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Informal Diplomacy in Meiji Japan: The Visits of General Grant and Crown Prince Nicholas Alexandrovich

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In the summer of 1879, Ulysses S. Grant (1822–85), the former President of the United States (1869–77) and general-in-chief of the Union Army in the American Civil War, made Japan the final stop on the two-and-a-half-year trip around the world that he began shortly after his presidential term ended. He traveled as a private citizen, and the U.S. government stated explicitly—and he himself often repeated—that he was not acting in any official capacity, but everywhere he went he was elaborately feted and shown the courtesies ordinarily reserved for heads of state. His reception in Japan, where he spent over two months, was particularly warm.¹ He had been in office when the Iwakura Mission visited the U.S. in 1871–72, and the Meiji government was pleased seven years later to reciprocate the hospitality that he and other Americans had offered its emissaries in Washington and to have an opportunity to hear the views of a seasoned Western leader.

Twelve years later, in the spring of 1891, Nicholas Alexandrovich Romanov (1868–1918), the Crown Prince of Russia, came to Japan. He was en route to Vladivostok, where he was to participate in ceremonies inaugurating construction of what became the Trans-Siberian Railway. His father, Tsar Alexander III, had conceived this trip as an educational experience, and Nicholas's itinerary before his ship dropped anchor in Nagasaki Bay had included Austria-Hungary, Greece, Ceylon, Singapore, Java, Siam, Cochin China, and China. Japan had transformed itself in important ways in the years since Grant's stay, most notably by adopting a constitution and other Western-style legal institutions and convening a national legislature. It remained under the burden of unequal treaties, however, and it was widely regarded as inferior in power and general level of development to Western nations, especially to Russia, which had enormous military might and was aggressively expanding its influence in Northeast Asia. Hoping to impress the crown prince and his family and their government, the Meiji emperor, his government, and many sub-national officials and private citizens treated Nicholas as a guest of the state, even though he was not authorized to conduct official business on this tour.

Both General Grant and Crown Prince Nicholas evidenced great interest in Japan and professed themselves delighted by much of what they experienced. The former was especially attentive to the political and economic changes that were taking place in the new Japan, and sympathetic to the leaders who were overseeing those changes. The latter was oriented toward cultural and religious matters, and was much taken by traditional social institutions (outstandingly *bushidō* as represented by the

former daimyo of Satsuma and his retainers, whom he met, and the charm and beauty of the world of urban entertainment as represented by geisha, whom he patronized).

Grant's visit concluded harmoniously after he had met five times with the emperor, famously advising the monarch to take a gradual approach to the adoption of representative institutions of government and counseling fiscal conservatism. Informally, the former President played a critical role in preventing a dispute between China and Japan from kindling armed hostilities. When he met them in Beijing, the Qing leaders Prince Gong and Li Hongzhang had requested him to mediate in the disagreement over which nation had sovereignty over the Ryukyus. In Japan, Grant discussed the matter with Itō Hirobumi and Saigō Tsugumichi and discovered that there was a considerable gap between the two nations' understanding of the issues. Showing sympathy toward both and alert to the danger that Westerners might take advantage of their discord, he urged with statesmanlike impartiality that they negotiate a settlement without assistance from third parties. They made efforts to follow his recommendation some months after he returned home in September 1879, and although those efforts ultimately did not produce a resolution, at least war was avoided.

Nicholas's tour was cut short after a policeman assigned to guard detail for his May 11 daytrip to Ōtsu attempted to assassinate him, inflicting two saber wounds on his scalp. Concerned that the crown prince's life was in danger and deeply chagrined that Japan had failed to maintain public order during his visit, the Meiji emperor decided to personally call on Nicholas at his hotel in Kyoto, to which he had returned after receiving medical attention and resting briefly in Ōtsu; the emperor took a special train from Tokyo the morning of May 12. The physician to the Meiji emperor and three other leading doctors were dispatched to Kyoto to offer their services within hours of the news about the incident reaching Tokyo. In addition, many key members of the Japanese government made the journey from Tokyo to Kyoto. They feared that this event had placed Japan in peril of war with Russia. Fortunately the crown prince's injuries were not serious. He said to his hosts and wrote in his diary that he believed himself the victim of a madman acting alone; he had not at all altered his favorable feelings about the Japanese people, he added. He was personally disposed to continue his travels for two more weeks, as originally planned, but his parents decided to summon him back to Russian soil, and he set sail from Kobe on May 19.

The trial and sentencing of Nicholas's assailant, Tsuda Sanzō, stand as a signal event in Japanese legal history. Apprehensive that anything but a penalty of death would precipitate military action by Russia, and nearly certain defeat for Japan, the executive branch of the Meiji government pressed the judiciary to convict Tsuda of violation of a law pertaining to the emperor and imperial family. The court asserted judicial independence, however, finding the applicable law to be a different article of the penal code, which did not provide for capital punishment. It found Tsuda guilty and sentenced him to life imprisonment.

In this essay, I review primary and secondary sources on the visits to Japan of the mature and deeply experienced ex-President and the youthful and somewhat

fanciful future tsar. In very different ways, both visits ended up having the effect of strengthening relations between the nations involved, although in the Russian case the gain was short-lived. Regional rivalry soon intensified and led to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05, but contrary to popular belief there seems to be no evidence that the tsarevich's 1891 visit turned him into a hater of Japan and no evidence of any link between Tsuda's saber thrusts and the war.²

The particulars of the itineraries of General Grant and Crown Prince Nicholas and their contacts in Japan are highly revealing of the mentalities of Japanese, Americans, and Russians, and also of the strategic thinking of rising geopolitical powers, in the late nineteenth century. If we wish to compare the visits to Japan of these two major figures, and to grasp their significance, we need to answer several simple questions about both. Where did they go? Whom did they meet? What sights did they see? Where did they stay? What did they eat?³ What kind of diplomacy—formal and informal—was involved in their visits? How much did hospitality cost? Who paid the bills? What was the response of those who received them, and of the public at large?

Ulysses S. Grant in Japan

Let us begin with General Grant. He entered Japan at Nagasaki on June 21, 1879. For the passage from Tientsin, where Li Hongzhang had seen him off, to Nagasaki, General and Mrs. Grant sailed on the USS *Richmond*. A steam sloop that had seen action in the Civil War, the *Richmond* was the flagship of the U.S. Pacific fleet. No ordinary American citizen would have had such a vessel made available to him, and that it was the Navy, not a commercial transportation company, that brought him to Japan underscored a point that the Japanese already knew—Grant was very special indeed, even though he was retired from public life and not representing his country. At a time when the notion of around-the-world journeys was still novel (as our late Nichibunken colleague Sonoda Hidehiro showed us in his 2003 book *Sekai isshū no tanjō*), and few people had traveled so extensively, Grant had toured England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Portugal, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Austria, Egypt, Turkey, the territory that is now Israel, India, Siam, and China. Grant's party remained in Nagasaki for six days; as the journalist (later U.S. Minister to China) John Russell Young reported, they saw “all the institutions of the town, the courts of law, the schools, [and] the dock-yard.” The general and his wife spent their nights in the building of the Normal School, a new institution. From Nagasaki the party sailed into the Inland Sea, planning to call next at Hyōgo (Kobe) and see Kyoto and other famous places in the Kansai. The Japanese authorities had imposed a quarantine because of a cholera epidemic, however, and Grant and his retinue could not go ashore. At anchor two miles offshore, they were greeted by local dignitaries who shouted words of welcome and regret from another boat, unable, because of the contagion, to board the *Richmond*.

After a brief stop in Shizuoka—“a pure Japanese town, without a tint of European civilization,” in Young's description⁴—where the governor introduced them to

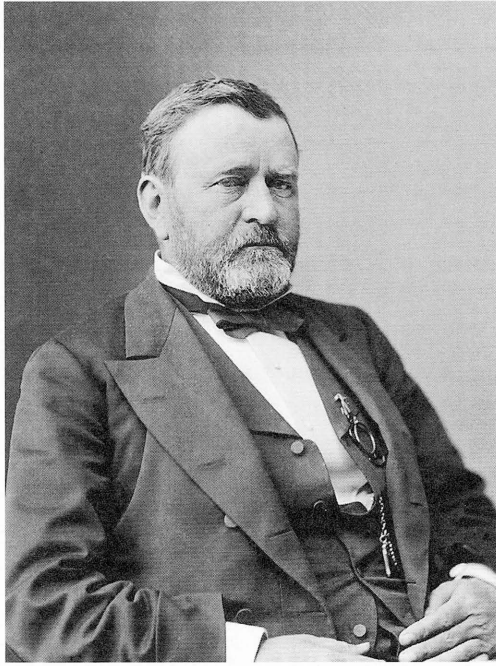


Fig. 1. Ulysses S. Grant.

local tea cultivation but Mt. Fuji was hidden by clouds, the Americans continued on to Yokohama, arriving on July 3. Elaborate but short reception ceremonies in Yokohama began in the harbor and concluded at the railway station, and Grant's group took a special train to Tokyo. There they stayed as guests of the state in the Enryōkan, a residence in the Hama Detached Palace that had belonged to the shogun and after the Restoration became the property of the imperial household.⁵ Iwakura Tomomi, Itō Hirobumi, and several other high officials of the government had turned out to meet Grant at Yokohama, and it had been arranged that the following day, the anniversary of American Independence, he would have an audience with the Meiji em-

peror—the first of five meetings, as it developed. Two weeks later, the general left the “rush and roar . . . and ceremony and parade”⁶ of the big city and made the two-day trip to Nikkō, riding in the imperial carriage. He remained in Nikkō for ten days from the 18th, longer than he would have stayed if cholera had not made Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe off limits. Some of the days in Nikkō were given over to meetings with Itō and Saigō, who arrived on the 22nd to talk about the Ryukyu matter. Kanagawa was General Grant's next stop. He visited the silk factory there, and in the evening the governor of the prefecture acted as his host. On July 31, he and his party returned to Tokyo and the Enryōkan, and stayed until September 3, when they embarked on a commercial ship, the *Tokio*, for San Francisco.

A great many of the people General Grant encountered in Japan were members of the new political and economic elite. This was by design, of course. Six months before his arrival, public and private planning had commenced. The government decided in January that the ex-President “Mr. Grand” グランド氏 should be accorded the treatment given to a foreign prince of the blood (*kakkoku kōzoku o gokyōtai* 各国皇族ヲ御饗待).⁷ Date Munenari 伊達宗城 (1818–92), formerly the daimyo of Uwajima and a veteran of several high posts in the Meiji government including Finance Minister, was appointed to be in charge of the general's reception; his experience dealing with foreigners had been enriched on official missions to England and China.⁸ The Japanese Minister to the U.S. was called home to accompany the state guest from arrival to departure and act as interpreter. This was Yoshida Kiyonari 吉田清成 (1845–91), who knew Grant from Washington and whose English had been polished

during seven years of study in England and America.⁹ Shibusawa Eiichi 渋沢栄一 (1840–1931), the president of the Dai-Ichi Bank and the preeminent business leader of Meiji Japan, and Fukuchi Gen'ichirō 福地源一郎 (1841–1906), president of the Tokyo Nichinichi Shinbun and in 1879 the speaker of the recently established Tokyo Prefectural Assembly, took on the major share of responsibility for organizing citizens of the capital during the visit. They were on hand, and both delivered welcoming speeches,¹⁰ when General Grant's train arrived at Shinbashi Station from Yokohama. The committee they formed raised the large sum of 30,000 yen to pay for a reception the evening of July 8. Some 1500 persons attended that event, among them “princes of the blood, Ministers of the different [ministries], Japanese naval and military officers, the [envoys from other nations], officers from the *Richmond*, *Monongahela*, and *Ashuelot*, and many distinguished foreigners and native citizens.”¹¹ As the general was accompanied by his wife Julia, wives and daughters were invited, as well. This was four years before construction of the Rokumeikan, the luxurious Western-style entertainment facility built at the initiative of Foreign Minister Inoue Kaoru, and this reception was held at the new Engineering College. For many of the Japanese guests, it was the first time they had ever seen social dancing. Some Western dishes on the dinner menu (ice cream among them) were also new to them. The Grants stood and greeted people for over half an hour, and while the guest list for this reception may not have included everyone he met in Japan, its elite character made it representative.¹²

Already on the afternoon of July 4, Grant had his first audience with the emperor. Accompanied by the ranking officers of the three-ship U.S. Navy squadron that brought him to Japan and John A. Bingham, the U.S. Minister to Japan,¹³ the general and his wife drove to the imperial palace and were met by Chief Minister of the Council of State Sanjō Sanetomi and Minister of the Right Iwakura Tomomi, then escorted into the presence of the emperor and empress.¹⁴ The emperor shook hands with Grant, a gesture that Young saw as a singular honor—“such a thing was never before known in the history of Japanese majesty.” Other members of the party were introduced, but at a distance of some three or four meters. On this occasion an imperial attendant named Ishibashi translated; the remarks exchanged by the two principals were cordial but short. There would be meaningful content in what Grant said to the emperor in later meetings, but this audience was in fact a courtesy call without much substance.

In the evening of Independence Day, American residents of Tokyo held a garden party, and Grant was the center of attention. Minister Bingham and Thomas B. Van Buren, a general in the Union Army and New York politician who was then the U.S. Consul-General in Yokohama, made speeches. Having been called on by “princes . . . , princesses, the members of the cabinet and citizens and high officials, naval officers, ministers and consuls”¹⁵ earlier in the day, in addition to going to the imperial palace, the Grants retired before the Fourth of July party ended, but they would continually be in demand by Americans for the duration of their stay in Japan. Another foreigner

whom they saw fairly often was Sir John Pope Hennessy (1834–91), the Irish-born governor (1877–83) of the Crown Colony of Hong Kong, by whom they had been entertained earlier in their tour and who happened to be visiting Japan when they arrived. Grant and Hennessy shared views of China and Japan that were more sympathetic than most of their contemporary Westerners in East Asia, who were typified by the combative and condescending British Minister to Japan Sir Harry Parkes.

Grant met the emperor again on July 7, when the two of them reviewed the Japanese Army.¹⁶ Date (“Prince Dati” in Young’s report) was with Grant this time. Members of the foreign diplomatic corps were also invited, including Hennessy, but “the hero of Appamatox” alone was invited into the emperor’s tent, while all the others, in “bright, glowing uniforms,” were shown to a larger tent. A luncheon at the Shiba palace followed, with Grant seated next to the emperor. The party at table included Arisugawa no miya Taruhito, Sanjō Sanetomi, Bingham, and Hennessy. Wives were once again present. According to Young, “The Emperor conversed a great deal with General Grant through Mr. Yoshida, and also Governor Hennessy.”¹⁷ From the excerpts of that conversation recorded in *Meiji tennō ki*—Young omits details here—it appears to have been polite social chat, with the emperor asking questions about the Grants’ impressions of Europe, India, and China, for example.¹⁸ They do not seem to have discussed matters of state. The ex-President asked the emperor if another opportunity might be arranged for them to talk, and an appointment was made for August 10. That date came after Grant’s excursion to Nikkō, where he had had “numerous” talks with Itō and Saigō regarding the Ryukyu sovereignty issue.¹⁹

Grant’s informal intervention in the Ryukyu matter and the August 10 audience with the Meiji emperor, in which he volunteered policy advice to the monarch, were the most important accomplishments of his time in Japan. He raised what he labeled “the Loo Choo question” because Prince Gong and Li Hongzhang had entreated him to do so; he was at pains to take an impartial stance, and he tried to make clear to both the Qing officials and the Japanese that he was not acting on behalf of the United States.²⁰ The Japanese government responded quickly to the opportunity to have him as a neutral mediator, and sent Itō and Saigō to Nikkō to present the Japanese position in the dispute. At the time and still a year-and-a-half later, the U.S. government was wary of becoming involved, and the Secretary of State instructed Bingham to distance himself from the matter, not to take sides or initiative, unless U.S. “action in th[e] capacity [of intermediary] be unmistakably agreeable to, or be formally solicited by, both Japan and China.”²¹ The crux of the matter was that both Japan and China claimed sovereignty over the Ryukyus, based on the fact that Ryūkyū kings entered into tributary relations with the Chinese from the fifteenth century, and with the daimyo of Satsuma and the Tokugawa shogun from 1609. Immediately after the Restoration, the Meiji government had declared that the Ryukyus were within the administrative territory of Satsuma *han*; in 1872, the central government redefined the legal and administrative basis of the islands, organizing them as Ryūkyū *han* (the only *han*, after all other *han* had been abolished and replaced by prefectures in 1871),

with the king acting in the capacity of chief administrator; in April 1879, shortly before Grant arrived in China, the Meiji government did away with Ryūkyū *han* and made it a prefecture, renaming it Okinawa *ken*. The former king had kept up contacts with the Qing and had indicated his dissatisfaction with the post-Restoration disposition. The Chinese saw it in their interest to try to undo what the new authorities in Japan had done. Grant listened carefully to both sides of the argument, and adhered to a strict neutrality. To the emperor on August 10, he stated that “[a]s to the merits of the controversy, it would be hardly becoming in him to express an opinion.”²²

Impartiality did not equate to indifference or complete passivity, however. On August 18, Grant addressed a letter to Prince Gong and Iwakura Tomomi strongly urging them to work out “a settlement which will be alike honorable to both nations,” and to do so by themselves. “No foreign power should be brought into [your negotiations], nor should any foreigner, except it might be as an interpreter. . . . I can readily conceive that there are many foreigners, particularly those interested in trade, who do not look beyond the present and who would like to have the present condition remain, only grasping more from the East, and leaving the natives of the soil merely ‘hewers of wood and drawers of water’ for their benefit. I have so much sympathy for the good of their children if not for them, that I hope the two countries will disappoint them.”²³ He recommended that the two governments appoint commissioners to confer and negotiate a resolution of the dispute. He suggested to the Chinese that the Japanese were ready to make concessions if the Chinese would withdraw communications that had been “threatening in tone” or “offensive.” He also hinted discreetly that Japan was outpacing China in building the kind of national strength that was effective in international relations: “Japan is rapidly reaching a condition of independence and if it had now to be done over such treaties as exist could not be forced upon her. What Japan has done, and is now doing, China has the power—and I trust the inclination—to do.”²⁴ Grant concluded his letter with this sentiment: “If anything I may have said or done should have any effect in producing so desirable a result I shall feel that my visit has not been in vain, though made without any thought of taking any part in the affairs of the two countries.”

For the audience August 10, the emperor extended the unusual courtesy of going to Grant, rather than having Grant come to him at the imperial palace. Attended by Sanjō, Minister of the Imperial Household Tokudaiji Sanenori, and Chief Chamberlain Yamaguchi Masasada, and in everyday Western dress (*ryakufuku* 略服), the emperor met Grant at 2 p.m. in a teahouse on the grounds of the Hama Detached Palace, the location of the Enryōkan. Date and Yoshida were with the general, as were his son (who was a colonel in the U.S. Army) and Young (identified as a secretary). This time the emperor and the distinguished guest talked for two hours, touching on the Ryukyu matter, on the advantages and disadvantages of representative bodies in government, on state finance, on treaty revision, and on education. It is evident from the account in *Meiji tennō ki*, in which the two men’s remarks are quoted or paraphrased in literary-style Japanese, that the former president spoke frankly and

with the confidence of a deeply seasoned elder statesman.²⁵ He warned the emperor that the Western nations, “with one or two exceptions,” were likely to try to take advantage of the discord between Japan and China over the Ryukyus. Remarking that newspapers and some citizens in Japan were advocating establishment of a popularly elected assembly (*minsen giin* 民撰議院, in the Japanese version of the transcript), Grant observed that in the “civilized countries” (*bunmei no shokoku* 文明の諸国), there are political parties; although they play a role in protecting against reckless policy (*ransei* 濫政), they sometimes do harm by their efforts to overthrow governments. He expressed the typical American view that “[n]o government, monarchical or republican, is as strong as the government that rests on the people. . . . But,” he continued, “you must always remember that privileges like this can never be recalled. When you give suffrage and representation you give them forever. Consequently in establishing such [an] assembly too great caution cannot be taken. It is exceedingly dangerous to launch out too suddenly.”²⁶ Although he professed that he did not know whether it was time for Japan to set up a representative body or not, he seemed to be coming down on the side of delay. His opinion was used by Itō and others to justify gradualism in opening the political process, and as is well known, only in 1881 did the government decide to study the making of a constitution and the emperor promise the establishment of a national assembly (the opening of which was deferred until 1890). On the subject of state finance, Grant warned strongly against foreign borrowing. He did not mention that as President he had inherited a heavy burden of foreign debt incurred during the Civil War, and one of the few successes of his administration was to pay it off, nor did he say anything about the debt the young Japanese state had incurred in putting down the Seinan Rebellion of Saigō Takamori other than “I am glad . . . the foreign loan of Japan is not so large.” Instead he offered the negative examples of Egypt, Spain, and Turkey, where “[n]ational resources are all hypothecated [pledged as collateral] to such an extent as they now have nothing that they may call absolutely their own.” He recommended that the Meiji government repay its foreign debt ahead of schedule. On the Ryukyu question, he summarized the concerns of the Chinese, and the emperor responded that Itō and others were authorized to speak for the Japanese side. Grant linked the level of tariffs with the prospects for treaty revision, arguing that the Japanese duties were too low. He indicated that he favored the ending of the unequal treaties that had hindered Japan since the 1850s. Turning finally to education, he praised Japan, saying that the “system seems to be as good as any of the United States or of European countries.” It worried him slightly, however, that so many of the teachers were young, and he offered that “we find it necessary in America to have one or two old professors of long experience to oversee the younger and working teachers.” The audience concluded with the emperor and Sanjō thanking Grant and promising to give deliberate consideration to his advice.

Grant’s hosts scheduled many visits to schools, academies, and colleges, providing him with the background to comment on the state of Japanese education in the August 10 meeting. He also was taken to see new enterprises, such as those in Shizuoka

and Kanagawa that were touched on earlier. In the realm of culture, two events stand out. Iwakura Tomomi hosted a noh performance at his own residence for the Grants, with a program consisting of *Mochizuki*, *Tsuchigumo*, and the kyōgen *Tsurigitsune*. The general, commonly thought of as a plain man not very interested in high culture, greatly enjoyed the noh. Keene quotes him as encouraging Iwakura to “treasure it and preserve it” in the face of changing times when it might easily “lose its dignity and fall into a decline.”²⁷ The night before they left for Nikkō, the Grants were amused at the theater, attending a kabuki play at the Shintomiza. The play (*Gosan-nen Ōshū gunki* 後三年奥州軍記) was a dramatization of Grant’s own military victories, but it set the scene in eleventh-century Japan, and the general was depicted as Minamoto no Yoshiie, who quelled a rebellion in the Northeast.²⁸

The popular writer Kanagaki Robun 仮名垣魯文 worked a chapter on the play into the biography of Grant that he published serially in nine fascicles during and after the visit, and the illustrator Kobayashi Eitaku 小林永濯 executed several scenes from the Shintomiza production, depicting not only battle scenes from the play, but also a chorus line of geisha dressed in kimono printed with the stars and stripes of the American flag. Robun’s book, *Amerika saki no daitōryō Gurando-shi den yamato bunshō* 米国先大統領格蘭氏伝倭文章 (Biography of Former President of the United States Grand, Written in Japanese) is interesting in its own right as an example of popular images of the celebrated guest. Much of the text—and many of Eitaku’s illustrations—is devoted to Grant’s military exploits and successes, while his presidency is treated in perfunctory fashion, and many more pages are given to the post-presidential grand tour than to the two terms of his administration.²⁹



Fig. 2. Kobayashi Eitaku’s rendition of the dancers at the Shintomiza.

The last big public event of Grant's stay was a festival in Ueno Park on August 25. Shibusawa and Fukuchi were the principals in the planning again, and they were able to prevail upon the emperor to make a personal appearance. For their part, when they arrived in the park, General and Mrs. Grant planted trees. Military bands played, fireworks were set off, and once again Grant was favored by a special audience with the emperor, who afterwards received the foreign diplomats, on behalf of whom Sir Harry Parkes made some remarks, and naval officers.³⁰ Returning to their residence after the event, the Grants rode in one of the emperor's carriages, and their progress through gaily decorated streets was a hero's parade observed by throngs of citizens.³¹

In his final week in Tokyo, the general received "constant visits" from members of the cabinet, especially Iwakura, who wished to stress again Japan's concerns about the Ryukyu matter. Farewell dinners were hosted by Date Munenari, Yoshida Kiyonari, Sanjō Sanetomi, Terashima Munenori (the foreign minister), and Mori Arinori (deputy foreign minister and former minister to the United States). Demonstrating Japan's reception of Western material culture in the informal diplomacy of the table, Date offered a menu of Western and Japanese cuisine with "a dish of baked pork and beans which would have done honor to Boston" as a special item, and Sanjō and Terashima entertained in a totally Parisian style. Only Yoshida served Japanese food in the native fashion, dressing in *wafuku* and seating his guests on *zabuton* in a tatami room.³² Grant saw prominent Americans, as well, in his last days in Tokyo. The only invitation he accepted from a Westerner was for a luncheon with the American journalist Edward H. House. Editor of the English-language weekly *Tokio Times* and a friend of John Russell Young from days when both men worked for the *New York Tribune*, House was so sympathetic to the new Japanese state that he was viewed with suspicion by many other resident Westerners. The former president, however, found his views highly congenial and invented a polite excuse to turn down an invitation from Sir Harry Parkes in order to visit House's home.³³

General Grant took leave of the emperor in a final audience on August 30. He regarded the occasion as so significant as to require a change from his usual practice of speaking extemporaneously. From a text he had prepared in advance, he read an expression of thanks, and continued,

It affords great satisfaction to say that during all this stay and all my visiting I have not witnessed one discourtesy toward myself nor a single unpleasant sight. Everywhere there seems to be the greatest contentment among the people; and while no signs of great individual wealth exist no absolute poverty is visible. This is in striking and pleasing contrast with almost every other country I have visited. I leave Japan greatly impressed with the possibilities and probabilities of her future. She has a fertile soil, one-half of it not yet cultivated to man's use, great undeveloped mineral resources, numerous and fine harbors, an extensive seacoast abounding in fish of an almost endless variety, and, above all, an industrious, ingenious,

contented and frugal population. With all these nothing is wanted to insure great progress except wise direction by the government, peace at home and abroad and non-interference in the internal and domestic affairs of the country by the outside nations. It is the sincere desire of your guest to see Japan realize all possible strength and greatness, to see her as independent of foreign rule or dictation as any Western nation now is, and to see affairs so directed by her as to command the respect of the civilized world. In saying this I believe I reflect the sentiments of the great majority of my countrymen. I now take my leave without expectation of ever again having the opportunity of visiting Japan, but with the assurance that pleasant recollections of my present visit will not vanish while my life lasts. That your Majesty may long reign over a prosperous and contented people and enjoy every blessing is my sincere prayer.³⁴

The emperor responded with a similarly gracious statement, remarking to Grant that his visit had “enabled us to form very pleasant personal acquaintance with each other, [and] will facilitate and strengthen the friendly relations that have happily existed between the two countries.” Bingham, also in attendance, thanked the emperor and the Japanese people for their hospitality to “our illustrious citizen.” He said he spoke for the current president and the American people, and his careful wording signaled once more that the former president was a private citizen, not an official representative, of the United States.

The Grants departed from Yokohama on September 3 aboard the Pacific Mail Steamer *City of Tokio*—a commercial vessel, not a ship of the U. S. Navy—bound for San Francisco. Their time in Japan could hardly have been more satisfying, either for themselves or for their hosts.

Crown Prince Nicholas Alexandrovich in Japan

Crown Prince Nicholas reached Nagasaki on April 27, 1891, aboard a frigate, the *Pamiat Azova*, at the head of a squadron of four Russian Navy ships. Three other vessels of the tsar’s navy rendezvoused with the *Pamiat Azova* just before entering the harbor.³⁵ Witnesses in Nagasaki thus saw a greater demonstration of might by the Russian Navy for Nicholas’s arrival than the Americans had put on for Grant. It was Holy Week, according to the Russian Orthodox calendar, and in observance of religious proprieties, Nicholas decided to postpone formal ceremonies of landing. He met Arisugawa no miya Takehito 有栖川宮威仁, whom the emperor had appointed as Nicholas’s principal host, aboard ship on the 28th, but he did not officially land for several days.

The Japanese had decided as soon as they learned of the plan for Nicholas to visit that he should be treated as a state guest and shown especial courtesy as the heir of the Romanov dynasty.³⁶ The Japanese government would pay the bills, then, except for purchases of souvenirs. Nine men were named as a reception committee (*seppan’in* 接伴員), and Arisugawa was assigned to be the principal counterpart

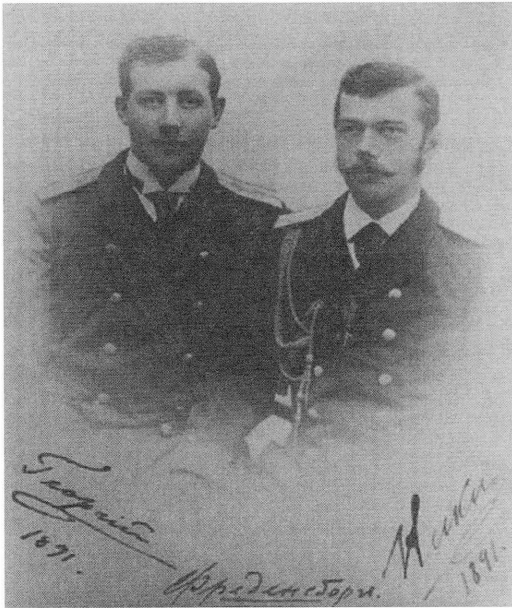


Fig. 3. Crown Prince Nicholas (right) and Prince George.

partly because of his high birth status (descendants of Emperor Gosai 後西天皇 [r. 1654–63], Arisugawa men had the title prince [*shinnō* 親王]), and partly because he had visited Russia two years earlier during a European tour that took him also to England, France, Germany, and Italy.³⁷ He was also a good English speaker, having honed his skill while serving a year as a naval cadet on the HMS *Iron Duke* and spending three-and-a-half years as a student at the English naval war college at Greenwich. English was one of several languages in which Crown Prince Nicholas was quite fluent, and it was frequently in use during his time in Japan.

Although he deferred his official landing until May 4, Nicholas actually left the ship and explored the town of Nagasaki several times before that. He shopped for souvenirs, something that he would do with considerable energy and an open, seemingly bottomless, purse everywhere he went in Japan. With his cousin Prince George (1869–1957) of Greece, who had accompanied him on this tour since the party was in Greece, and some of the young officers from his squadron, he visited Inasa, the village where Russian navy officers stayed when on station in Nagasaki, and where there were some Russian graves in the Goshinji 悟真寺 temple. The young Russians spent two evenings in a restaurant in Inasa called the Volka, where the proprietor, Matsu or Omatsu, and some young women kept them entertained; one local historian names the geisha who served Nicholas and George as Kikuyakko 菊奴 and Oei お栄.³⁸ At sea between China and Japan, Nicholas had read Pierre Loti's novel *Madame Chrysanthème*, and seems to have derived some romantic notions of Japan and especially Japanese women from it. He also was taken with the report that Loti had been tattooed in Japan, and he arranged to have an artist visit his ship and tattoo a dragon on his own right arm.

The day after Easter, May 4, Nicholas officially took his first steps on Japanese soil. Prince Arisugawa escorted him, and Governor Kusaka Yoshio 日下義雄 of Nagasaki hosted a lavish banquet at which only Japanese cuisine was served.³⁹ Special bamboo arches had been erected at the wharves, and although rain caused cancellation of fireworks and demonstrations of kiteflying, Nicholas and his party were taken to Suwa temple, “adjoining the park where twelve years before General and Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant had planted a banyan tree.”⁴⁰ The crown prince spent one more day



Fig. 4. Nicholas in a jinrikisha in Nagasaki.

in Nagasaki, calling on the Russian consul and inspecting the Russian infirmary there. Then he and his entourage sailed to Kagoshima.

Kagoshima interested Nicholas because of its reputation, probably well deserved, as a bastion of conservative values. Shimazu Tadayoshi 島津忠義, the last daimyo of the Satsuma domain, was his host. When they arrived at the Shimazu residence on May 6, Tadayoshi took them to a balcony, and from there they watched, to Nicholas's delight, as more than two hundred former retainers of the Shimazu family entered the courtyard in full armor. At the head of this parade was Tadayoshi's six-year old son. The former samurai performed warrior dances (*bushi odori* 武士踊り) and put on a demonstration of martial skills, including mounted archery. All this was followed by another Japanese banquet.⁴¹ Tadayoshi, like his father Hisamitsu 久光, had supported the Restoration movement, but then had become disaffected with the new regime, and was well known for stubborn adherence to old ways. The Russians' visit to him stoked one of the wildest rumors to circulate in mid-Meiji times. Saigō Takamori, it was said, had not died in the Seinan Rebellion of 1877, but had escaped to Siberia, and he had returned to his native Kagoshima on the ship that brought the crown prince. A contemporary woodblock print depicts this scenario of the arrival: on the dock, with the *Asova* at anchor behind them, Saigō, in a full dress uniform, stands next to Nicholas, who is resplendent in a red uniform, and Saigō is raising his helmet in greeting to two unidentified officers; on the other side of the tsarevich are three of Saigō's trusted lieutenants (who also died in the Seinan War, according to virtually

all accounts). A few newspapers printed the rumor, as well, and at least some people were ready to believe it was true.

There were some Russian Orthodox clergy in Kyushu, and Nicholas met them also.

After two days in Kagoshima, Nicholas's flotilla moved on, pushing their prows through the Inland Sea and landing in Kobe on May 9. Prince Arisugawa escorted Nicholas to a harborside pavilion specially built for his arrival, where other Japanese officials, headed by Hyōgo Prefectural Governor Hayashi Tadasu 林董 and all in formal dress, joined them. Hayashi was a former bakufu retainer who had been sent to England to study before the Restoration, and he would later become foreign minister; after treating the Russian party to light refreshments of *kasutera* and Kirin Beer that had been donated by local businessmen, he acted as guide during the couple of hours that they spent in Kobe before boarding a train for Kyoto.⁴²

It was early evening when Nicholas and his entourage got to Kyoto. At the station there was a ceremony of greeting at which local officials and other notables joined the members of the imperially-appointed reception committee in greeting the guests. Then Nicholas was shown to the Tokiwa Hotel, on the site of today's Kyoto Okura Hotel, where the crown prince asked to be booked into a Japanese-style room, rather than the new Western-style room that had been readied for him. After a banquet, the visitors were taken outdoors to see a most unusual sight. The organizers of Kyoto's reception had arranged for lighting of fires on five mountaintops—two fires that formed the shapes of the Chinese character *dai* 大, one that formed a ship, another the character *myō* 妙, and another a *torii* 鳥居. Traditionally lit on the last night of the *bon* festival (and only then—August 16 by the Gregorian calendar), these are the *gozan okuribi* 五山送り火, the purpose of which is to show the spirits of the dead the way back to the other world. In 1891, they were lit as a diversion for European royalty. After seeing the fires, Nicholas, George, and their party went off to the Gion district to see Kyoto *geiko* dance, staying out until two in the morning.⁴³

Off to a late start on May 10, the guests nevertheless put in a full day of sight-seeing and shopping. They were shown the Gosho, Nijō Castle, and the two main Jōdo Shin temples, Higashi Honganji and Nishi Honganji. Kyoto Governor Kitagaki Kunimichi 北垣国道 (1836–1916) took them to an exhibit of Kyoto arts and crafts, and the two princes spent the then-fabulous sum of 10,000 yen on items that pleased them. Nicholas especially liked the weaving of Nishijin craftsman Kawashima Jinbei II 二代目川島甚兵衛, and not only did he purchase some things on the spot, but he began a long-term patronage relationship with Jinbei. Stopping at the residence of an old aristocratic family, the Russian party watched some men playing *kemari* 蹴鞠, the footbag (hackey sack) game that was popular in ancient times. At Nishi Honganji, the priests served them tea in the Hiunkaku pavilion, a famous three-story structure originally built by Toyotomi Hideyoshi at his Jurakudai residence in the late sixteenth century and later moved; in his diary, the crown prince described the Hiunkaku as “the priest's home.” The attractions of Gion pulled the visitors back for a second

night. About that, Nicholas's diary tells that his cousin George had a geisha in the prime of her youth sing to them and that Navy Captain Dubasov, who had come up from Kobe, was very happy with the occasion, but little more. Again Nicholas's sense of time was out of synch with that of his observers, or perhaps his group made another stop on the way back to their lodgings—he wrote that they parted from the geisha at 11:30, while the Kyoto prefectural record says that it was 2 a.m. when the young men returned to the Tokiwa Hotel.⁴⁴

The next day, May 11, was fateful. The princes were carried by jinrikisha to Ōtsu, on the shore of Lake Biwa ten kilometers east of Kyoto. Schoolchildren, soldiers from the garrison in Ōtsu, and curious ordinary citizens lined the route, expressing welcome. By 9:30 the Russian party arrived at Miidera 三井寺, or Onjōji 園城寺, the big Tendai temple that overlooks the lake, where the chief abbot displayed some treasures of Buddhist art for them. From the temple they went down to the lake and took a steamboat to Karasaki 唐崎 to see the shrine there. Fireworks were launched, even though it was daytime, and the boat was decorated with the flags of Russia, Greece, and Japan. Returning to Ōtsu, Nicholas's group was given a luncheon in the hall of the prefectural assembly by Governor Oki Morikata 沖守固 (1841–1912). To this point in the crown prince's tour of Japan, it can be said that everything went to the satisfaction of both guests and hosts. That changed in an instant. After lunch, the guests got back into their jinrikishas and left the prefectural office building. Moving single-file down a narrow street, they had gone no further than five hundred meters when Tsuda Sanzō, a policeman who had been assigned to guard duty, dashed after Nicholas as he passed and struck at him with a saber. The tsarevich dodged, but the blade cut his scalp fairly deeply in two places above his right ear and eyebrow. Nicholas jumped from his jinrikisha and ran forward. His attacker pursued him but was tackled by one of the jinrikisha men. Prince George, who had been right behind Nicholas, leaped from his jinrikisha and struck at the assailant with a bamboo cane that he had purchased that day; another of the jinrikisha men grabbed the saber and cut the attacker on the back of his head and upper spine. The would-be assassin was arrested on the spot.

Nicholas survived. In fact, he was not seriously injured. That was not immediately evident, however. He received first aid from a merchant on the scene, and then was taken back to the prefectural capitol to be rebandaged and to rest. A couple of hours later a specially arranged train took him back to Kyoto. Ten minutes after the attack, Prince Takehito had sent a telegram to Tokyo informing the emperor and government of the incident, saying that Nicholas's wounds were severe (*jūshō* 重傷, as indeed Takehito feared, for there had been a lot of blood). Shortly thereafter Takehito wired the emperor a second time, requesting that he come to Kyoto to attend upon the crown prince. Several members of the government and medical men left Tokyo almost immediately for Kyoto, and a train was set up for the emperor, with a departure time of 6:30 the following morning. Safely back at the Tokiwa Hotel that evening, Nicholas was treated by Russian Navy doctors who had rushed up from

Kobe; they stitched his cuts and changed the dressings. Late that night the emperor sent telegrams to both Nicholas in Kyoto and Tsar Alexander III in St. Petersburg, and the empress sent a message to Nicholas's mother, Tsarina Maria, expressing concern and deep regret about the event.⁴⁵

On May 12, the crown prince wrote: "Tuesday. I slept well for nine-and-a-half hours. In fine spirits, I sat in my room in kimono, hardly moving at all. The Japanese room is very much to my liking. When you open the *shōji* and the doors, fresh air quickly fills the room. From here and there all over Japan, from the places I have visited and from places I have yet to visit, messages have been coming in expressing concern about my health after yesterday's deplorable incident. From shrines and schools, and from citizens' organizations and merchants, condolence gifts have been delivered to me by way of the garden. I have received countless telegrams asking after my condition. At 10:00 in the evening, the emperor himself, accompanied by two imperial princes, arrived from Tokyo."⁴⁶ This diary entry gives no hint of serious concern about his physical condition or prospects for recovery, nor does it suggest any generalized anger against the Japanese. The Russian doctors that day refused the request of the Japanese doctors sent by the emperor to examine the crown prince, saying that there was nothing unusual about the wounds and that they did not want to have the bandages removed.⁴⁷

Even when it started to become apparent that Nicholas was not seriously hurt, the emperor, his government, and many ordinary Japanese were mortified. There was a deep sense of shame that the authorities had failed to provide security for such an important guest. This shame was the more intense because the Russian Minister to Japan, Dmitri Shevich, had worried about Nicholas's safety from the time the visit was in the planning stage. Shevich had discussed his concerns with Japanese Foreign Minister Aoki Shūzō and had elicited promises that legal steps would be taken to deter anyone who might contemplate doing harm to the crown prince—Aoki undertook to see to insertion of a provision in the law that would make the same penalties applicable to convicted offenders against foreign royalty as to those who offended against the Japanese emperor (but in the event, Aoki did not perform on his undertaking).⁴⁸ In addition, Japanese national and subnational administrators had meticulously planned for security, and Ōtsu demonstrated their planning, as both regular police and special guards were placed at close intervals along the route the crown prince would travel. That a policeman might act in complete violation of his duties, as Tsuda Sanzō did, was an unforeseen possibility, however.⁴⁹

Shevich's concerns were not completely without grounds. Just six months before Nicholas arrived in Japan, on the day of opening of the first session of the Diet, rowdy young men had thrown stones at the Russian mission in Tokyo. The youths took offense when the wives of the minister and his diplomatic colleagues (not all of them Russian) had gathered on the balcony to watch as the emperor rode by on his way to the event. The troublemakers took offense that the Western women were looking down at their sovereign.⁵⁰ Other anti-foreign incidents had also occurred over

the previous year, as the German historian and Tokyo Imperial University Professor Ludwig Riess and the wife of the British Minister to Japan, Mary Fraser, detailed in their reminiscences. There was tension in the background of the tsarevich's visit, then, although his hosts were honored and pleased to receive him.

On one level, the personal diplomacy of royalty became the main story in the few days following Tsuda Sanzō's attack. The emperor called on Nicholas at the Tokiwa the morning of the 13th; Prince George of Greece greeted him and escorted him into Nicholas's room.⁵¹ The emperor began by saying how pleased he had been that Nicholas had come to Japan and been welcomed as a state guest, and he had been looking forward to receiving the crown prince in Tokyo. He regretted to the utmost degree that Nicholas had suffered the attack in Ōtsu, he went on, and he was certain that the tsar and tsarina had felt deep distress when they got the news of what had happened. He prayed that the crown prince would speedily make a full recovery, he said, and he hoped that Nicholas would go on to enjoy the sights of Tokyo and other towns and of the Japanese landscape. Only slightly indirectly, the emperor expressed what his government most fervently wished for: that the tour would go on, that Nicholas would have a good time, and that the relations between Japan and Russia would be unaffected by what had happened.

Nicholas responded graciously. He thanked the emperor for the welcome he had received and praised the Japanese people for their goodness. "Unpredictably, the day before yesterday, I suffered a light wound at the hand of a madman," he said, "but the feelings of gratitude that I have for the your kindness and that of the people of your country in general have not changed at all from those I had before I was wounded." Nicholas would repeat these sentiments again before he left Japan, although he would not be able, as it turned out, to satisfy the emperor by continuing his tour as originally planned. Tsar Alexander ordered his son back to the *Pamiat Azova*.

Upon learning that the crown prince would leave Kyoto, Meiji offered him a ride on his own train, and accompanied him to Kobe. This may not have been entirely a spontaneous gesture of imperial hospitality. From the documentary archive of Itō Hirobumi, Osatake Takeshi quotes an account of Shevich's meeting with Aoki at the Tokiwa, saying that the Russian envoy told the foreign minister that Nicholas's mother was extremely disturbed by what had happened and insisted that he return to the ship at once. Nicholas had reacted by expressing his own wish to continue on to Tokyo and the other sites he had wanted to see, Shevich said, but an order from home had to be taken seriously. Worried about his prince's safety on the short journey, in tears, Shevich requested that the emperor ride with Nicholas from Kyoto to the dock in Kobe.⁵²

By letter from the *Pamiat Azova* on May 16, Nicholas informed the emperor that the tsar had ordered that the Russian ships depart for Vladivostok on the 19th.⁵³ Reluctant as he was to see the crown prince go, Meiji extended one final invitation, asking Nicholas to join him for a farewell luncheon in Kobe. Nicholas declined on grounds that his doctors advised against his leaving the ship, but at the same time he reversed

the invitation, offering to be the emperor's host at a luncheon on board the ship on the 18th. To the distress of his government, who immediately recalled how the Qing had taken the Korean regent (*taewŏn'gun*) captive and packed him off to China on a ship at a critical moment in 1882, Meiji accepted. He dismissed his advisers' worries by telling them that Russia was a civilized country. The luncheon aboard the *Pamiat Azova* was a success. Meiji went with Arisugawa no miya Taruhito and Kitashirakawa no miya Yoshihisa 北白川宮能久親王. Minister Shevich, who was present, later said that he had never seen the emperor talk and laugh so loudly. When the emperor apologized for what happened at Ōtsu, Nicholas said once again that there were madmen in every country and moreover "the wounds are very light; please do not worry yourself about it."⁵⁴ The day of this luncheon was Nicholas' twenty-third birthday. At noon, before the emperor's party came aboard ship, Russian, Japanese, and other warships in the harbor fired their cannons in salute. Local notables including the mayor and city council came up alongside the *Pamiat Azova* on boats to offer their congratulations, and the harborside was decorated with countless flags. Many Japanese sent gifts, adding to the mountain that had been piling up since the Ōtsu attack. In the evening there were fireworks.⁵⁵

As Nicholas was leaving Japan, he wrote to his mother in the same forgiving spirit as his words to the emperor, but with a light touch: "Strange to say I like Japan just as much as before, and the incident on April 29 [old style calendar date] left no hard feelings; I'm just not very fond of police uniforms anymore!"⁵⁶

The sense of national crisis that gripped Japan's leaders and many of its people did not dissipate overnight, and there was a lot of effort expended in formal diplomacy between the officials of both countries, as well as informal diplomacy and relationship-cultivation between the two imperial families. Meiji proposed to send Prince Takehito to St. Petersburg to apologize, but the Russians made it clear that this would not be necessary.⁵⁷

The story of the trial of Tsuda Sanzō, Nicholas's assailant, has often been told, and I will not rehearse it in detail here.⁵⁸ It is, as I mentioned earlier, a very important event in modern Japanese legal history. Prime Minister Matsukata Masayoshi and virtually everyone else in his government wanted to have a speedy trial and a verdict of guilty, followed by prompt execution. This might placate the tsar and his government, they thought. Shevich made very clear to Foreign Minister Aoki that he wanted to see Tsuda receive capital punishment, and there was little to indicate that the Russian state might be satisfied with a lesser punishment. Matsukata called the chief judge of the Daishin'in, Japan's supreme court, Kojima Korekata 児島惟謙 into a meeting and put pressure on him to interpret the law so as to bring about swift execution. The government argued that the applicable law was article 116 of the Criminal Code, which provided for the death penalty for persons convicted of crimes that harmed the emperor or members of the imperial household (*kōshitsuzai* 皇室罪). As chief judge, Kojima himself would not be one of the trial judges, but it was he who selected those judges. He resisted the government's reasoning, taking

the position that the language of article 116—the term *kōshitsu*—clearly applied only to the Japanese emperor and imperial family. It could not be understood to include foreign royalty, as Matsukata, Minister of Justice Yamada Akiyoshi 山田顕義, and others maintained. Kojima, a number of leading professors of law, and much of the legal community held that for crimes against foreign royalty as for crimes against ordinary Japanese subjects, the only applicable law was to be found in article 292 of the Japanese Criminal Code; for attempted homicide the maximum penalty that could be meted out was life imprisonment. Yamada and Home Minister Saigō Tsugumichi based themselves in the Kansai for the duration of Tsuda's trial, which was conducted in Ōtsu, and they continued to lobby Kojima and the trial judges. In the end the court resisted the political pressure of the government and ruled that Article 116 was not the relevant law. After a speedy trial that commenced on May 24, it sentenced Tsuda to “imprisonment without term” (*muki tokei* 無期徒刑) on May 27. Less than four months later, he died in a Hokkaido prison of pneumonia.

To the prosecutors who questioned him before and during his trial, Tsuda gave an explanation of his motives. Several things had been troubling him, among these the rumors that Saigō Takamori was still alive, worries he had about Russia's might and its intentions regarding regional hegemony and dominance of Japan, and a feeling he got while on duty the morning of May 11 in Ōtsu that Nicholas and George were acting disrespectfully when they passed a monument to soldiers who had died fighting against Saigō's rebels. He seems to have been a confused man, but he struck at a time when others, too, were carrying out antforeign acts, and fear of Russia was in the air.

Japanese sent thousands of messages and gifts to the crown prince in the days between the assassination attempt and the sailing of the *Pamiat Azova*. This outpouring of sympathy was the response to the detailed reports in newspapers.⁵⁹ Such popular expressions of concern and tokens of friendship can also be categorized as a variety of informal diplomacy. Undoubtedly the most dramatic gesture of any Japanese citizen was the suicide of Hatakeyama Yūko, who slit her own throat in front of the Kyoto prefectural office the evening of May 20. A twenty-seven-year-old seamstress from Chiba prefecture, Hatakeyama had wanted to come to Kyoto and carry out her act sooner, but had been unable to make arrangements and had arrived on the very day that the crown prince's flotilla departed from Kobe. On her person when she died were two letters, one addressed to the officials of Russia, the other to the Japanese government, offering her “life as a Japanese” (*kokujin no mi* 国人の身) in atonement for what had happened; a copy of the *Yomiuri shinbun* was also among her effects, and it was subsequently learned that she had been an avid follower of the national news.⁶⁰ Hatakeyama's suicide evoked admiration from many Japanese and even some foreigners, Lafcadio Hearn most prominent among them, but it is not clear that Nicholas himself ever heard about it.⁶¹

Of other private acts, the Russians must have been aware. On May 11, The Tokyo Rice Exchange, the Stock Exchange, many schools, and major theaters and

places of amusement closed as a sign of respect. Some schools remained closed for two more days, and wholesale wine-merchants in Tokyo shut down from May 13 to 15.⁶² If Nicholas personally learned of these closings, it would have been consistent with his attitude toward the Japanese people as expressed in his conversations with the emperor for him to have been grateful.

The Two Visits Compared

The 1879 visit of General Grant was a splendid success, satisfying both guests and hosts in almost all respects. The single notable disappointment was that Grant's party could not tour the Kansai as planned because of the cholera outbreak there. If the general's mediation did not bring a quick resolution to the dispute between the Qing and Japan over the Ryukyu matter, at least it served the useful purpose of lowering temperatures somewhat and getting the two sides to moderate their rhetoric. Almost surely Fukuchi Gen'ichirō's greeting on July 3 and the emperor's words of farewell on August 30 were representative of the feelings of their countrymen; they were honored by the presence of the world-famous U.S. leader and by his obvious interest in and sympathy for Japan.

Crown Prince Nicholas' time in Japan in 1891 began extremely well. Everything continued to be positive until May 11, when Tsuda Sanzō transformed the visit into a failure. The planned high point of the tour, from the point of view of the Japanese government and the emperor, was to have been the visit to Tokyo, and after Tsuda's attack, the hosts made extraordinary efforts to persuade the Russians that Nicholas would be safe if he stayed in Japan and completed his original itinerary. Minister Shevich, the tsar, and the tsarina, however, were unpersuaded. Their concerns about security led to termination of the trip. Among Japanese the sense of shame at the failure to protect the royal guest of the state was accompanied by fear of retaliation, and despite Nicholas' own cheerful reassurances that he was all right and harbored no bad feelings, relations between the governments remained tense for some months.

Daytimes and early evenings Nicholas spent in Japan were heavily scheduled with sightseeing and shopping—largely in the company of members of the Japanese nobility, as his hosts were exquisitely sensitive to status and were eager to establish parallels (and parity) with European aristocrats and their traditions. He seems to have been unfailingly polite and on guard against offending the Japanese. Tsuda Sanzō may or may not have witnessed an instance when Nicholas did not show respect in a place where he should have, although it seems doubtful he could have known the import of the war monument at Miidera.

Nicholas' father had sent him on a *Bildungsreise*, an educational tour, and he did appear to be curious and attentive, and to learn a good deal. As I remarked at the beginning of this chapter, he focused primarily on cultural and religious matters, in contrast with General Grant's more worldly orientation toward government and the economy. When he had a chance, in Nagasaki and in Kyoto, the young crown

prince also indulged a lively interest in nightlife. If we take Nicholas at his word, as expressed in his diary and in all the reports of his conversations with his hosts, he wanted to remain in Japan in May 1891, and regretted having to leave early. What he took home from Japan, besides a scar and a great many material objects that had captured his fancy and would continue to give him pleasure, were mostly positive impressions. Yet for all the cordiality that had been shown on both sides, and despite the warm face-to-face exchanges that Nicholas had with the Meiji Emperor, relations between their two states would sour in their lifetimes, and their personal relationship would make no difference.

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NOTES

1 As the diplomatic historian Payson Jackson Treat put it, “Although a private citizen, without rank or station, [General Grant] had been received with distinguished honors by the governments and peoples of Europe, but nowhere did he receive greater marks of esteem than in Japan” (Treat 1921, p. 107).

2 A direct connection between the assassination attempt and Tsar Nicholas II’s feelings and motives at the time of the Russo-Japanese War has been drawn by many writers. Even Donald Keene, in his biography of the Meiji emperor, seems inclined to believe that there was a link; he quotes the memoirs of Count Sergei Witte in support of this (“It seems to me that the attack left the Tsesarevich with an attitude of hostility toward and contempt for Japan and the Japanese, as can be seen from official reports in which he refers to the Japanese as ‘macaques’”) (Keene 2002, p. 450). Tsunehiro Eiichi repeats the rumor of a connection, and quotes another passage of Witte’s memoirs attributing the comment about Japanese being “monkeys” (*saru* 猿 in Tsunehiro’s translation) to the testimony of Russian Army Minister Kuropatkin (Tsunehiro 2004, p. 256). Schimmelpenninck van der Oye expresses doubt about the reliability of Witte’s memoirs, however, remarking that the former finance minister cast his account in terms favorable to his own interest, and should be read with caution (Schimmelpenninck van der Oye 2001, esp. chapter 4, “*Pénétration Pacifique: Sergei Witte*”). Ian Nish writes only two sentences about the Ōtsu incident, concluding, “The exact cause is still unclear; and the consequence of this incident for Nicholas’s later judgements is equally unclear” (Nish 1985, p. 4).

3 For reasons of space and time, I will not go deeply into the question of what the two distinguished visitors ate. This was of great interest to John Russell Young, however, and he comments on the food on a number of occasions, most notably in writing in detail of the banquet in Nagasaki the first night the Grant party was there. Culinary history has recently captured some attention, and Kuroiwa Hisako has written about the luncheon banquet on May 19, 1891, when Nicholas entertained the emperor aboard the *Pamiat Azova* (Kuroiwa 2007).

4 Young 1879, vol. 2, p. 517.

5 The Enryōkan had been hastily constructed in 1869 especially to house the Duke of Edinburgh, the first member of a foreign royal family to visit Japan. For some years afterward, it was used as a guest residence for official visitors. Steele 2003, p. 121.

6 Young 1879, vol. 2, p. 558.

7 See Terashima Munenori’s proposal to Sanjō Sanetomi and Sanjō’s approval, Gaimushō 1949, vol. 12, p. 128, cited also by Chang 1969, p. 375.

8 When the new system of nobility was implemented in 1884, Date was made a count

(*hakushaku* 伯爵); in recognition of his meritorious service at the time of the Restoration, he was raised to the rank of marquis (*kōshaku* 侯爵) in 1891.

9 Born a Satsuma samurai and chosen for study abroad in 1864, Yoshida was Japan's Minister Plenipotentiary in Washington from 1874 to 1881. He had studied political economy, then focused on banking and insurance, at King's College. After returning to Japan in 1870, he entered the Ministry of Finance and served as assistant to Ministers Ōkubo Toshimichi, Ōkuma Shigenobu, and Inoue Kaoru, successively. He returned from Washington to take a post in the Foreign Ministry, then became Vice-Minister of Commerce and Industry, then a counselor of the Genrōin, and finally, in 1888, a member of the Privy Council. He received the title of viscount (*shishaku* 子爵) in 1887.

10 The text of Fukuchi's speech was published in the July 4 edition of the *Tōkyō nichinichi shinbun* (see SSMHS 1982a, p. 74). An English translation appears in Remlap 1879, pp. 269–270. This greeting was intended to be cordial, even flattering, and its phrases should be read with that in mind, but it is probable that Fukuchi reflected the view of many Japanese when he said, "It was during the happy times of your Presidency that the two countries became more closely acquainted and connected, and almost every improvement that has been made in our country may be traced to the example and lessons received from yours. . . . The citizens of Tokio consider it a great honor that they have been afforded the opportunity of receiving you as their guest."

11 Remlap 1879, p. 276.

12 In her diary, Clara Whitney, an American girl in Tokyo who was nineteen at the time of Grant's visit, wrote a vivid account of a number of the social occasions, and named many of the illustrious guests. Whitney 1979, esp. pp. 251–252, 255–261.

13 Bingham was a former member of Congress, a Republican like Grant, elected eight times to the House of Representatives from Ohio. Following Bingham's final term in the House, Grant appointed him Minister to Japan, and he occupied that post for twelve years. A lawyer before he became a politician, he had been named judge advocate of the Union Army by Abraham Lincoln; after President Lincoln's assassination, Bingham was appointed one of three judges in the trial of accused co-conspirators of the assassin John Wilkes Booth. In Tokyo he was often called Judge Bingham by the Grant party and other Americans.

14 The account of Young 1879, vol. 2, pp. 523–531 is more detailed than that in *Meiji tennō-ki*, vol. 4. Young (1840–1899) does not specifically note that he was one of the attendants on Grant, but he writes of "our party" and "our group" in his account of this audience. Other sources report that Young was introduced to the emperor not as a journalist—the man who had been assigned by the New York Herald to go with Grant on this journey and send back dispatches—but as the general's secretary. (*Meiji tennō ki*, vol. 4, p. 720, without mentioning a name, records that a secretary (*shoki* 書記) accompanied Grant in the August 10 interview.) Dennett 1924 makes clear that Grant and Young developed a close relationship in the course of the trip, and it was Grant's recommendation that resulted in Young's being appointed U.S. Minister to China in 1882.

15 Young 1879, vol. 2, p. 531, is the source of this list.

16 Keene 2002, p. 313, remarks that the emperor "may have supposed (not knowing that Grant detested such military reviews) that this would be of particular interest to his guest."

17 Young 1879, vol. 2, p. 534.

18 *Meiji tennō ki*, vol. 4, pp. 704, 719.

19 *Meiji tennō ki*, vol. 4, p. 720.

20 “The matter was one about which he would rather not have troubled himself,” he told the emperor on August 10, “as it belonged to diplomacy and governments, and he was not a diplomatist and not in government.” Young 1879, vol. 2, p. 545.

21 Secretary of State W. M. Evarts to John A. Bingham, September 1879, U.S. State Department correspondence, No. 465, quoted by Treat 1932, vol. 2, p. 100. “The Government of the United States, fearing that the good offices of the United States were being accepted by the two powers under a misapprehension that General Grant in some way officially represented the United States, instructed its representatives to make clear that he had acted in an entirely personal capacity” (Dennett 1922a, p. 13, citing Foreign Relations, 1881, p. 243, Apr. 4, 1881, Blaine to Angell, a communication cited also by Treat 1932).

22 Young 1879, vol. 2, p. 545.

23 The full text of the letter addressed to Prince Gong is reproduced by Treat 1932, vol. 2, pp. 101–102, with a note stating, “A copy of General Grant’s letter was transmitted by Minister Young from Peking in his No. 33, October 9, 1882.”

24 To Itō Hirobumi, Grant had made a more direct pronouncement about Japanese strength. Keene quotes Young’s paraphrase of the general’s words thus: “Japan was in point of war materials, army and navy, stronger than China. Against Japan, China, he might say, was defenseless, and it was impossible for China to injure Japan.” Keene comments that “Grant’s accurate estimate of the relative military strength of China and Japan revealed his expertise as a professional soldier, whereas most foreign observers, even as late as the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), were sure that China was far stronger than Japan.” Keene 2002, p. 314.

25 *Meiji tennō ki*, vol. 4, pp. 720–728.

26 This quotation is from the English translation of the August 10 audience printed in *Gaimushō* 1949, vol. 12, pp. 127–153. See also Chang 1969, p. 384.

27 Keene 2002, pp. 318–319.

28 Keene 2002, p. 318.

29 Kanagaki 1879–1880.

30 Chang 1969, p. 389, has a succinct account of the Ueno festival; see also Young 1879, pp. 573–575. Chang cites a 1935 pamphlet issued by the Tokyo city government entitled *Guranto-shōgun to wagakuni*. I have not been able to locate a copy of that pamphlet.

31 Young described the ride home: “For miles the General’s carriage slowly moved through a multitude that might have been computed by the hundreds of thousands, the trees and houses dangling with lamps and lanterns, the road spanned with arches of light, the night clear and mild, all forming a scene the like of which I had never witnessed, and which I can never hope to see again. It was the culmination of the General’s visit to Japan, the highest honor that could be paid to him by the Japanese government and people” (p. 575).

32 McCabe 1879, pp. 771–775, quoting Young. Grant himself was unable to be present for the dinner at Yoshida’s, but the rest of his party attended.

33 Huffman 2003, pp. 144–145.

34 McCabe 1879, pp. 779–780; Chang 1969, pp. 391–392; *Meiji tennō ki*, vol. 4, pp. 741–742.

35 Lensen 1961, p. 232. Lensen notes a discrepancy in the identification of two of the ships between the “official” account by Ukhtomskii and the unofficial eyewitness account by Tsyvinsky. In both reports, however, the vessels add up to seven.

36 Osatake 1991, pp. 25–28.

37 See Yasuda 1990, p. 23. Takehito, 1862–1913, was the younger brother of Taruhito 熾仁, 1835–1895, who had been named commander of the imperial forces in the Restoration war of 1868–1869 and later served as chief of the army general staff.

38 See Yasuda 1990, pp. 32–33, who reproduces a photograph of Omatsu by the noted early photographer Ueno Hikoma. The local historian cited by Yasuda is Matsutake Hideo 松竹秀雄.

39 Son of a family of physicians in Aizu domain, governor of Nagasaki Prefecture from 1886 through 1892, Kusaka was another of those Meiji officials who had studied abroad. He is remembered in Nagasaki as a hard-working and efficient administrator, and is credited with planning and seeing through to completion the construction of a modern water supply system.

40 Keene 2002; Yasuda 1990; Lensen 1961, pp. 233 and 237.

41 Osatake 1991, p. 41.

42 Osatake 1991, pp. 42–43.

43 Osatake 1991, p. 45; Yasuda 1990, pp. 42–43. Nicholas's diary says his group stayed out until midnight. Yasuda gives his translation of the diary, then quotes "Kyoto prefectural records" that report that their return to the hotel was at 2 a.m. He wryly observes that probably the Japanese record is the one that is accurate.

44 Yasuda 1990, pp. 43–45; on Kawashima Jinbei, p. 44.

45 Yasuda 1990, p. 47.

46 Yasuda 1990, pp. 46–47. Cf. Lensen 1961, p. 240; Lensen did not have access to Nicholas's diary, and wrote based on other sources. Here I translate Yasuda's Japanese translation of the Russian original. The word Yasuda uses for Nicholas's attire on the 12th is *heyagi* 部屋着; I take this to refer to the *yukata* supplied by the hotel.

47 Keene 2002, p. 451. *Meiji tennō ki*, vol. 7, pp. 817–818. *Meiji tennō ki* notes that the doctors from Tokyo asked again on the 13th to examine Nicholas, and were again refused. Among the doctors on the Japanese side was one Westerner, a German physician named Scriba who was in the employ of the Japanese government as an instructor at the medical college (*Meiji tennō ki* identifies him as *ika daigaku yatoi kyōshi* 医科大学雇教師).

48 Andō 2003, pp. 7–8. In fact Aoki did not follow through on his promise to Shevich to bring about changes in the law.

49 Tsuda was a veteran of the imperial army, and had been wounded in the successful campaign against Saigō Takamori's rebellion. Born a samurai in Iga, he had joined the police after leaving the army and had served in Kanazawa and Shiga. Among the sources that tell about his background and motives as he explained them afterwards is Ōtsu-shi Rekishi Hakubutsukan 2007, which has many illustrations. Tsuda was upset by the rumors that Saigō was still alive and had returned to Japan, and he was susceptible to anti-foreign agitation.

50 On anti-foreign and especially anti-Russian activity in the months before the crown prince's visit, see Riess 1905, pp. 8–13, and Fraser 1899. The German historian Ludwig Riess, who had come to Tokyo in 1887 to take an appointment as professor at the Imperial University and remained until 1902, wrote of the background to the Ōtsu incident—of antforeign and particularly anti-Russian sentiment and a couple of outbreaks of violence—in the memoir he published shortly after his return to Germany. Reproducing his journal entry for May 15, 1891, he expressed doubt about the Japanese press accounts of Tsuda's motives and offered

his own theory, namely that Tsuda acted out of fanatical antforeignism: “Vielmehr ist es wahrscheinlich eine Tat des fremdenfeindlichen Fanatismus, der in Japan schon so vielen Schaden angerichtet hat, und der seit 1888 wieder merklich in der Zunahme begriffen ist und seit der Kundgebung der Fremden gegen die Vertragsrevision am 11. September 1890 überhand genommen hat” (p. 11). Mrs. Fraser gives a vivid account of the stone-throwing incident at the Russian legation in Tokyo on November 29, 1890, opening of the Diet.

51 An account of the meeting, with quotations, is given in *Meiji tennō ki*, vol. 7, pp. 818–820.

52 Osatake 1991, pp. 100–101, citing *Itō Hirobumi hiroku* 伊藤博文秘録, pp. 252–254.

53 A Japanese translation of the letter is printed in *Meiji tennō ki*, vol. 7, p. 825. As might be expected, it is written in the most courteous of terms, and the crown prince repeats expressions of gratitude to the emperor and the Japanese people.

54 *Meiji tennō ki*, vol. 7, pp. 830–831. Keene also finds Shevich’s observation noteworthy (Keene 2001, p. 452). My English translation of the tsarevich’s words is from the Japanese translation: “Sōshō kiwamete asashi, aete shinryo o rōshitamau koto nakare” 創傷極めて浅し、敢えて宸慮を勞したまふことなかれ。

55 These details about Nicholas’s birthday are from Lensen 1961, p. 246.

56 Schimmelpenninck van der Oye 2001, p. 20. Schimmelpenninck van der Oye also quotes Nicholas as saying to a German visitor four years later, “Essentially I have much affection for the Japanese, despite the injury whose mark I bear. . . . This [the scar on his forehead, to which the tsar pointed] was the work of a fanatic.”

57 The Japanese proposed to send Enomoto Takeaki, former minister to St. Petersburg and an expert in Russian affairs, along with Takehito. When the current Japanese minister in Russia, Nishi Tokujirō, discussed this with Foreign Minister Giers in St. Petersburg, Giers told him that the tsar would receive the special mission if it were sent, but “their Majesties the Emperor and the Empress are fully conten[t]ed with the course of events” and did not feel the mission to be necessary. In fact the tsar had made plans to be away from the capital at the time the mission would arrive, and would have been inconvenienced by being obligated to be present to receive Prince Takehito and Enomoto (Nishi telegram to Aoki dated May 17, 1891, in *Gaimushō 1952*, p. 146). By the end of the month of May, Enomoto had been named to replace Aoki as foreign minister.

58 Osatake 1991, first published in 1929, remains an essential work, but there have been dozens of excellent studies done over the years, and the incident continues to draw the attention of legal historians and law scholars. Among the good works published in recent years Kamakura Toshiyuki 鎌倉利行, *Ōtsu jiken kō* 大津事件考 (Osaka: Ōsaka Daigaku Shuppankai, 2003) and Kansai Daigaku Hōgaku Kenkyūjo 関西大学法学研究所, ed., *Kiki to shite no Ōtsu jiken* 危機としての大津事件 (Suita: Kansai Daigaku Hōgaku Kenkyūjo, 1992) deserve mention.

59 A selection of those newspaper articles, primarily from the *Tōkyō nichinichi shinbun* and the *Chōya shinbun*, is in SSMHS 1982b, pp. 85–93.

60 The *Tōkyō nichinichi shinbun* of May 24 reported Hatakeyama’s suicide, and carried full texts of those two letters (artlessly addressed to *Rokoku gokanri sama* 露国御官吏様 and *seifu onchū sama* 政府御中様), which were undated, plus a letter to “people at home and abroad” dated May 18 and farewell letters she had written to her mother and younger brother dated May 20 (SSMHS 1982b, pp. 91–92). Lafcadio Hearn was moved by Hatakeyama, and praised the purity of her intentions and her patriotism in two of his books (Hearn 1894 and Hearn

1903). Putting together what he had learned of her background and citing medical examination of her person, Hearn offered an impassioned refutation of cynical speculation that she had been motivated by desire to escape from some private shame.

61 In Yasuda Kōichi's translation of selected excerpts Nicholas' diary (Yasuda 1990), the last entry that deals with the journey to Japan is that of May 19. Whether the Japanese authorities turned over Hatakeyama's letter addressed to *Rokoku gokanri sama*, I have not been able to ascertain. There is nothing pertaining to Hatakeyama in *Gaimushō 1952* (there are ninety-eight pages of documents relating to the attack on the crown prince, sixty-five of them with dates later than May 20). Of course the staff of the Russian mission in Tokyo could have read Hatakeyama's letter to them in the newspaper, but I have found no indication of a response.

62 Lensen 1961, p. 241.