchs and party politicians alike, became an extremely aggressive factor in Japan's politics. In the Taishô era, the army laid the foundations to dominate Japan's foreign policy in the 30s. But even as early as in the Taishô era, Japan more than once slipped into periods of army-dominated foreign policy (*Rikugun Gaikô*) or dual foreign policy (*Nijû Gaikô*), a division between the foreign ministry's interests and the army's interests. For the army, the Foreign Ministry (*Gaimushô* 外務省) turned into the 'obstacle ministry' (*Gaimushô* 害務省)<sup>60</sup>. Even though the Foreign Ministry, as a matter of course, was the responsible institution for formulating Japan's foreign policy, the army considered it a mere obstacle to its own rightful demands and strategies, which nobody could dare to deny were the best for the Empire.

## 1. Manchuria

After Korea was firmly established as a Japanese colony, Manchuria became the main focus of Japan's colonial policy, if not foreign policy, and the main target of Japanese continental expansion. For the Imperial Army, possession of this region was absolutely necessary to satisfy Japanese security in

view of the Russian threat. South Manchuria with the Kwantung Leased Territory and the South Manchurian Railway was made a Japanese sphere of influence after the Russo-Japanese War, while Northern Manchuria stayed firmly under Russian control. In the following years, it was in the first place the Kwantung Army stationed in the Kwantung Leased Territory which pursued an aggressive policy of bringing the whole of Manchuria under Japanese control. Inoue Kiyoshi stresses :

"The Governor of Kwantung had to follow the guidelines of the Foreign Ministry concerning foreign policy negotiations. But he had special powers (*Tokubetsu Inin*) for negotiations with Chinese authorities. The Kwantung Army used these powers as it could and indeed followed rather the guidelines coming from the Army Ministry and the General Staff than those coming from the Foreign Ministry."<sup>61</sup>

Making use of these powers, the Kwantung Army aimed at complete control of the whole of Manchuria when it supported the Manchurian Independence Movement in 1912 and again in 1915. In the wake of these events, it was less the General Staff or the Army Ministry who pursued an independent foreign policy for the army, but middle-ranked officers who were stationed on the continent itself - the 'men-on-the-spot' (出先機関). Kitaoka Shin'ichi stressed the fact that strikingly many of these officers did not belong to the dominant Chōshū clan, but to the rivaling Satsuma- or Kyūshū-clique within the Imperial army<sup>62</sup>. This minority group in the army under the leadership of generals Utsunomiya Tarō and later Uehara Yūsaku did use an aggressive approach in continental policy as a mere utensil to increase its influence within the Imperial Army and thus Japanese politics. Officers belonging to this faction, like Machida Keiu, Fukuda Masatarō, Nakajima Masatake, Nishikawa Torajirō, Takayama Kimimichi, Taga Muneyuki, and Tachibana Shōichirō, held the posts which were particularly convenient for influencing continental policy, i.e. the post of Chief of Bureau II in the General Staff, the post of Supreme Commander of the Kwantung Army, and the post of

military attaché at the embassy in Peking, for a remarkably long period and thus could be made responsible for the aggressive tendencies in Japanese continental policy in the Taishō era<sup>63</sup>.

In 1912, after the fall of the Manchu dynasty in China, army officers mainly belonging to the Kyūshū faction, planned and supported the movement to re-establish the Manchu dynasty in an independent Manchuria, after Mongolia and Tibet had declared their autonomy from China as well. The Kwantung army as well as the South Manchurian Railway Company secretly supported the independence movement in Manchuria with financial aid, weapons, counsel, and training, while Japan's official policy at that time favoured support and recognition of the Peking government and not the partition of China in regard to the policy of the Western powers<sup>64</sup>.

In 1915, the disappearance of European influence in China again allowed Japan to become more active in China. The forced recognition of the '21 demands' is a well-known example<sup>65</sup>, but at the same time, the army again supported independence movements in Manchuria and in Inner Mongolia as well. Colonel Takayama Kimimichi and Major Taga Muneyuki of the Kwantung Army as well as Captain Matsui Kiyosuke and Kikuchi Takeo from the Japanese Guard troops which were stationed in Peking since the Boxer Uprising in 1900, organized support for the separatists in Manchuria and Mongolia and allowed the direct participation of Japanese troops<sup>66</sup>. Now, the actions of the 'officers-on-the-spot' gained the support of the central army authorities as well. The General Staff under the newly appointed Chief of Staff Uehara Yūsaku (leader of the Kyūshū faction) dispatched Koiso Kuniaki who further supported the Manchurian independence movement and the Manchurian warlord Chang Tso-lin<sup>67</sup>. Even the army's efforts did not succeed just yet, it was shown that the army had the power to gain significant influence on Japan's foreign policy and could cause serious trouble for the government in international matters.

## 2. Siberia

Another example of army foreign policy (*Rikugun Gaikō*) was the Siberian Intervention which took place from 1918 to 1925 (including the occupation of Northern Sakhalin), at the climax of democratization trends in Japan during the period of the so-called *Taishō-democracy*. The Imperial Army, especially the General Staff around Uehara Yūsaku and Tanaka Gi'ichi, was the most active advocate of a Japanese expedition to Siberia in order to suppress the Bolsheviks and to create a pro-Japanese buffer zone or puppet state in the Russian Far East, and at the same time to secure the whole of Manchuria as a Japanese sphere of influence. But due to the opposition of the United States to an intervention, politicians like Hara Kei and Makino Nobuaki (Shinken) opposed the army's demands in the Advisory Council for Foreign Affairs (*Gaikō Chōsa I'inkai*) and thus delayed the expedition until August 1918. Only in summer 1918, the fate of the Chekoslovak Legion, trapped in the Civil War in Siberia, made the United States change its attitude and made US-President Woodrow Wilson agree to a limited allied expedition to Siberia.

But even though the actual intervention was delayed until August 1918, the army became astonishingly active in Siberia, creating the infrastructure necessary for a future occupation of the region and, moreover, reaching a military agreement with China. In the wake of the preparations for the intervention in Siberia, an institution was created which became a symbol for the army-dominated foreign policy in the 1930s and which is known as the *Tokumu Kikan* (特務機関 - 'Officers with special assignments'). These officers served mainly as information officers in occupied or to-be-occupied zones. The creation of the *Tokumu Kikan* dates back to the beginning of 1918, when the first officers were sent to Siberia and Northern Manchuria by the General Staff in order to :

- establish contact to the various anti-bolshevist regimes in Eastern Siberia
- collect information on the general situation

- mediate between the various anti-bolshevist regimes
- advise the anti-bolshevist regimes, especially in military matters
- organise the support of these regimes with money and weapons.<sup>68</sup>

The General Staff already had a network of spies all over the world that were built around the military attachés at Japan's embassies. But none of these officers had political tasks, they merely had to collect militarily relevant information. Only after the official creation of the *Tokumu Kikan* in the beginning of 1918, usual field officers could become politically active and influence the foreign policy of the whole nation. In the case of Siberia this meant full-fledged support for the anti-bolshevist regimes in the Russian Far East, which had to be united and turned into a pro-Japanese buffer state. Following this guideline, officers like Nakajima Masatake, Araki Sadao, Mutô Nobuyoshi, Kurosawa Jun, and Kuroki Shinkei (Chikanori) - some of them to gain utmost importance in the 1930s - closely cooperated with anti-bolshevist leaders like the Cosack Atamans Grigorij M. Semenov<sup>69</sup> and Ivan Kalmykov<sup>70</sup> ; Dimitrii L. Horvath, the governor of Russia's Railway Zone in Northern Manchuria<sup>71</sup> ; various local governments in Vladivostok<sup>72</sup> as well as the Pan-Mongolian movement<sup>73</sup>. They clashed more than once with civilian authorities that criticized their unauthorized actions. Kuroki Shinkei, the fanatic supporter of Ataman Semenov, was relieved of duty because his policy of support for the Pan-Mongolian movement was in direct conflict with the Foreign Ministry's policy of conciliation with the government in Peking<sup>74</sup>.

Another demonstration of army influence on foreign policy was the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese Military agreement of May 16, 1918. For the army, a military agreement with China was indispensable to secure the logistics of an expedition to Siberia. To achieve this goal, the army dispatched the officer Banzai Toshihachiro to Peking in February 1918, where he started negotiations with Chinese authorities without consultation of the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo<sup>75</sup>. The Foreign Ministry under Motono Ichirô was at that time almost as pro-interventionist as was the army, but still the minister was

concerned "to have Japan's policy toward China formulated and conducted by groups outside his own ministry."<sup>76</sup> But the General Staff insisted on the independence of the Supreme Command (*Tōsui-ken no Dokuritsu*) and stressed that since not a treaty was to be concluded with China but just a mere military agreement, negotiations fell clearly within the authority of the army.

During the negotiations, Banzai was later assisted by other officers like Saitō Kijirō (military attaché at Japan's embassy in Peking), Ugaki Kazushige (Chief of Bureau I in the General Staff), and Honjō Shigeru (member of Bureau I in the General Staff) as well as by the economic activist Nishihara Kamezō, the mastermind behind the Nishihara-loans which had brought China into close dependence to Japan in the previous years<sup>77</sup>. Finally, on May 16, 1918, the Sino-Japanese Military Agreement (*Nisshi Rikugun Kyōdō Bōteki Gunji Kyōtei*) was signed and a couple of days later the Navy followed swiftly with a similar agreement<sup>78</sup>. According to this agreement, Japan was authorized to use the whole of Manchuria as a base for the coming occupation of Siberia, but by this means - no need to mention - Japanese influence in Manchuria was to be firmly established as well, just as a mere byproduct of the Siberian Intervention.

Once the Intervention started<sup>79</sup> in August 1918, the army proved fast that the allied 'restricted intervention' (*Gentei Shuppei*) was not what she had in mind. The army wanted a free hand in Siberia and wanted to dispatch as many troops as she liked and wherever she liked (*Zenmen Shuppei*), insisting on the independence of Supreme Command (*Tōsui-ken no Dokuritsu*) which forbade civilian authorities to influence military matters. Before the intervention started in August 1918, Seiyūkai-President Hara Kei had shown that he exactly understood the real aims of the army :

"The army-dominated foreign policy (*Rikugun Gaikō*) is a deep-rooted evil in Japanese politics and has caused great problems to the state in the past. Numerous examples can be quoted. In this case [the Siberian Intervention] as well, the army's plan could be to agree to an

initially small plan of action, just to enlarge the incident later. We must be very careful on this matter.<sup>1160</sup>

Indeed the army proceeded fast with enlarging the intervention once it began, and the Siberian Intervention which had started as a restricted intervention (*Gentei-shuppei*) was turned into a 'total intervention' (*Zenmen-shuppei*). Again, it was especially officers from the Kyūshū faction of the army who insisted on an aggressive stand in Japan's Siberia policy. One of the most influential officers of this faction and a close follower of Uehara Yusaku, General Machida Keiu, even demanded the annexation of the whole of Eastern Siberia on the occasion of Russian weakness in the wake of revolution and civil war. In a letter to Uehara dating March 17, 1918, Machida demanded as "essential for Japan's future :

1. possession of the territory east of Irkutsk (use of Irkutsk to add the region between Kiakhta and along the planned railway to Peking, as well as, of course, Inner Mongolia and the eastern part of Outer Mongolia to our sphere of influence and use it as a area of supply of resources).
2. the vicinity of the Sea of Japan must be made a secure sphere of influence, so that even in the case of an armed conflict with a superior maritime power it can be used as a communication base to keep contact with Manchuria, Korea, and the Maritime Province.
3. this opportunity must be used to sign a military agreement with China. With our military support, the northern and southern governments must then be united. Militarily supported and guided by us, China then will be entrusted with securing its borders to Western Mongolia, Sinkiang, and Kashgar.

[...]

6. There is no need to give too much concern to the attitude of the United States which try to hinder Japanese expansion all the time.<sup>1161</sup>

Japan again slipped in a period of dual foreign policy. While the government assured that the intervention was only temporary and that international

agreements would be respected, the army ignored these guidelines and at the climax of the intervention in fall 1918, dispatched more than 70,000 troops to Siberia while promising a restriction to 7,000 in the agreement with the United States from August 1918. Moreover, the army enlarged the intervention area from Vladivostok in the beginning to the whole Russian Far East and pursued a policy of colonization of the whole region.

In the case of the Siberian Intervention, the army's independent actions could still be suppressed. There was a fierce rivalry between the General Staff under Uehara Yūsaku on the one side, and the cabinets of Hara Kei, Takahashi Korekiyo and Katō Tomosaburō on the other side. But thanks to the prevalence of a democratic and anti-militaristic mood during the Taishō era, Japanese troops were finally recalled from mainland Siberia in 1922 and from Northern Sakhalin in 1925. However, the success of civilian authorities and the retreat of the army in politics did not endure, but was soon to be reversed. The Chang Tso-lin incident in 1928 was the last time that civilian authorities were still able to control and suppress the army's independent actions<sup>52</sup>. In 1931, the radicalization of the army, which was caused by the anti-militaristic mood of the 1920s as well as the anti-military reforms and the disarmament policy of the party cabinets in the Taishō era, had to result in the eruption of the Manchurian Incident.

58 Inoue, *Taishō-ki no Seiji to Gunbu*, op. cit., p. 357.

59 Inoue, *Taishō-ki no Seiji to Gunbu*, op. cit., p. 358 ; Ikei Masaru : *Shinkō Shokoku ni okeru Seiji to Gunbu* [Politics and the Military in emerging states]. In : Keiō Gijuku Daigaku Chiiki Kenkyū Gurusupu (ed.) : *Hendō-ki ni okeru Gunbu to Guntai*. Tōkyō 1968. pp. 85-124, esp. p. 95 ; Tsunoda Jun : *Seiji to Gunji* [Politics and Military]. Tōkyō 1987. p. 21.

60 Some army officers started to write the term 'Gaimushō' (Foreign Ministry) not with the usual character 'Gai' (外), which means 'Foreign', but with an alternate character with the same reading, meaning 'obstacle', 'damage' or 'harm' (害). They wanted to show that the Foreign Ministry was nothing more than a obstacle, which stood in their way to fulfill their national mission of securing Japan's place as a hegemonial power on the continent.

- 61 Inoue, Taishō-ki no Seiji to Gunbu, op. cit., pp. 362.
- 62 Kitaoka Shin'ichi : Nihon Rikugun to tairiku seisaku [The Japanese Army and continental policy]. Tōkyō 1978. pp. 76ff.
- 63 Kitaoka, Nihon Rikugun, op. cit., pp. 77f.
- 64 Inoue, Taishō-ki no Seiji to Gunbu, op. cit., pp. 384f ; Masumi Jun'nosuke : Hanbatsu Shihai - Seitō Seiji [Oligarchic government and party politics]. Tōkyō 1992 (=Nihon Seiji-shi, vol. II). pp. 267ff ; Hatsuse Ryūhei : Uchida Ryōhei no Kenkyū [Studies of Uchida Ryōhei]. Fukuoka 1980. pp. 179ff ; 185ff.
- 65 See for example : Kawada Minoru : Hara Kei to Yamagata Aritomo [Hara Kei and Yamagata Aritomo]. Tōkyō 1998. pp. 20ff ; Takeda, op. cit., 60ff.
- 66 Inoue, Taishō-ki no Seiji to Gunbu, op. cit., p. 385 Masumi, Hanbatsu Shihai-Seitō Seiji, op. cit., pp. 267ff ; Hatsuse, Uchida Ryōhei, op. cit., pp. 179ff ; 185ff ; Kawada, Hara Kei, op. cit., pp. 44f.
- 67 See Inoue, Taishō-ki no Seiji to Gunbu, op. cit., p. 390 ; Masumi, Hanbatsu Shihai-Seitō Seiji, op. cit., pp. 267ff ; Hatsuse, Uchida Ryōhei, op. cit., pp. 179ff ; 185ff.
- 68 Sanbō Honbu (ed.) : Taishō shichinen naishi jū-ichinen Shiberia-shuppei-shi [The Siberian Intervention from 1918 to 1922]. 3 vols. Tōkyō 1972 (Reprint). vol II, pp. 883f.
- 69 Concerning Japan's support of Semenov see : Hosoya Chihiro : Japanese Documents on the Siberian Intervention, 1917-1922. Part I : Nov. 1917-Jan. 1919. *Hitotsubashi Journal of Law and Politics* 1 (1960) 30-53, esp. p. 47 ; Morley, James W. : The Japanese Thrust into Siberia, 1918. New York 1957. pp. 93f ; 180 ; Yamamoto Shirō (ed.) : Nishihara Kamezō Nikki [The Diary of Nishihara Kamezo]. Kyōto 1984. p. 255.
- 70 See Morley, The Japanese Thrust, op. cit., p. 353 (Appendix I) ; Sanbō Honbu, Shiberia-shuppei-shi II, op. cit., p. 872.
- 71 Sanbō Honbu, Shiberia-shuppei-shi II, op. cit., pp. 873 ; Hosoya Chihiro : Shiberia-shuppei no Shiteki-Kenkyū [Historical Studies of the Siberian Intervention]. Tōkyō 1955. P. 148 ; Morley, The Japanese Thrust, op. cit., pp. 106f ; 178f.
- 72 Sanbō Honbu, Shiberia-shuppei-shi III, op. cit., p. 1305 ; Gaimushō Ôbei-kyoku : Urajio Seijō [The political conditions in Vladivostok]. Tōkyō 1921. pp. 19ff ; White, John Albert : The Siberian Intervention. New Jersey 1950. pp. 388f.
- 73 See Gaimushō Kiroku MT 1.6.4.1.4.5 (Pan Mōko-Undo Ikken) ; White, The Siberian Intervention, op. cit., pp. 76f ; 379f ; Hara Teruyuki : Shiberia-shuppei - Kakumei to Kanshō 1917-1922 [The Siberian Expedition : Revolution and Intervention 1917-1922]. Tōkyō 1989. pp. 488f.
- 74 Gaimushō Kiroku MT 1.6.4.1.4.5, 127ff.
- 75 Araki Sadao (ed.) : Gensui Uchara Yūsaku-den [Biography of Field Marshal Uehara Yūsaku]. 2 vols. Tōkyō 1937. vol. II, p. 120 ; 120 ; Hara, Shiberia-shuppei, op. cit., pp. 283 ; Hosoya, Shiberia-shuppei, op. cit., pp. 128ff.

- 76 Morley, *The Japanese Thrust*, op. cit., pp. 116.
- 77 Araki, *Uehara-Yūsaku-den II*, op. cit., pp. 120ff ; Morley, *The Japanese Thrust*, op. cit., pp. 113ff ; 161ff ; Takeda, op. cit., pp. 63ff.
- 78 The Agreement can be found in : Hosoya, *Documents*, op. cit., pp. 39f (english translation) ; Gaimushō (ed.) : *Nihon Gaikō Nenpyō narabi shuyōbunsho* [Time table for Japanese foreign policy and major documents]. 2 vols. Tokyo 1965. vol. I, pp. 441ff ; Sanbō Honbu, *Shiberia-shuppei-shi I*, op. cit., pp. 221ff (appendix 5).
- 79 For a short account on the way to the intervention see Hosoya Chihiro : *Origin of the Siberian Intervention, 1917-1918. Annals of Hitotsubashi Academy* 9 (1958) 13-134, passim.
- 80 Kobayashi Tatsuo (ed.) : *Suiusō Nikki-Itō-ke Monjo* [The Suiusō Diary - Documents of the Itō family]. Tōkyō 1966. pp. 133f.
- 81 Uehara Yūsaku kankei monjo kenkyū-kai (ed.) : *Uehara Yūsaku kankei monjo* [Documents referring to Uehara Yūsaku]. Tōkyō 1976. p. 483.
- 82 Oe Shinobu : *Tennō no guntai. Tōkyō 1982 (=Shōwa no Rekishi, vol 3). pp. 157ff.*

## V. Conclusion

In the Taishō-period, the Imperial Army became a well-established and independently acting political force which had to be reckoned with, especially with regard to foreign policy and colonial policy. The army could institutionalize its influence, it could defend, and it could even enlarge political privileges. Moreover, the army created precedents of independent action which could be referred to by the rebellious 'young officers' (*Seinen Shōkō*) in the 30s when they explained their actions. Furthermore, the army made first contacts and cooperations with civilian right-wingers, like the 'Black-Dragon-Society' or 'Amur Society' (*Kokuryū-kai*)<sup>83</sup>, a constellation which has been described as typical for the 30s as well, but is well-rooted in the army politics of the Taishō era.

Hara Kei's death in November 1921 led to a clear break in the politics of reform regarding the outstanding political position of the army. After Hara's death, the army could not only defend its political privileges, it could gain back lost privileges and could also prove that it was able and willing

to use its power. This can be said for colonial policy in the Taishō-era as well. Hara's reforms were soon to be reversed or made irrelevant. The opening of the posts of general-governor of Taiwan and Korea and the post of governor of Kwantung for civilians was reversed only in 1936, but even up to then not a single civilian could reach the post of general-governor of Korea, Japan's most important colony. The army's position stayed unchallenged. In Kwantung, the Imperial army was also able to defend its position within colonial administration and it could even gain a more independent position for the troops of the Kwantung Army.

It was this independent position of the Kwantung army in the first place which led to the Manchurian Incident in 1931. After the failure to provoke action in 1928 with the Chang Tso-lin Incident, staff officers of the Kwantung army around Ishihara Kanji and Itagaki Seishirō put much effort in the systematic planning of Japanese support for an independent puppet state in Manchuria and the realization of their ideals in the new state. Finally in 1931, they succeeded in provoking an incident and, in the time to come, the whole of Manchuria was occupied with the help of troops from Korea, that were dispatched by General Hayashi Senjūrō without authorization from central authorities in Tokyo and by ignoring cabinet policies and guidelines.

The strengthening of the army's independent position in Manchira culminated in the unification of the posts of Supreme Commander of the Kwantung Army (*Kantō-gun Shirei-kan*), the Governor of the Leased Territory Kwantung (*Kantō Chōkan*), and the ambassador to the newly created puppet state of Manchukuo (*Manshū-koku Chū-tō Taishi*) in 1932 (*Sanmi Ittai* 三位一体). Now the army virtually controlled Japan's continental policy not only in military, but also in political and economic regards.

Only seemingly did the army's position in Japan's politics decrease during the Taishō-democracy, namely in view of the reforms of the cabinet Hara Kei, as well as during the arms reduction policy of the mid 20s. In reality, these politics and reforms had the opposite effect. The army, especially

lower-ranking officers, became increasingly aware of the anti-army and antimilitaristic mood in Japan's politics as well as amongst the people, and thus started pursuing the enhancement of the army's position and reputation in a very radical way. The climax of this policy was the Manchurian Incident of 1931 which should lead Japan's foreign policy into the 'right' direction and should become the starting point for domestic restructuring as well, thus triggering a series of putsches and assassinations.

83 Vgl Inoue Taishō-ki no Seiji to Gunbu, op. cit., p. 387

### Appendix : Japan's colonial administration

The following lists have been compiled according to :

Nihon Kin-gendai-shi Jiten henshū i'inkai (ed.) : Nihon Kin-gendai-shi Jiten. Tōkyō (Tōyō Keizai Shinpō) 1978. Appendix 21 (pp. 876ff).

Nihon Kindai Shiryō Kenkyū-kai (ed.) : Nihon Riku-kai-gun no seido-soshiki-jinji. Tōkyō 1971.

### Governors-General of Korea

Name	Appointment	Former post	Later post
Terauchi Masatake	1910/10/1	Army Minister	Prime Minister
Hasegawa Yoshimichi	1916/10/16	Chief of General Staff	
Saito Makoto	1919/8/12	Navy Minister	Prime Minister
Ugaki Kazushige	1927/4/15	Army Minister	designated Prime Minister
Yamanashi Hanzō	1927/12/10	Army Minister	
Saitō Makoto	1929/8/17	Navy Minister	Prime Minister
Ugaki Kazushige	1931/6/17	Army Minister	designated Prime Minister
Minami Jirō	1936/8/5	Commander of Kwantung Army	Army Minister
Koiso Kuniaki	1942/5/29	Colonization Minister	Prime Minister
Abe Nobuyuki	1944/7/24	President of 'Yokusei-kai'	

(Unity party)

### Governors-General of Taiwan

Name	Appointment	Former post	Later post
Kabayama Sukenori	1895/5/10	Chief of General Navy Staff	Minister of Interior, Education Minister, Member of Privy Council
Katsura Tarô	1896/6/2	Commander of 3 <sup>rd</sup> division	Prime Minister, genrô
Nogi Maresuke	1896/10/14	Commander of 2 <sup>nd</sup> division	Director of <i>Gakushû-in</i>
Kodama Gentarô	1898/2/26	Commander of 3 <sup>rd</sup> division	Chief of General Staff
Sakuma Samata	1906/4/11	Commander of Tokyo Garrison	
Andô Sadayoshi	1915/5/1	Commander of Korean Army	
Akashi Genjirô	1918/6/6	Commander of 6 <sup>th</sup> division	
Den Kenjirô	1919/10/26	Minister of Communication	Member of Privy Council Minister of Commerce/Agriculture
Uchida Kakichi	1923/9/6	Minister of Communication	
Izawa Takio	1924/9/1	Director of Police Agency	
Kamiyama Mitsunoshin	1926/7/16	House of Peers Delegate	
Kawamura Takeji	1928/6/16	House of Peers Delegate	
Ishizuka Eizô	1929/7/30	House of Peers Delegate	
Ôta Masahiro	1931/1/16	Governor of Kwantung	
Minami Hiroshi	1932/3/2	House of Peers Delegate	
Nakagawa Kenzô	1932/5/27	Vice Education Minister	
Kobayashi Seizô	1936/9/2	Military Advisor to Emperor	
Hasegawa Kiyoshi	1940/11/27	Military Advisor to Emperor	
Andô Toshikichi	1944/12/30	Military Commander of Forces in Area 10	

### Governors of Kwantung (*Kantô-shû*)<sup>84</sup>

Name	Appointment	Former post
Ôshima Yoshimasa	1905/10/18	Commander of 3 <sup>rd</sup> division
Fukushima Yasumasa	1912/4/26	Vice-chief of General Staff

Nakamura Akira	1914/9/15	Chief aide-de-camp
Nakamura Yūjirō	1917/7/31	President of Manchurian Railway
Hayashi Gonsuke	1919/4/12	Ambassador to China
Yamagata Isaburō	1920/5/24	Civilian Governor of Korea
Ishūin Genkichi	1922/9/8	Ambassador to Italy
Kodama Hideo	1923/9/26	
Kinoshita Kenjirō	1927/12/17	Lower House Delegate
Ôta Masahiro	1929/8/7	House of Peers Delegate
Tsukamoto Seiji	1931/1/16	Chief Secretary of Cabinet
Yamaoka Mannosuke	1932/1/11	Director of Police Department in the Ministry of Interior
Mutō Nobuyoshi	1932/8/8	Inspector-General of Military Education
Hishikari Takashi	1933/7/28	Military Advisor to Emperor
Minami Jirō	1934/12/10	Military Advisor to Emperor
Ueda Kenkichi	1936/3/6	Military Advisor to Emperor
Umezu Michirō	1939/9/7	Vice Army Minister
Yamada Otozō	1944/7/18	Inspector-General of Military Education

### Governors-General of Karafuto (Southern Sakhalin)

Name	Appointment	Former post
Kumagaya Ki'ichirō	1905/8/28	
Kusunose Sachihiko	1907/4/1	Major-general
Tokonami Takejirō	1908/4/24	Cabinet minister for regional affairs
Hiraoka Sadatarō	1908/6/12	Governor of Fukushima prefecture
Okada Bunji	1914/6/5	Governor of Tochigi prefecture
Masatani Akira	1916/10/13	Governor of Saitama prefecture
Nagai Kinjirō	1919/4/17	Head of Otaru Ward, Hokkaido
Masatani Akira	1924/6/11	
Toyoda Katsuzō	1926/8/5	Governor of Fukui prefecture
Kita Kōji	1927/7/27	Governor of Tainan Region(Taiwan)
Agata Shinobu	1929/7/9	Head of Reconstruction Bureau
Kishimoto Masao	1931/12/17	Governor of Hiroshima prefecture
Imamura Takeshi	1932/7/5	Head of Department for Interior Korean Affairs
Munci Shin'ichi	1938/5/7	Head of control department, Ministry of Colonization
Ogawa Masayoshi	1940/4/9	Governor of Mie prefecture

Ôtsu Toshio                      1943/7/1      Governor of Saitama prefecture

84 The Leased Territory of Kwantung was administered from October 1905 to September 1906 by a Governor-General (*Sôtoku*), after that by a Governor (*Totoku*). In 1919 the administration of the Kwantung colony was changed and the title of the Governor was changed to *Chôkan* (Civilian Governor). The change to *Chôkan* stressed the fact that the governor of Kwantung was usually a civilian after 1919 according to the reforms of Hara Kei.