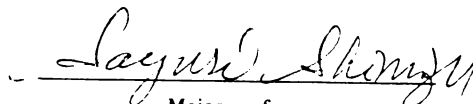This is to certify that the

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CONTINUITIES IN AMERICAN IMAGES
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By

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ABSTRACT

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By

Steven Charles Strong

This essay demonstrates and documents the degree to which the core elements of the American image of Japan have stayed the same in the past fifty-years despite rapid changes in US-Japanese relations. American analysis of Japan has often been grounded in American ideas of Japanese national character. These views have tended to exclude confrontation and diversity in Japanese history and have created an image of Japan which is based on general character traits which do not constitute an adequate analysis of Japan. These generalizations reinforce the idea of Japan as paradoxical, unstable, and to a degree inscrutable. The static nature of the criteria by which Japan is judged, the American self-image, and changes in the geo-political arena, have caused various shifts in the American image of Japan, but there has never been a wholesale reformulation of that image. This has left the door open for fluctuations in the American image of Japan but it also provides a conduit to regression back to old, five-and-dime-store stereo-types.

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Introduction

This essay examines some of the American images of Japan in the postwar world. It examines the stereo-types Americans have had of the Japanese, the prevalence of some of these images in scholarship which seeks to explain Japan at a general level, and their manifestation in certain media reports. To that end, this essay is divided into five parts. After introducing the subject matter and methodology, there is a sketch of the American image of Japan from the nineteenth-century to the present. This is followed, in Part III, by an analysis of the changing relationship between the United States and Japan in terms of geo-political and economic relations. The image one nation has of another, in this case, the American image of Japan, is shown to be profoundly linked to the international environment and the psychological needs of nations as derived from that environment as well as from their own self-image. Ideally, these two sections would be written together in some intricate web which demonstrates the dialectic between stereo-types and the dynamic, and changing world of international relations. Such a chapter, however, would be too problematic in terms of chronology and require a deeper analysis of American policy toward Japan than can be completed here.

The solution is to write the essay in a layered, accumulative manner. Thus, Part IV, builds off the investigation of the stereo-types of Japan and their relation to the international context by examining media coverage of Japan with a particular emphasis on the 1960 riots in Tokyo over the ratification of the US-Japanese Mutual Security Treaty, the textile wrangle, and the debate over Japanese automobiles in the US, by far the largest and most visible aspect of the contemporary Japanese trade surplus with the United States. These events generated wide coverage in the United States. They also represent the progression of the relationship from one primarily concerned with security, to one in which the main tensions are economic. By examining these specific cases, along with

other samples of American media coverage of Japan last, one is able to bring the theory and insights developed in the earlier sections to bear on the more focused, issue oriented media reports. In so doing, the prevalence of stereo-types and the importance of the international environment as a mediating context is made more clear than if the media were treated before or along with the other sections. This is so because the premises from which the media examine Japan are mostly derived from general works and stereo-types about Japan.

Throughout, it is clear that the idea of change in the American image of Japan is only correct to a degree. As world events and issues of contention change, so do the specific interests of nations and their citizens. What needs to be emphasized, however, is the extent to which American stereo-types of the Japanese have remained consistent even in the midst of a rapidly changing relationship between the two nations. The stereo-types Americans hold of Japan have shifted from side to side within narrow parameters. In that sense they clearly fluctuate. However, in some ways change seems to be too strong a word. What is more accurate is to say that old ideas are merely manipulated for new ends. Ideas of Japanese national character, a` la those codified during and immediately after the Second World War live on, often just beneath the surface of discussion. Their presence needs to be documented, if only to remind those who think about Japan, of the narrow parameters in which thought and discussion is often cast. Part V discusses these issues and serves as a conclusion.

Part I: The Methodology and the Issues

Examining the history of the American image of Japan is an extremely difficult task for a number of reasons. First, there is no such thing as *the* American image of Japan. What different Americans think about Japan is infinitely complex, and there is simply no way to give an accurate representation of the various ideas, and concepts Americans hold with regard to Japan. Complicating this is the fact that most Americans have not had a strong or at least distinct image of Japan, because few Americans have thought about Japan in the course of their everyday life. With the exception of the Pacific War, most Americans have only thought about Japan when they were confronted with a news item, or a reference to Japan in a book, movie, magazine article, or in a conversation. The impression of Japan generated from this encounter was likely to have had a strong impact on their image of Japan because it most likely competed with relatively few existing ideas about the Japanese.[1] Nevertheless, it is possible to describe the general range of attitudes most Americans have shared with regard to Japan by examining the ideas delivered to Americans by some of the most influential writers on Japan.

What has been consistent about the writings on Japan is the fact that the images have both been mediated by the contemporary international context, and, to an inordinate degree, been premised on the idea that the Japanese have a defining trait which can be isolated, defined, and then used to explain Japan. The latter phenomena is, to a degree, unavoidable. However, to the extent that such a method of analysis has been employed, it has worked against a sophisticated understanding of Japan. In particular, the reliance on ideas based on national character has over--emphasized conformity and uniformity in Japanese society, culture, and history. These ideas are not only evident in scholarly historical, or anthropological studies, but also in general works which are designed to

explain Japan and the Japanese to a general readership as well as in the media. In other words, ideas which are rooted in a concept of Japanese national character are sprinkled throughout studies which are not directly related to national character.

The manner by which this is done is very similar to the process described by Edward Said, in his fascinating work, *Orientalism*. As Said defines it,

> Orientalism, is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) the 'Occident.' Thus a very large mass of writers, among whom are poets, novelists, philosophers, political theorists, economists, and imperial administrators, have accepted the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, 'mind,' destiny, and so on......[2]

While Said's interest is with European discourse on the "traditional Orient," his ideas can easily be applied to many of the Americans who have written about Japan. The books and magazine articles presented to Americans as explanations of Japan follow the model laid out by Said in that they treat Japan as an "other" which can be defined and analyzed according to particular character traits which differentiate Japanese from Americans. These assumptions have been posited in any number of works, which together, form a sort of web which often catches, and confines analysis of Japan within its parameters.

As discussed in Part III, power is a crucial aspect in this equation. The expectations derived from the imbalance of power in the U.S.-Japanese relationship allows Americans to define the Japanese and judge them by American standards or in relation to how Americans perceive themselves. Indicative of this is the frequent use of the word "paradox" to describe a Japan with one foot in what is perceived to be American style modernity and the other in a traditional Japan based on feudal ethics. It is with regard to the feudal half of the American image of Japan that the most enduring, and misleading

stereo-types are to be found. Thus, analysis of Japan, is tied up with the American self-image, and geopolitical-political realties as they are viewed by Americans. To quote again from Said, Orientalism is a,

> *distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetics, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts; it is an elaboration not only of a basic geographical distinction (the world is made up of two unequal halves, the Occident and the Orient) but also of a whole series of interests......[3]

This is a deft analysis of the manner in which hegemony and interests combine to create an underlying mode of analysis which is so basic and central to an understanding of the "other," that the ethnocentrism at its core becomes almost invisible. This is true of a range of scholarship on Japan. By focusing on the "otherness" of Japan, an otherness rooted in Japan's exceptionalist history, stereo-types of Japan have passed for concrete analysis. This is misleading, and poses dangers to the health of the US-Japanese relationship.

Said's statement also demonstrates the importance of concrete geo-political goals or in his words "interests" in the creation of images. In other words, the American image of Japan has often been driven to a large degree by the specific policy needs or goals of the United States. This is true, not only of the American image of Japan but of the American image of other nations as well. One way to measure the importance of specific policy needs in the formation of images is to juxtapose the American images of Japan and China. Such a comparison demonstrates an almost inverse relationship between the American image of the two nations.

For example during the Second World War, the Chinese were toted as America's best ally in Asia and both the Chinese people and the Chinese leadership enjoyed remarkably good press in the United States. As a 1941 article in *Time* points out, the Chinese are much less likely than the Japanese to be "dogmatic," "arrogant," to be

"hesitant in conversation," or to "laugh loudly at all the wrongs times." Rather, in contrast to these general Japanese characteristics, Chinese were said to be "more placid, kindly, open" people.[4] However, if one were to compare American press of the Chinese and Japanese ten years latter, in 1951, one would find a very different image of the both the Chinese and the Japanese. Indeed, many of the negative characteristics which the Japanese were charged with during the war, were shifted to explain the Communist threat.

Thus, the reason for this change is in many ways linked directly to the importance and the roles these two nations were playing in American foreign policy. When the Americans needed the Chinese during the war, they were portrayed as good people who could become a stable democratic ally. When, the Communists took power, however, this image of the Chinese changed radically, and the image of the Japanese, Americas new ally in Asia, rose accordingly. This comparison of the American image of China and Japan is simplistic and over-general, however, it makes the point that power, and concrete policy goals and needs are extremely important factors in the creation of images.

In regard to the American image of Japan, these needs are often fulfilled by emphasizing certain positive or negative aspects of the so called Japanese national character. For example, in recent times, some of the most important books about Japan have come from the genre which purports to explain the Japanese and the Japanese economic miracle. According to Chalmers Johnson, these books can be divided into a few identifiable categories. In particular, he mentions the pure economic analyses of Japan's postwar economic success, the socio-economic school or what Johnson sometimes calls the "anything but politics approach to miracle research,"[5] the special institutions school of thought, and finally, those who stress the role of the state in Japan's economic success. None of these categories is self-contained and there is frequent overlap, especially between the second and third schools of thought. More specifically, both the "anything but politics, and the special institutions approach to Japan, emphasize the special, or as they are often termed, the "unique" aspects of Japanese society. These are based on a

"national character-basic values-consensus analyses" popular among those who seek to explain Japan.[6] While these attempts to generalize about the Japanese and to apply these ideas to Japanese institutions have not been totally without merit, and as will be shown, not without encouragement from the Japanese themselves, they are none the less, too confining, and in many ways misleading.

These ideas of national character, and its over-use in American scholarship about Japan are also intimately related to America's self-image, and the international context. The American image of Japan has been based on the American view of America as the apex of modernity and morality in international affairs. This has led to an ethnocentric view of Japan, as well as one which employs what H.D. Harootunian has called a type of "colonialism without territorialization."[7] The post-war US attempt to turn Japan into an ally against the Soviets and the Chinese was, according to Harootunian, an attempt to "resituate the former imperialist Japan within the new framework of American imperialism and call it by another name."[8]

Whether one is as cynical as Harootunian or not, it is clear that the attempt to turn Japan into a stable ally affected the way Americans viewed that nation. American analysts have continually judged Japan based on how well Japan was doing with regard to democracy, and capitalism, two of the most basic features of American society. In the postwar years, these ideas have often been couched, at least theoretically, within ideas of modernization theory. And as an analysis of works which attempt to explain Japan and media coverage will demonstrate, these ideals and standards, along with stereo-types of the Japanese character, have been important factors in the process by which Americans have formed their image of Japan.

This is particularly true with regard to the "renarrativization" of Japanese history in the postwar period. Exactly what is meant by a "renarrativization" of Japanese history and the role of modernization theory is set out by Harootunian in his article "America's Japan/Japan's Japan," and Carol Gluck's essay "The Past in the Present." According to

Harootunian, the American Occupation of Japan, was like a "bourgeois wedding" between the US and Japan in which the groom [the United States] sought to transform the bride [Japan]

> by bringing her into the grooms household; through the marriage the bride would be resocilaized into the groom's world of middle-class values and the standards of civilized life, now read as the 'free world.' This narativizing of Japan by the American Occupation became the central plot of social sciences in the 1950s and 1960s and what then came to be known as modernization theory.......[9]

In particular, Harootunian discusses his belief that the US took the initiative in defining the relationship between the two nations by creating a way of looking at Japan in which Japan was judged according to Japan's success in modernizing according to modernization theory. In particular, this translated into a call for a "'retelling' of Japan's modern history based on greater and more precise attention to 'empirical data'....This presumption authorized a program leading to an understanding of 'Japan within the concept of modernization,' which was presented not as a theoretical construct, but merely as a description of the way things were."[10] Modernization theory became one of the most important analytic tools applied to Japan, and, according to Harootunian, had a profound influence on the ways the Japanese viewed themselves. These Japanese self-stereo-types, like Japanese self stereo-types before the war, were then fed back to America in the form of *Nihonjinron* and/or Japanese pontification of their "unique world view." In his own words, Harootunian summarizes this process as follows,

> Modernization theory, as it was increasingly 'applied' to explain the case of Japan prompted the Japanese to incorporate American expectations to fulfill a narrative about themselves, produced by others, elsewhere, that had already demanded the appeal of fixed cultural values--consensuality-- uninterrupted continuity, and an endless present derived from an exceptionalist experience. In this way, modernization theory, which betrayed the conceit of an earlier social science that had bracketed history

altogether, was used to encode Japan and invite the Japanese to locate themselves in the account by summoning values and experiences attesting to a cultural endowment that had survived since time immemorial (a social Darwinist inflection that had privileged enduring values supposedly because they had survived) as an explanation for both economic and technological success and the absence of conflict in the nation's history. In this narrative both the Meiji Restoration of 1868, which represented a genuinely transforming moment, and the Pacific War were either marginalized or explained as aberrations.....According to this program....Japanese history showed how the nation had successfully evolved peacefully from a feudal order, whose values has survived in tact to mediate this development... [11]

Whether or not American scholarship really shaped the way the Japanese viewed themselves to the degree that Harootunian suggests, is debatable. Nevertheless, his is a fascinating statement with a wide-range of implications. For our purposes, it is prudent to focus on a few aspects of what Harootunian has stated, and implied in this statement and throughout his article. With regard to the US image of Japan, he is implying that the ideas which emphasize Japan's "fixed cultural values--consensuality--uninterrupted continuity, and an endless present derived from an exceptionalist experience,"[12] were derived, in part, from the psychological needs of Americans during the Cold War, (Japan was be a model of the success of American developmental policy, and an example to other Asian and less developed countries of how to modernize and achieve democracy), the American self-image of the United States as the most modern nation in the world, and a residual belief, both in the United States and Japan, in Japanese exceptionalism.

Japan was thus a role model for other nations seeking to industrialize as well as an exceptional case. For example, as Harootunian relates these ideas in his discussion of the Kennedy-Reischauer assault on Marxism, he discusses how Ambassador Reischauer adapted ideas of modernization theory, in particular the work of W.W. Restow, to Japan by emphasizing the role of culture and the state as mediating factors which helped to keep Japan from fragmenting during the trials of modernization. Reischauer viewed Japan as a success because they had "used....the pattern of the West,"[13] in their efforts at

modernization. "In this program, Reischauer saw the United States as the most successful example of historical development and modernization."[14] What is, for our purposes, extremely important, is the emphasis in these analyses on Japan's culture and history as a mediating context. What Harootunian has written about Japanese writers on Japan, is also true of many American analysts of Japan. Again, to quote Harootunian, he states that this renarritivization "was effectively articulated by a large number of writers and thinkers of the late 1960s, and it continues to capture the popular imagination in countless books, articles, and media events calculated to remind Japanese that this cultural uniqueness and difference account for the nation's vast economic and technological successes."[15]

Some of Harootunian's ideas are echoed in an essay entitled "The Past in the Present" by Carol Gluck. While not as concerned with modernization theory, and while focusing more on the Japanese image of Japan, as opposed to the American, Gluck also discusses how economic success in Japan led to a reworking of the past by which specific Japanese cultural traits were held up as reasons for Japan's economic success. As with Reischauer and the other practitioners of modernization theory, Gluck emphasizes how the negative elements of Japan's modern history were purged from public memory in a way which stitched the modernization and success of Meiji directly to the postwar world. This created a sense of continuity, based on culture, which overlooks such ugly warts of Japan's past such as Japanese fascism, Japan's fifteen years of war in Asia, and virtually any real or enduring conflict in Japanese society or economic history. It also provides a context conducive to a mis-leading, or at least incomplete, analysis of Japan based on ideas of Japan's "feudal unconscious."[16]

This is not to say that Japanese national character has always been the *only* lens through which Japan has been viewed. As pointed out, modernization theory was supposedly universal, and Japan's importance to the Americans as an ally against Communism meant that analysis was often directed at how well Japan was doing relative to the rest of the world economically, and what type of an ally it was being. Under, the

surface, however, was clearly a tendency to impart a level of importance to Japan's "feudal unconscious." As Japan's economic success rose, so did the importance of these character traits. Just as the Japanese began to view Edo through "rose colored glasses,"[17] and to see the roots of their modernity in their traditional culture, Americans began to focus and often put a negative spin on those elements of Japanese national character which were supposedly so important in Japan's economic success. It is with the resurfacing and persistence of these later stereo-types that this essay in primarily concerned.

Some authors, for example, Sheila Johnson, have argued that the American image of Japan has changed too rapidly and in too many directions for one to claim that it is guided by a strict sense of Japanese national character. For example, the rapidity with which war-time ideas of the Japanese as sneaky, cruel, and fanatical were replaced with images of the softer, more peaceful side of Japanese culture demonstrates that Americans are willing to change their views with regard to the Japanese.[18] Johnson is undoubtedly partially correct when she states that these changes have a lot to do with contemporary events, and are thus situational as much as they are immutably based on an idea of national character.[19]

Nevertheless, anyone who reads through a number of works designed to "explain Japan" cannot help but be struck by the frequency with which certain ideas about the Japanese are discussed and the narrow parameters within which discussion of the Japanese usually takes place. In other words, to say that the general stereo-type of Japan changes is perhaps misleading. It may be better to say that it merely leans to one-side or the other or that the stereo-type is multi-faceted, yet often contradictory. Exploring where these ideas come from, and how/why they are generated is a difficult task.

Fortunately, there is at least one method of analysis which seems to bridge many of the problems suggested above. Namely to combine a study of both the dominant stereo-types of Japan as expressed by some of the most important scholars writing about Japan,

with an analysis of a few specific points of contention between the US and Japan which generated a good deal of comment in the media.[20]

Such an approach will help to illuminate American stereo-types of Japan by examining two of the most important places of distribution, books and the media. Furthermore, examining the general framework of post-war American-Japanese relations, will make a start toward demonstrating the power specific policy needs and goals have played in the formation of the stereo-types which are such a large part of the American image of Japan.

While accomplishing much, this methodology has some limitations. For one thing, it is difficult to bridge the gap between what the elites write and what the masses believe. In other words, looking at the popular American image of Japan by looking at books and magazine articles automatically gives the elites (the writers) more voice than the masses. However, since the books and magazines used in this analysis are largely from the popular press, as opposed to academia, it can be safely assumed that the ideas reflect popular stereo-types as well as any printed material could hope to do.

Another limitation, is the fact that this methodology does not necessarily examine the roots of these stereo-types. To make up for this deficiency, I have included an historical sketch of the American image of Japan as well as a study of the general framework of postwar US-Japanese relations. This is at least a start at demonstrating how specific American policies and goals vis a vis Japan can be extremely important in determining which characteristics of the Japanese are emphasized at a particular time.

However, as this paper demonstrates, the American image of Japan is not all the product of judicious "spin-doctoring" designed to create an image of Japan which is conducive to American policies. Rather, ideas of Japanese national character often help to shape US policy and/or American reactions to Japanese policies. Furthermore, as has been pointed out in the essay, the Japanese are responsible for much of the American images of Japan due to general stereo-types formed by the Japanese themselves. These

ideas are, it seems, often consciously created and refined for dissemination among the Japanese as well as internationally. Their purpose, may well be to provide a justification for Japanese policies, by making the arguement that the Japanese do something a particualr way simply because they are Japanese and thus they cannot be expected to change the practice in the very near future.

The importance of Japanese self-stereo-types should not be dismissed, and there is a good deal of work which can be done in this area. Due to time and space constraints, however, this essay deals mostly with American images of Japan. The reader is reminded, however, to keep in mind that at the root of many of what are here termed American stereo-types of Japan are in fact derivatives of Japanese stereo-types as well as the result of conscious and unconscious "spin" used to justify American policy and to create an image of Japan which is conducive to the carrying out of that policy.

With regard to books, I have looked at the ideas of: the wartime scholars and anthropologists who wrote about Japan, Herman Khan, the successful and influential writer of *The Emerging Japanese Superpower*, Richard Holloran, the former *Business Week* reporter, *Washington Post* Far East Bureau Chief, and diplomatic correspondent to the *New York Times*, Frank Gibney, a fairly prolific and well known writer on things Japanese, and finally Clyde Prestowitz a contemporary author known to be critical of Japan, but who is rigorous in his scholarship and widely read by those with an interest in Japan. While far from an inclusive list, these authors provide a range of opinions, ask different questions, and come to different conclusions. All however, to a greater or lesser degree, tend to the generalize about Japan and to place the Japanese into a framework which leans too heavily on national character as an analytical tool.

In terms of the media, I have examined a range of articles with a basic focus on coverage of the 1960 protests over the continuation of the US-Japanese Security Treaty, the textile wrangle of the late Sixties and early Seventies, and the fierce debates over the growth of sales of Japanese cars in the US. These events were chosen for a few specific

reasons. First, they provide some focus to what otherwise would have been an overwhelming number of articles, and second, as issues which took place more or less at the beginning, middle, and the end of the media analysis done for this paper, they demonstrate the progression of the issues which have been most important in the post-war US Japanese relationship -- the US use of Japan as an ally and a weapon in the Cold War, followed, of course, by the rise to prominence of the economic issues which dominate contemporary relations between the two countries.

These events bring up the importance of the international political and economic environment as a mediating context in which images are formed, changed, and perhaps most of all, re-enforced. In her essay "The Past in the Present," Carol Gluck discusses the way in which history, in her specific case-study, Japanese history, is created and viewed by the Japanese nation as a whole. As Gluck phrases it,

> Since national history is also ideology--a past imagined in the context of national identity--public memory is hegemonic, even if it is not singular. There is a weight to it. And as postwar Japanese constantly reconstituted the past in the light of the present, the weight of public memory changed. In the course of the postwar period, and closely related to the economic phenomenon now enshrined in collective memory as high growth, the dominant sense of the past shifted toward the conservative social and national center.[21]

Carol Gluck's idea of how a nation views its past, and how that view is changed with regard to contemporary events and needs is applicable to the American image of Japan. This is so, in that to the degree that the Japanese reinvent their history by virtue of the changes in their collective memory, so too, do Americans alter their views of Japan in relation to contemporary events. As Japan became more and more successful economically, many Americans began to wonder exactly who the Japanese were and why they were doing so well economically. To answer these questions, both Americans and Japanese emphasized Japanese national character to explain Japan's contemporary success.

In so doing they utilized images which, for Americans, have deep roots based in Orientalism, and the American self-image.

Just as there are parameters in terms of how a nation views its own history, so too, is the American image of Japan caught within the parameters of general stereo-types about the Japanese. When one views the formation of the image Americans have of the Japanese as *a process* (it is Gluck's view of the creation of the collective memory as a process which is important here), it becomes clear how there can be both continuity within the parameters, and change with regard to the specific issues of interest. In other words, a shifting back and forth to different sides of the same set of images and stereo-types.

To quote again from Gluck, she states of the purveyors of history, "No one group, whether the academic historians, the schools, or the mass media, possesses proprietary control over an Orwellian memory hole. Following one scholar's suggestion that such collectively negotiated memory is 'more like an endless conversation,' one can think of it as vernacular history."[22] Again, Gluck's words apply to the case of the American image of Japan. In this case, however, the collective negotiation takes place within the framework of the international context, the American world view, and the American view of America itself.

Thus, in examining how Americans view Japan, one needs to take a number of factors into account. As Sheila Johnson and Gluck have both pointed out, the international context is of primary importance. Only by looking at the changes in the US-Japanese relationship from a geo-political, and economic point of view, can one understand why the American image of the Japanese has fluctuated and only by examining what has remained consistent throughout, can one appreciate the continuing role of traditional stereo-types of the Japanese national character in defining the American image of the Japanese.

Before getting into details, there is one other term which is in need of definition. This is the word *myth*. In this study myth is always used in conjunction with ideas of a

Japanese national character. The word myth does not imply that an idea is totally wrong. For this essay, the working definition of myth, in this case, the myth of Japanese national character, allows for what Roy Andrew Miller, has termed the "kernel of truth." In his book, *Japan's Modern Myth: The Language and Beyond*, Miller explores the myth of *Nihongo*. Just as Gluck's ideas of collective memory can be adapted to fit this essay, so too can Miller's use of the term myth, be used in this essay. In his debunking of Japanese ideas about their language and the common belief that it is somehow uniquely, unique, Miller defines myth in the following way,

> myth itself may be expected to have a hard, irreducible kernel of truth at its heart. All successful myths do. None of them are made up out of whole cloth. No effective sustaining myth, and particularly no myth that is designed to operate for very long periods of time, can do its work, or for that matter even survive, if it lacks this kernel of truth, a core of actual fact......because the kernel itself is real enough, incorporating it into the myth immediately endows the myth with a substantial, if quite specious, patina of truth. The technique [for sustaining a myth] is one of employing the right thing for the wrong end.[23]

In other words, much of the stereo-types used to explain the Japanese, ideas about: hierarchy, obedience to authority, the importance of personal relations and obligation, the avoidance of direct conflict, the importance of the group etc., have a kernel of truth. They are not made up. They are not totally wrong. However, to focus on these ideas to the exclusion of other factors is a manipulation of the myth along the lines Miller is discussing above. It is the over-use of these ideas, that many American scholars (and Japanese too, although they are not the focus of this essay) are guilty of. And it is this reason why one can talk of the myth of Japanese national character. This myth was codified in the form of a mass of writing on Japan in the years during and after the Pacific War. However, as will be seen, it has long and deep roots.

One reason it is tempting to target the Pacific War as the time of the creation of the myth of Japanese national character, is that, it was the Pacific War which first induced

Americans to write about Japan in great numbers. At the height of the Second World War, the US government employed a number of scholars to study Japanese national character in order to help the US government fight the war against Japan. "Propelling the wartime efforts to produce anthropological studies of Japan was the search for the 'fatal flaw' in Japanese national character that could account for Japan's attack on the United States."[24] The result of these biased attempts to define the 'fatal flaw' in Japanese character was a series of studies which are notable for their generalizations, and totally unfounded conclusions based on a minimal amount of research, very little of which even took place in Japan. Nevertheless, the works of these authors, in particular Ruth Benedict, exercised influence on latter and better researched studies. These works, in turn, influenced the next generation of authors.

This cycle of authors standing on the shoulders of their predecessors is common in the historiography of any subject. However, what is exceptionally frustrating with regard to Japanese studies, is that so many of the later, better informed scholars seem to have relied on the basic premises of this Japanese national character. Thus, while they may dismiss the earlier studies as being over-general, and while they may reject many of the more racist, biased studies as out and out wrong, it does not stop them from going on to generalize about Japanese national character. These authors, like the war-time scholars before them, have in common a proclivity to find some system or defining characteristic in Japan or of the Japanese which they then use to describe the whole nation. And while most are aware of the danger of generalizing about a whole nation, they none the less proceed to do it, usually following a disclaimer that their work should not be taken too seriously. What is consistent in the historiography, then, is the fact that so many authors feel they are justified in generalizing about the Japanese and Japan's "unique" institutions.

In other words, the decline of the popularity of what used to be called national character is, with regard to those writing on Japan, often largely semantic. To the extent that stereo-types and easy-answer gimmicks are employed, they have the same effect as

the earlier national character studies. The roots of this American image of Japanese national character, the codification and dissemination of that image, and its continued expression in general studies about Japan is the subject of the next part of this essay.

PART II: THE AMERICAN SELF-IMAGE AND ITS
RELATIONS TO THE AMERICAN IMAGE OF JAPAN

As stated before, the image one nation has of another is intimately related to the international context, psychological needs, and self-image. Thus, in examining the American image of Japan, one needs to think first of the American image of America. No short sketch of the development of the American national identity can hope to answer this question fully. However, the American Anglo-Saxon tradition and American attitudes toward immigration to the US, in particular, Japanese immigration, provide some useful clues in fleshing out what Americans meant when they called themselves "Americans," and how this related to the American view of Japan.

In a broad sense Hans Kohn has argued that there are three primary factors in American self-identification. First on Kohn's list is "the historical root of the English tradition of liberty which the settlers brought across the ocean."[25] Second, is the enormous amount of land and resources which were found in America, and third is the fact that "historical roots (the Anglo-American tradition) and spatial opportunities combined in the idea of universal liberty with America's power to assimilate millions of immigrants..."[26]

The impact of these three factors has been explored by both Gordon Wood and Bernard Bailyn. Both authors have demonstrated how first the Colonists and then subsequent generations of Americans saw themselves as the protectors of the English tradition of self-government and how the ideas of liberty and equality worked to transform America. In *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, Bailyn uses colonial revolutionary pamphlets to demonstrate how the ideology of English Civil War Radicals was transformed to correspond to colonial concerns. Specifically, Bailyn demonstrates

that English concepts of liberty, virtue, sovereignty, and the English Constitution itself were used and transformed by the Colonists to create an ideology of republicanism. To Americans, this republicanism meant a society of relationships which were horizontal within society and not vertical, in other words, relationships between equals. This was diametrically opposed to the hierarchy and dependence typical of colonial and monarchical governments and of course, to the governments of Asia.

The Colonists believed that England and the English Constitution were the greatest examples of liberty in the world. However, while they rejoiced in their association with this tradition, they worried about its future. The colonists saw England as a "wrinkled, old, worn-out hag" dominated by a group of corrupt ministers bent on subverting English and American liberty. In contrast, they saw America as having the potential to create a government in which the high ideals of liberty, justice, and equality were protected by a flexible, modern government. Bailyn argues that these ideals were not limited to the formation of a new government but rather spread throughout the whole of society. There was, in Bailyn's words, a "contagion of liberty."

It was this fundamental transformation from a monarchical society to a democratic society which gave Americans a sense that they were at the apex of modernity. Furthermore the rapid growth of the American population and westward expansion meant that the old colonial bonds of patronage and dependence were strained and then broken. According to Gordon Wood, the incredible increase in the population and its mobility were "the most basic and the most liberating forces working in American society.[27] These forces worked in concert with the ideology of republicanism to crack the bonds of dependence in both family and community relations and thus caused fundamental changes in society. As the traditional monarchical society began to break apart, Americans struggled to secure a political and social order which corresponded to the ideals of classical republicanism. Some of the most important aspects of this republicanism, for example, concepts of equality and independence, were totally at odds with the patriarchy,

patronage, and hierarchy of a monarchical society, or of course, the imperial, hierarchical system of Japan.

Instead of dependence, republicanism celebrated an independence which was tied to an idea of the public good. A virtuous republican was one concerned with the public good. Whereas citizens in a country like Japan were constrained by their concern over the repercussions of their actions in terms of patronage and dependence, a citizen of a republic was theoretically constrained by his or her belief in the necessity of disinterest and virtue.[28]

As immigrants poured into the US the idea of the United States as "an open gateway, a nation of many nations, became as important for American nationalism as its identification with the idea of individual liberty...."[29] This great influx of immigrants did not diminish American nationalism, rather it increased it. Two quotes, one from Ralph Waldo Emmerson and one from John Louis O'Sullivan provide illustration of how at least two people viewed the importance of immigration for America. In "The Young American" Emmerson wrote,

> A heterogeneous population crowding on ships from all corners of the world to the great gates of North America.....and thence proceeding inward to the prairie and mountains, and quickly contributing their private thought to the public opinion....it cannot be doubted that the legislation of this country should become more catholic and cosmopolitan than that of any other. It seems so easy for America to inspire and express the most expansive and humane spirit; new-born, free, healthful, strong,....she should speak for the human race.....It is the country of the future.[30]

Or in another example, O'Sullivan wrote,

> The American people having derived their origin from many other nations, and the declaration of national independence being entirely based on the great principle of human equality....demonstrate at once our disconnected position as regards any other nation; that we have, in reality, but little connection with the past history of any of them....Our national birth was the beginning of history, the formation and progress of an untried political system which separates from the past and connects to the future only so far as regard the entire development of the rights of man, in moral, political

and national life, we may confidently assume that our country is destined to be the great nation of futurity.[31]

These two quotes demonstrate two essential points with regard to the role of immigration in the formation of an American self-identification. First is the fact that American ideals, the "contagion of liberty" are virtually universal, and strong enough to overcome the strains of a heterogeneous population. Second, is the emphasis on modernity. America, because of its ideology of equality and powers of assimilation is cast as a direct contrast to the old world. America is the future and the whole world is invited to come and contribute.

Nevertheless, despite the professions for unlimited immigration there were tensions over immigration from the founding of the US. In particular, many feared the settlement of immigrants into compact, isolated areas. This, they feared, would slow down assimilation and work against the ideals of a nation united around liberty and equality. By the middle of nineteenth-century, these fears had become even stronger. The primary reasons for the increase in reservations over immigration were the vast increase in the number of immigrants and the "disproportionately large number of paupers" relative to the rest of American society.[32]

This fear was a result of their belief that liberty could persist only as long as their was a safe distribution of power. The new immigrants threatened this distribution because if they did not assimilate into American society and abide by American ideals they could, in sufficient numbers, pervert the system and destroy American ideals. Thus, the paradox of striking out against those who are different in order to assure liberty. Asians posed a particular threat. First, they were clearly identifiable as an other, second, Asia's "hordes" had the potential to fill America, and finally, Asians had an ancient history, diametrically opposed to the modernity Americans professed and treasured.

When Americans compared their country to Asia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries, they were particularly struck by the differences. Where as America represented all that was new and dynamic, Asia represented all that was old, and stagnant. Indeed, the two seemed to be polar opposites. For example, "one contrasted America's liberty to Asia's tyranny, commercial development to agrarian stagnation, Christianity to pagan cult, respect for women to polygamy, material advance to primitive conditions."[33] In other words, Asia was "not merely a geographical term but represented a stage in human development."[34] Thus, even though most Americans knew very little about Asia they had an image of Asia "because they had an image of America."[35] Americans felt that Asians did not have the same values as they did. With respect to Japan, Americans distrusted both Japanese immigrants to the United States, and Japan as well.

This condescension and suspicion is fundamental to the anti-Japanese feeling which became more and more prevalent in the first quarter of the twentieth-century. For example, in terms of Japanese immigration to the United States, Roger Daniels points out in his book *The Politics of Prejudice* - "had Japanese exclusion been put to a national referendum in the 1920's, there is little doubt that it would have received the sanction of the vast majority of the electorate."[36] The ideas behind Japanese exclusion had roots which were both deep and wide. This is clearly manifest in the "Yellow Peril" literature which had a large following in the United States in the early part of the twentieth-century.

By 1905 the term 'yellow-peril" was in wide use in the United States.[37] The timing of this occurrence was not coincidental. In 1894 the Japanese had defeated the Chinese in the Sino-Japanese War. Ten years latter, the Japanese became the first Asian nation to defeat a white power when they defeated the Russian army. The rise of Japanese power, and their defeat of one of the white, status quo powers worried many in the United States.

In *Japan in American Public Opinion*, Eleanor Tupper describes how the American perception of Japan began to change after the Russo-Japanese War. Most Americans had supported the Japanese in the war as hedge against the extension of

Russian power. However, with the end of the war and Japan's demands for substantial concessions, many Americans came to view Japan as a threat. This was particularly true on the west coast where the fears of a powerful Japan were mixed with antagonisms due to immigration. For example, the *San Francisco Chronicle* took up the issue in February of 1905. The *Chronicle* wrote "Immigration is increasing steadily....The Japanese is no more assimilable than the Chinese and he is not less adaptable in learning quickly how to do the white men's work, and how to get a job for himself by offering his labor for less than the white man can live on."[38] The *Chronicle* was not alone in its concern over Japanese immigration. A number of papers such as: the *Santa Clara Journal*, the *Hanford Sentinel*, the *San Francisco Argonaut*, the *Sacramento Union*, and the *Seattle Union* all followed lead of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Their concerns were directed at the threat the Japanese posed to the character of American life.

For example, the *Chronicle* wrote,

> Sufficient [Japanese immigration] has already occurred here to make it plain that if Japanese immigration is unchecked it is only a question of time when our rural population will be Japanese, our rural civilization Japanese, and the white population hard pressed in our cities and towns.....What work cannot be done without Oriental labor that work must be unperformed. Our fruit industries are important. Our land, our homes, and our civilization are far more important. And they are in danger.[39]

It is interesting to relate these fears back to ideas of virtue, independence, and republicanism which played such large parts in the formation of an American national consciousness. Those at the *Chronicle* were clearly concerned that their life-style and beliefs, the very same ideas Americans used to juxtapose themselves with Japan, were in jeopardy by an unassimilable race. The ideas of unlimited immigration and the power of American ideology to transform immigrants appeared to be not applicable in regard to the Japanese.

In addition to the newspapers, many of California's politicians were speaking out against Japanese immigration. For example, California's Senator James D. Phelan published a statement in which he claimed that the whole Pacific Coast "would be easy prey in case of attack." He went on to say that Japanese immigrants were an "enemy within our gates."[40] Other examples of those spreading the gospel of the "yellow-peril" include American naval hero Richmond Pearson Hobson, and Hommer Lea. Lea's famous book *The Valor of Ignorance*, written in 1909, warned of the coming Japanese invasion of Philippines, and the whole west coast of the US.

These calls of a Japanese invasion did begin to sink in, and to spread. Indeed, they sunk in to the point that "in both 1907 and 1912-1913, the periods of greatest friction in California, there were full blown war scares." Fears of the "Yellow Peril" showed up in works of fiction as well as in racist diatribes. For example, F. Scott Fitzgerald's Amory Blaine said in *Paradise Lost* that he "would dream one of his favorite waking dream....the one about the Japanese invasion, when he was rewarded by being made the youngest general in the world."

By 1920 these fears had fused with "scientific racism" to the point that Lothrop Stoddard, in his infamous book *The Rising Tide of Color*, would write,

> Colored immigration is a universal peril, menacing every part of the white world...The whole white race is exposed, immediately or ultimately, to the possibility of social sterilization and final replacement or absorption by the teeming colored races...There is no immediate danger of the world being swamped by black blood. But there is a very immediate danger that the white stocks may be swamped by Asiatic blood....Unless [the white] man erects and maintains artificial barriers [he will] perish...White civilization is to-day coterminous with the white race.[41]

Implicit in the "yellow peril" and "yellow peril" literature was the assumption that Japanese could not assimilate into American society. The Japanese, it was believed, were different, and thus dangerous. And as war scares, and irrational fears of invasion

demonstrate, these ideas were not confined to Japanese immigrants but rather to Japan as a whole. The Pacific War, of course, only intensified these fears.

The best single work on the American image of Japan during the Second World War, is John Dower's *War Without Mercy*. Dower makes the case that race was the most important single factor in regard to how the United States viewed the Japanese during the war. He demonstrates that there was a marked contrast in the manner in which Americans viewed the Japanese as opposed to the Italians and the Germans. For example, he points out that German atrocities were always attributed to the Nazis where as those of the Japanese were usually attributed to Japs or in some cases, for example, *Time* Magazine, to "the Jap." This denied the Japanese any individuality and affected the way the war was fought in the Pacific. The famous wartime reporter Ernie Pyle provides some excellent manifestations of this through his dispatches which clearly show differences in the ways the two enemies were perceived. According to Pyle, the Japanese were treated as if they were sub-human. For example, they gave Pyle the "creeps" and he wanted to take a "mental bath" after seeing Japanese prisoners.[42] This attitude did not exist with regard to the Germans and Italians and it was not peculiar to Pyle.

In fact racial slurs were so common during the war as to become casual. Many of the US. Military leaders, such as Admiral Halsey, as well as allied diplomats engaged in metaphors comparing the Japanese to animals. The Japanese were likened to ants, rats, and bees swarming around the Queen (Emperor). However, by far the most common metaphor was to compare Japanese to apes. These animal metaphors dehumanized the enemy and made killing that much easier. Not only did these images affect the attitudes of the soldiers, they provided a frame of reference for those people who did not actually fight in the war. People who had never seen a Japanese or been in a battle could understand the idea of killing a monkey, flushing animals out of the Jungle, or of destroying a rat's nest.[43]

There was also another side to the American images of Japan. While the traditional American image of the Japanese had fueled the stereo-types of Japanese

inferiority, in the wake of Japanese military success, they also became the root of the concept of the Japanese superman. In marked contrast to earlier images, the small, insignificant Japanese became giants. Where they had been considered myopic, off-balance, poor flyers who were afraid of the jungle, they now became supermen with a fanatical fighting spirit. There was a revival of the old "yellow-peril" literature. For example, Homer Lea's book came into vogue. The myth of the Superman was slowly debunked as the war went on. However, neither of the myths, that of inferiority or super-human qualities was totally, destroyed. These two images went through the war hand in hand.[44]

These images, of course, were not invented during the war. As the revival of Lea's book demonstrates, they were clearly linked to the pre-war attacks on Japanese immigration. The war-time images of Japan contained both the condescension of pre-war racism, as well as the fear of some sort of Japanese superman. In other words, the *Chronical's* fear that the Japanese were going to take over California by dint of their economic fanaticism and ability to prosper on less than Americans was echoed in the fears of a fanatical Japanese soldier, able to live, like an ape, in the jungle.

It was the desire of the American government to understand this fanatical psychology which led to the war-time character studies of the Japanese. As such, the Pacific War spurred phenomenal advances in American research on Japan. As alluded to before, the most prominent and influential of the books to come out of this war time effort to understand the Japanese, was Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. While, contemporary scholars consider Benedict's work to be too full of generalizations, it is still influential to the point that it is not only found in almost every single reading list and/or bibliography of books related to Japan, it is frequently singled out in some way as having been a particularly helpful book.

Of course, Ruth Benedict was not the only one publishing about Japan at this time. Aside from the obvious news coverage, she was joined by an number of anthropologist,

and scholars, all of whom attempted to define the national character of Japan. Some of the most important (and often most ridiculous) of these authors are: Geoffrey Gorer, Weston La Berre, Douglas Harring, Fredrick S. Hulse, James Clark Moloney, Fred Kerlinger, and John Embree.[45] Their war time studies of Japan varied in terms of both their influence at the time and in their staying power after the war. However as a group, according to Richard H. Minear's article in the *Japan Interpreter*, the national character studies of the Japanese "were probably the most influential national-character studies of all, and they have continued to exercise an inordinate influence on the field of Japanese studies in the United States."[46]

What then, is it that Benedict and the other wartime scholars say about Japan? There are a number common treads which run through these works, however some of the most important, both in terms of their importance to the authors argument, and their longevity, are the ideas which stress, that the Japanese are repressed compulsives, who are driven by the strict and demanding nature of their culture to define an order both in their personal lives, and in the world. This desire for order, along with Japanese concepts of *on* and *giri* make the Japanese especially prone to hierarchy, loyalty, and obedience, as well as harmony and group cooperation (at least within their own group). In addition, the Japanese are said to be driven by a desire to act properly and to avoid shame. Their morality is based on shame, on not offending the proper relationship between the parties involved, and not on any sense of "right" or "wrong" as Westerners perceive morality.

In the case of Benedict, these ideas, especially those related to hierarchy, and personal obligations/relations, were clearly the center piece of her work. While much more sophisticated than many of the other authors, some of whom focused on Japanese toilet training as the basis for the Japanese personality, Benedict nevertheless, uses her general map of Japanese culture to explain why the Japanese went to war and to take a guess at how they will act in the post-war world. In particular, Benedict mentions the "dark face" of *giri* which causes Japan to be overly sensitive and to react in a hostile

manner to actions which were not designed as insults. For example, Japan's over-reaction to the American Exclusion Act and the Naval Parity Treaty. Furthermore, Benedict claims Japan's situational morality and different concept of sincerity (for the Japanese Benedict defines sincerity as "the zeal to follow the 'road' mapped out by the Japanese code and the Japanese Spirit"[47]) were the principle factors in causing the war.

As noted before, there were a number of other authors who were writing on Japanese national character at this time. Instead of reviewing each author, and what he/she said, it seems prudent to look at what is common about them, and to base judgment on those elements which were pervasive in most character studies. To a degree, such an analysis has already been done by both Richard H. Minear and Fred N. Kerlinger. Both of these authors take offense to the sweeping generalizations made by the war time studies. In particular, Kerlinger discusses the work of Gorer, LaBarre, and Medows. "A basic thesis of these writers," he argues, "is that the Japanese are an aggressive people due to frustrating factors in child-rearing practices and to the harsh restrictions of adult life. That is the frustration-aggression theme is basic."[48] Like Benedict, these authors translate these traits into an explanation of why Japan went to war. In the process, ignoring historical, and contemporary issues which played a large part in Japan's decision to go to war, as well as ignoring the diversity within Japan.

It is surprising to see that even the few writers with extensive experience in Japan, also emphasize the same stereo-types. One of the two authors who Minear identifies as an "old Japanist," Douglas G. Harring is a good example. Harring, originally went to Japan as a Baptist missionary. He arrived in Japan in 1917 and stayed there until 1926 when he was recalled for heresy. Following his dismissal as a missionary, Harring became an anthropologist. His writing on Japan is characterized by what Minear describes as a sort of schizophrenia.

Despite his greater familiarity with Japan, and his first hand experience living among the Japanese, Harring was in basic agreement with the essays discussed above.

Thus, while he attributed the "compulsiveness" of Japanese behavior to the pressures of Tokugawa rule, and not to toilet training, he none the less agreed that the Japanese exhibited compulsive traits. In his contribution to Silberman's book, an essay titled "Japanese National Character and Culture: Cultural Anthropology, Psychoanalysis, and History," Harring highlights eight basic conclusions of the war-time studies, all of which he finds more or less convincing. To paraphrase Harring, he describes these eight characteristics as follows:

(1) Psychologically and culturally the Japanese are very homogeneous. They act and think more alike than do Occidental peoples. The avowed aim of Japan's prewar Ministry of Education was to produce subjects of the Emperor so much alike as to be interchangeable for national purposes.....

(2) The Japanese conform almost eagerly to numberless exact rules of conduct and exhibit bewilderment when required to act alone or in situations not anticipated in the codes.....

(3) The major sanctions of conformity to Japanese codes of conduct are ridicule and shame. Early in life every child learns that the slightest breach of proper conduct may expose his family to ridicule, and that a lapse from propriety may leave him unsupported in the face of the ridicule of the world and the wrath of his own family.....

(4) The Japanese are extremely polite. Politeness is conceived of as adherence to a code that prescribes correct treatment of others in order to maintain one's own 'face' and self-esteem. The test of Japanese politeness is ego-centered: 'Have I acted correctly?'.....This contrasts with the concept of courtesy, as conduct motivated by consideration of the goals and welfare of the other person....

(5) Because Japanese families and Japanese society are rigid hierarchies, individuals must ascertain their precise status in every social situation.....hence the need for vigilance concerning everyone's 'proper place.' This attitude transfers into international relations......clarification of the hierarchical rankings of nations was a compulsive necessity for the Japanese even at the cost of war....

(6) Veneration of family ancestors and of the Emperor as surrogate of the national ancestors means that every individual has been reared to constant awareness of infinite blessing received from three sources. No effort of his, even death in battle, can repay one ten-thousandth part of the obligation to the Emperor and to his forebears....

(7) Pleasures of the flesh are regarded as in no way sinful or evil. They are subordinate, however, to the major goals of life.....'They cultivate the pleasures of the flesh like fine arts, and then, when they are fully savored,

they sacrifice them to duty....The strong, according to the Japanese verdict, are those who disregard personal happiness and fulfill their obligations. (8) The word *makoto*, mistranslated in dictionaries as 'sincerity' is charged with emotional significance in Japan. *Makoto* is not equivalent to sincerity; a *makoto* person uses every means, including deception and violence, to carry out his duty....In Japanese eyes, *makoto*, utter devotion to codes of conduct, is one of the highest virtues.....[49]

Harring's summary of Japanese national character provides an excellent summary of the conclusions of wartime studies, as well as another example of the continuity and the many connecting threads which run between the various studies of Japanese national character. In the post-war years, these same ideas have been turned to the study of Japanese government, and economics. Ideas of harmony, loyalty, cooperation, *on*, *giri*, etc. have continued to be the building blocks on which Japanese society, foreign relations, and business practices have been analyzed. While there is certainly a degree of validity to this approach, it has often been taken to extremes. The result is that books on Japan portray a more unified, harmonious Japan than is actually the case. In other words, diversity, individuality, contention, and the circumstances outside the realm of Japanese culture are often overlooked, or at least de-emphasized.

In more modern times, many of the attempts to explain the Japanese economic miracle and to explain the Japanese themselves follow the national character studies in general outlook and in a very specific sense. As already discussed, the re-writing and re-interpreting of Japanese history after the war was greatly influenced by ideas of modernization theory which, whatever their original aim, created an environment in which both Americans and Japanese eventually began to point to continuity in Japanese history, culture, and values, at least at some central, core level, as factors which made Japan's tremendous modernization possible. Many of these works exhibit an undeniable continuity in terms of their analysis of Japanese national character as mediated by Japan's "exceptional" historical development. More specifically, the importance of harmony, loyalty, *giri, on*, compulsivness, fanaticism, and a feeling that it is extremely difficult for

there to be trust between Japanese and Americans may be just as common in contemporary analyses of Japan as in those of the prewar and wartime era. There may not be anything inherently wrong with emphasizing some of these ideas in the study of Japan. What it problematic, however, is that such analysis often produces simple stereo-typical views of the Japanese which present only a kinder, watered-down version of the war-time "Jap," minus, of course, the direct racial assaults on the Japanese. This leaves the door open for a return to the older, negative stereo-types of Japan.

Perhaps the best example of this is Herman Khan's enormously successful *The Emerging Japanese Superpower*. Khan's book provides explicit examples of the ties between the national character studies and the latter economic analysis. Indeed, Khan himself makes this point a number of times throughout his work. "The basic thesis" of Khan's book, is that "the Japanese differ from Americans and Europeans in many important ways, and that it is important for Americans and Europeans to understand these differences."[50] Of course Khan gives the usual disclaimer that the Japanese are too complex to generalize about and his efforts should not be taken too seriously. Nevertheless, he continues, problems in defining national character with regard to a given nation are "less serious" with regard to Japan than with most other peoples, because "to a remarkable degree they [the Japanese] are a unified and homogeneous people with one culture."[51] Indeed, in this influential book, Khan devotes nearly twenty-five percent to a chapter entitled "Some Comments on the Japanese Mind." Again, it is instructive that a book which deals with the emergence of Japan's economic prowess is based on an understanding of the "Japanese mind." With regard to his outlook on Japanese national character, there are few surprises in Khan's work. His characterization of the Japanese is extremely similar to those of the other authors discussed so far. In particular, Khan discusses his debt to Ruth Benedict. For example, Khan states,

> For the general reader wishing to pursue this matter of the similarities and differences between Japanese and American national characters perhaps the best book is *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* by Ruth Benedict. While the Benedict book is almost a quarter of a century old, most of the points it makes still carry a high degree of validity....I should also note that the Benedict book is extraordinarily readable. I will use it freely in this chapter--in part because I myself found it a most useful introduction whose clarity I see little point in paraphrasing, and in part because it is widely available.[52]

Khan then goes on to quote Benedict's introduction at length. While he notes that many specialists consider Benedict's work to be over-general, he also asserts that none of them have told him that it is particularly misleading. In terms of his own conclusions about the Japanese mind, Khan presents a multi-faceted, and non-binding picture. In other words, he contradicts himself and covers his prose with enough generalization that virtually anything would fall under some category of his analysis. Nevertheless, his analysis was clearly influenced by Benedict's ideas. Of the variety of issues he discusses in this chapter, special attention is given to: hierarchy, prestige, shame, guilt, pride, group centered decision making, harmony, and duty.

Having thus summed up Japanese national character, Khan proceeds to recent Japanese economic growth explicitly linking it to his character sketch. As he phrases it, "some [of the reasons for Japan's success] arose directly out of the Japanese national character as described in the previous chapter."[53] What is important here is Khan's use of ideas of a Japanese national character as the basic building blocks of his analysis of Japan's economy. In fact, to emphasize the importance of Japanese national character, Khan added an extensive (close to sixty pages) appendix which is mostly filled with quotes and theories about Japanese national character.

Another popular work which approaches the study of Japan in a similar way is Richard Halloran's *Japan: Images and Realities.* Halloran's most explicit attempts to define Japan can be found in his chapters "The Establishment and Consensus," and a chapter called "We Japanese," a chapter of sweeping generalization in which Halloran tries

to put forth the world view of Tanaka Taro, his average Japanese. In this chapter Halloran attempts to give the reader a view of the world from Japanese eyes by letting Tanaka give a twenty-five page over-view of his life and his views of Japanese society. Such a chapter can be written Tanaka (Halloran) claims because Japanese have a "definite national character" and thus all Japanese are almost exactly alike in terms of their beliefs.[54]

In the former, Holloran attempts to give the reader a look at how "Japan is run." In so doing, he relies on the a metaphor based on the idea that there is an "Establishment" of elite bureaucrats, businessmen, politicians, and a handful of prestigious Japanese who run the nation. These elites operate an establishment which has no parallel in the Western nation-states, as it "has evolved from the earliest times as families joined into clans and into a national family."[55] The essence of Japan, according to Holloran, is contained in the power found in this Establishment, and the essence of the Establishment itself, is found in personal relationships and obligation as outlined by Benedict, Khan, and others. As Holloran phrases it,

> The Establishment is held together by formal, visible organizational ties that are much the same as in other leadership groups around the world. But there are unspoken, intangible ties that are unique to Japan and often unseen by the foreigner. No tie is more important to the Japanese than the interwoven personal relationships that define his place in the web of society. This essence of personal loyalty and obligation is considered a prime virtue and permeated Japanese society. It governs every facet of one person's relations with others in the family, marriage, school, work, and play. Those in the Establishment have personal obligations to the emperor and the Imperial Household, to their own families and through members of the family to others....to their schoolmates, to their business associates, to people in a wider circle with whom they have become associated one way or another, down to the young girls who caddy for them on the golf course.[56]

This formulation of the Establishment contains most of the major elements and stereo-types so far discussed. Here, however, they are applied to the study of the working of the modern Japanese government. Halloran is by no means alone in tying these

traditional pillars of American stereo-types of Japan to modern Japan's "unique" political and economic institutions. Frank Gibney's work, *The Five Gentlemen of Japan*, is similar in its attempt of define a basic element of Japanese society and to apply it to all of Japan. For Gibney, the idea is the "web society." This web society, the same term used by Holloran above, is based on all of the familiar elements of Japanese national character. By tracing the lives of five different Japanese, Gibney hopes to show how the web confines, and defines the Japanese. There understanding of personal relations, Gibney believes, defines the way they interact with other members of society and the societal institutions.

In terms of more recent books, Clyde Prestowitz Jr.'s book *Trading Places* also uses these ideas of a Japanese national character, translated into Japanese institutions, as a tool with which to pry into the US-Japanese economic relations. As Prestowitz phrases it,

> The fascinating aspect of this phenomena [Japan's unique national character] is not the particular explanations but the near obsessions of the Japanese with their uniqueness. Indeed, the concept even extends beyond people to things. One of the recent trade issues involved the contention that Japanese soil is different from that of other countries. This sense the Japanese have of their own uniqueness, which has struck all observes of Japan as one of the keys to the nature of its society, gives rise to a certain tribal pride.[57]

According to Prestowitz the most important elements of this group identity are found in Japan's: group consciousness, concern for harmony and conformity, group ethics, personal relationships, hierarchy, exclusiveness -- by which he means the Japanese idea of uniqueness, and the Japanese drive for self-sufficiency -- based on their belief that no one can really understand Japan and that it is thus not safe to rely on foreigners. Prestowitz provides a number of anecdotal stories in which he ties the difficulty of some US company, or trade negotiation in penetrating the Japanese market to his idea of the Japanese national character.[58] For example, he uses the example of the IBM-Hitachi spy

case as an example of Japanese group consciousness, desire for harmony, and the importance of personal relationships.

As he relates the story, an American, William Palyn, was hired by Hitachi to consult them on how to make IBM compatible computers. Palyn felt that some of what he was being asked to do was illegal, and he informed the FBI. Upon investigation, the FBI determined that both Hitachi and Mitsubishi were using questionable methods to get new technology. As he contrasts the reactions in the US and Japan, Prestowitz says,

> most Americans who were aware of the incident thought the culprits should deserved to be caught and punished, since theft is wrong and illegal. The Japanese reaction was quite the opposite. Sting operations are considered distasteful in Japan.....The reason is not hard to comprehend. A society in which acceptable behavior is determined by following strictly what others do is vulnerable to stings....The feeling in Japan is that if some members of the group are doing something, the others cannot be expected to refrain from doing it also.[59]

Prestowitz goes on to say that this same case also provides a good example of the importance of human relations in Japan. He discusses how most Americans felt that Pylon had done the right thing. He could have made more money from Hitachi, however, he decided to stand up for what was right. From the Japanese perspective, Palyn had demonstrated that he was "unreliable." He had broken the trust of his group and thus had acted in a "despicable," "dishonorable" way.

Prestowitz goes on to give a number of other examples and to discuss the fact that hierarchy should be the starting point of any analysis of Japanese culture. He concludes his short sketch of Japanese national character by saying, "the self-perception of uniqueness, the group orientation, a suspicion of foreigners, and the drive for self-sufficiency -- these factors combined make the Japanese market very difficult to enter."[60] In the next section, he tries to demonstrate how these ideas are transferred into Japanese institutions. In so doing his argument is almost exactly the same as Richard Halloran's ideas of the "Establishment."

While it is true that these authors are sophisticated enough not to base their entire argument on ideas of Japanese national character, they nevertheless use these ideas in a manner which obscures the complexity or at least the conflict in Japanese society. And while these particular authors may very well be aware of this conflict, their readers may not be, and they never would learn about it either through their works or the media which seem to premise their reports on ideas which are derived from these general works on Japan.

The similarities in the consistent use of ideas of Japanese national character in these works, and as will be seen, in the media reports on Japan as well, are tied to a simplistic, stereo-typed reading of Japanese history. All of these authors trace the root of Japanese national character to Japan's feudal unconscious. They then extrapolate from a mythic past to an equally mythical present. An interesting discussion of this phenomena can be found in Tetsuo Najita's introduction to *Conflict in Modern Japanese History*. While Najita is mainly discussing the historical writings of Japan specialists in academia, his comments are at least as true for the general works discussed above. According to Najita, histories of Japan have tended to form characterizations

> of Japan as a consensual society proceeding along an evolutionary course or, at times deviating from it.....The dimension of conflict, dissent, and in general, the turbulence that one sees over the course of that history was usually treated as an aberration of the true course. Individual voices of agony were seen as those of marginal figures, sure losers lacking demonstrable influence.[61]

This approach, Najita, and the other contributors to the work believe, "neglects a large portion of Japanese history."[62] In terms of this essay, Najita's statement is important because it is the stereo-types derived from this deficient history which are used to explain Japan. This is particularly true for the general histories and the simple answer approaches which serve as a base for much of the media reports which are so instrumental in

influencing American opinion owing to the lack of interest and knowledge about Japan in the general American populous. In other words, the historical generalizations produced by these authors are often the root of even greater, and one might expect more widely read, generalizations in the media. A few examples of historical generalizations in these books and then in the media will help to demonstrate how the image of Japan continues be based on simplistic half-truths.

In *Trading Places*, Prestowitz relates the Japanese reaction to the Palyn case discussed above to the fact that,

> mutual watching has a long tradition in Japan. In the Tokugawa era, the shoguns employed what was known as the *go-nin gumi* system, where groups of five households were held responsible for the actions of individual members for such things as tax and loan payments and infractions of sumptuary laws. During the Second World War, *tonari gumi* (neighborhood associations) were used to enforce control of society. Today Western officials are often amazed by the strong reaction of their Japanese counterparts to newspaper stories and leaks, the reason is that the Japanese officials watch the press intently in order to divine in what direction the group is likely to go.[63]

Is such generalization and continuity from Tokugawa Japan, to World War Two Japan, to the corporate culture of Hitachi and MITI really appropriate? What about power relations in Tokugawa Japan? Did everyone stick together and did they all enjoy and react in the same way to the supervisory role of the *go-nin gumi* or the *tonari-gumi*, as, according to Prestowitz, the Japanese reacted to the Palyn case? There is undoubtedly some elements of truth to Prestowitz's comment, but it seems too much to extrapolate, and to claim a continuity based on Japanese national character and on a history which was never as clear cut as the myth makes it out to be.

One could also point to the frequent use of ideas of harmony, the *ie*, and loyalty as applied to Japanese corporate culture as elements which were supposedly drawn directly, and in most of the works, it appears, with little effort or mediation into modernity. Such extrapolation from samurai to businessman ignores a number of important factors. Not

the least of which is the deliberate institution of practices via company paternalism which are designed to foster, or perhaps require is a better word, the types of behavior which supposedly come so naturally to the Japanese.

Are Japanese workers really more loyal and hard working than anyone else? Are they this way because of the Japanese national character? Or, could it be that loyalty and long hours are a result of systemic factors which preclude an employee from going home, or changing jobs when he or she would like? Anyone who has asked a number of salarymen what they think of their job, their company, and the hours they work will quickly become disabused of the idea that most Japanese are happy to work outrageous hours. This is not to say that Japanese do not work long hours, only to point-out that contrary to much of what one reads, they are not inherently happy to do it. Yet, somehow this connection is still maintained in the American image of Japan and the general scholarship, and it based, it appears on an underlying assumption that Japan operates via a "feudal unconscious" and that there is a tremendous degree of continuity, and harmony in Japanese history.

For example, Halloran ends *Japan: Images and Realities* with a chapter called "Nara: Past and Prologue," in which he posits that the core of Japan has not changed and that an understanding of ancient Japan is very helpful in understanding contemporary Japan. As Halloran phrases it,

> the parallel between the events of the flow of history in the seventh and
> eighth centuries and the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is so striking. It
> is possible and even profitable to read passages from standard works on
> early Japanese cultural history and to substitute the words 'nineteenth and
> twentieth centuries' for 'seventh and eighth centuries.[64]

The danger in such a statement, and the danger of all the over-simplification discussed above, is the application to which it can be put as an analytical tool of understanding which focuses on the myth of the Japanese character. A perfect example is

an article which appeared in the May 17, 1966 issue of *Newsweek*. This article, entitled "How to Succeed in Business in Japan" is designed to provide the reader with a short sketch of how Japanese business operates and how the Japanese themselves view business. As one might expect, the article is full of generalizations, emphasizes harmony and the Japanese way at the expense of virtually any diversity and/or conflict, and takes a somewhat patronizing view of Japan in the sense that the Japanese are portrayed as evolving toward a more American style of doing business. In addition the article emphasizes Japanese uniqueness as it has evolved out of Japanese history and the continuity of that history, as described by Halloran and the others. The article begins as follows,

> A Western business man, on his first visit to Japan, tried not long ago to phone a television manufacturer for information about the company and an appointment with its president. Thwarted at every turn by the underling at the other end of the line, the businessman finally barked: "Well, do you make television sets or not?"
> "I'm sorry," came back the smooth reply, "I'm not in a position to answer that question." [65]

The reason for such strange behavior, it is explained, is the "wonderful mystique of Japanese business life-a mystique rooted in ancient custom and tradition from the country's feudal past." The article goes on to explain that the "bushido spirit-is absolute.....the bushido spirit is as rampant today as it was when samurai roamed the countryside, aristocratically decked out in silk robes and steel armor, doing the chivalrous and often warlike bidding of their daimyo, or lords."[66] As such the catch words of Japanese business culture are "self-discipline," "unquestioning obedience," "harmony," and by extension, the concepts of company/employee obligations are all derived from a Japanese history and culture which can be directly applied to explain the present. In Japan, it is explained, "traproots of tradition run deep" and are the primary reason that "no other country in the civilized world is so wrapped in mystique" as Japan.[67]

Another example of the over-simplification, or in this case the mis-use and mis-understanding of Japanese history, and specifically the historical continuity of Japanese values, is cited in Andrew Miller's *Japan's Modern Myth*. Miller discusses the example of an article published by Jerome Allen Cohen in a 1976 issue of the Sunday *New York Times Magazine*. In the article titled "Japan's Watergate: Made in the U.S.A.," about the original absence of comment in the Japanese news media about the scandal surrounding Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka, Cohen concludes "Japan, it seemed, was still, as a poet described it 1200 years ago, 'the divine country whose people would not speak out'....".[68] What angered Miller so much about Cohen's quotation was the fact that it "is a reference to the same *Man'yoshu* poem," a poem Miller had previously discussed as an example of a deliberate fabrication and manipulation of myth by the authors of *Koukutai no Hongi*, the 1937 work which was distributed in the millions in Japan and which traced the basis for Japanese claims of distinctness and superiority.[69]

According to Miller, the authors of *Kokutai no Hongi*, changed the meaning of the poem and created a "spurious doctrine that Japan was originally 'a land of the deities which is free from the strife of words,' in other words, a country where people make a virtue of not expressing verbally what they feel about things. Here," Miller continues, "we have the true origins, tawdry though they may be, of the modern anti myth of the Japanese virtue of silence, or, as it is often expressed, the Japanese gift for non-verbal communication."[70] When such an idea, a manipulation of a 1200 year old Japanese poem, reproduced for the Japanese war effort in 1937, and redistributed today via what Miller calls the myth of *Nihongo* appears in an analysis of Japanese politics, media, and culture in a 1976 edition of the *New York Times*, "in what form," Miller correctly asks, "does it not appear?"[71] Everywhere from movies, to fiction novels, such as the enormously popular novels *Shogun* (1977) and the more recent *Rising Sun* (1993), to political cartoons one sees the direct connections between samurai ethics, and fanaticism and modern Japanese business practices, and culture.

For example, one humorous political cartoon sited in Sheila Johnson's work, but originally published in *Playboy,* shows a Japanese couple embracing on the beach. As the waves crash over them, the man professes, "I love you more than anything else in the world--excluding my job at Yamada Electric, of course."[72] Is such an attitude really a part of Japanese national character, or is it more systemic and/or imposed on the employee than genuine? Either way, does the use of such images contribute to an understanding of Japan, or does it merely perpetuate old, stereo-types similar to those used to argue for the restriction of Japanese immigration due to the fact their lack of individualism and work habits would undermine American culture and values.

All of this is not to say that Japanese culture and history have no effect on modern Japan. Clearly this is not the case. Japan's history and culture, as in every nation, has molded the way society is organized as well as the behavioral ethics of the society. What this essay has attempted to point out is that the criteria by which Americans have formed their opinions of the Japanese has been relatively static and based, it appears, on a superficial understanding of Japan. An understanding which, while it may not be totally wrong, over simplifies the Japanese and contributes to misleading characterizations, and to mistrust. Particularly dangerous are ideas of Japanese uniqueness and almost universal conformity in Japanese society. Ideas of uniqueness are dangerous in that they project to Americans an image of Japan as an inscrutable, and often weird country which non-Japanese cannot hope to understand. Such ideas cut-off debate and discourage serious study of Japan.

In a similar manner, ideas of conformity are dangerous in that they tend to de-humanize the Japanese by supporting a "Jap" mentality and lend credence to statements such as, *Newsweek's* comment that in Japan the "*busido........*is absolute." A de-emphasis on conflict in Japanese history seems to create a corresponding rise in over-general comments which lead to stereo-typing. This in turn leads to continued distrust, exaggeration, and mis-understanding. It also leaves the door open for a return to ideas

and stereo-types which were prevalent during the war and which were, in many cases, racially based.

This is not totally the fault of Americans. All of the writers discussed above posit that the Japanese character which they are describing is not their invention or insight, but rather a reflection of what the Japanese say about themselves. It should be pointed out that many of the over-generalized concepts Americans have about the Japanese come from the self-stereo-types the Japanese have about themselves and their "uniqueness."

Ideas of Japanese uniqueness and the stereo-types which are derived from them have a long history. In terms of the ideas discussed in this paper, it is easy to point out how the Japanese themselves have contributed and American stereo-types about Japan via their own ideas and rhetoric. For example, in the section discussing the pre-war American image of Japan, it was pointed out that Americans were very fearful of Japanese immigration. These ideas were derived from the American image of Japan as different from the United States. However, it would be wrong to place all the blame for these ideas on the American side.

For example, in their book *Japan and the California Problem*, T. Iyenaga and K. Sato, argue that the proclivity of many Americas to look on the Japanese with suspicion and condescension was encouraged not only by racism but also by the life-styles of the Japanese. Iyenaga and Sato argue that the Japanese "manifest a strong tendency to congregate...this habit of collective living retards the process of assimilation, and, moreover, makes the Japanese problem loom large in the eyes of the white population living in adjoining places."[73] While a tendency to congregate is natural among immigrants, the Japanese showed a particularly strong clannishness. Iyenaga and Sato claim this is the result of widespread belief among the Japanese of the myth of their own racial uniqueness. "So strong is this myth even today," the authors argue, that "in spite of the anthropological discovery that the original settlers of the island were of diverse

races....the people still cling to the idea that the Japanese are a pure and glorious race which was divine and which is now represented by its direct descendent, the Emperor."[74]

The ideas used during the Pacific War with regard to Japan's *kokutai*, are, of course, an irrefutable example of Japanese self-stereotyping. In more recent years, these ideas have continued in the form of Japanese self-analysis of their own economic prosperity. Too often, the Japanese explanations are couched in cultural, exclusivist terms which promote the idea of Japan as an "other." This type of rhetoric clearly is returned to Japan via American stereo-types. This dialectic is particularly striking in virtually all the books and articles discussed in this essay, and as has been pointed out, they are not only a recent phenomena. The Japanese, themselves, have historically contributed to American stereo-types of Japan by their own ill conceived ideas of Japanese uniqueness as expressed by politicians, writers of *nihonjinron*, and a the general level at which these ideas are accepted by many Japanese.

These Japanese self-stereo types often set the tone for American analysis of Japan and in some cases create enmity when they are simply repeated by Americans. Most people who have spent a good deal of time in Japan are surprised by the frequency with which they hear Japanese generalize about themselves and/or draw comparisons between Japan and the rest of the world. Such statements often begin with the words "we Japanese...." and end with some broad statement about all Japanese. These ideas are often exported internationally, and color the way non-Japanese view Japan.

A discussion of the role of Japanese self-stereo-types in the formation of American images of Japan raises many interesting questions. Where do these ideas come from and why? Why does one here so much about Japanese uniqueness? What effect do these ideas have on the image of Japan? Do the Japanese really have what has often been called a "victim consciousness" and how does that affect their stereo-types of themselves, and ultimately the image others have of them? To what degree are people accused of "Japan-

bashing," a broad phrase often used to discredit critics of Japan, merely repeating many of the Japanese ideas about themselves?

The fact that Japanese self-stereo-types are often used by Americans to explain Japan demonstrates the impact these ideas have internationally. Questions as to why and how this is true are much more complicated. However, it seems clear that if one is to truly understand the American image of Japan he/she must understand the role Japan's ideas of Japan impact on American ideas of Japan.

For example, one of Japanese myths which affects American stereo-types is the manner in which conflict is almost eliminated from Japanese history. Anyone who has read histories of Japan in the Taisho period, for example, can see that the much discussed harmony of Japanese business and management practices did not just evolve inevitably out of Japan's inner harmony. Rather, the institutions which create what appears to be remarkable employee loyalty, were in fact, manufactured in recent times, and were often based on American models and ideas. Thus, what Sheldon Garon terms the "ultimate irony" of Americans looking to Japan for management ideas which supposedly evolved inevitably out of the Japanese national character, but were in fact consciously created and implemented, often with Western models in mind.

With this information in mind, what are we to make of Halloran's statement that,

> Japanese business practices and ethics today are derived from the traditions of the Tokugawa merchants and the *samurai* who went into industry during the Meiji era......The *samurai* brought with them their autocratic traits, their belief in privilege and status for those with power, their fierce loyalties and willingness to compromise with friends, their aggressiveness with its touch of ruthlessness towards rivals.[75]

In other words life-time employment, and possibly the roots of the *keiretsu* system as well as tariff and non-tariff barriers can be attributed to samurai ethics and not a

conscious set of private and/or government policies designed to promote fast industrial growth. Does this mean that Halloran is totally wrong? No. Only that he is being overly general and perpetuating stereo-types which make it difficult for there to be a view of the Japanese which is not based on stereo-types of Japanese national character.

This simplistic application of historical stereo-types is problematic in that, for example, one would think that the average Nissan executive has as much in common with the samurai as the average General Motors executive has in common with Wyatt Earp. This is not to say that business practices and management systems are not related to culture, only to point out that these types of characterizations are superficial and lead to a continued reliance on old images and stereo-types which, in turn, preclude the progression of understanding and friendly relations. To say that samurai ethics rule Japanese business or that "busido is as absolute as when the *samurai* roamed the countryside" is as misleading as a Japanese statement to the effect that,

> Current American business practices are predicated on the rough, gun-toting ethics employed by the American cowboy. Individualism and confrontation are as rampant today in American business as when the cowboys rode the range. Justice is as straight-forward as when the cowboys shot cheaters as the poker table. Is it any wonder that a country which developed out of a gun-slinging old-west, where justice was swiftly administered via a pistol would have a high crime rate? It is this fierce cowboy individualism which makes Americans unreliable as business partners, since they cannot work in groups and shoot anyone who disagrees with them. How can we feel truly comfortable if we have such people as our suppliers, or partners.

If such a statement were ever made by a Japanese, and some have come pretty close, Americans would find fault with the characterization that cowboy ethics provide the best way to explain the foundation of American business. Is it true that American business practices encourage individualism more than do Japanese practices? Yes. Is true that cowboys represent individualism? Yes. Does it then follow that Americans are best characterized as gun-slinging cowboys? Considerably more has influenced American

management styles than cowboys, and like-wise, there are more influences on Japanese business practices or Japanese society than the legacy of the *samurai*.

The absence of understanding of these facts demonstrates the selective and often misleading application of Japanese history in much of the modern pontification on Japanese uniqueness. Here we are reminded of Sheila Johnson's work as well as the work of such authors as Nathan Glazer and Pricilla Clapp. As these authors have demonstrated, the American image of Japan has shifted along with the psychological needs of Americans in regard to the changing level of importance (or unimportance) Americans place on their relationship with Japan in regard to their over-all economic and geopolitical world view. The fact that these changes have taken place does not, as has been demonstrated, mean the parameters in which Americans place the Japanese have widened or that scholarship on Japan no longer contains the same old stereo-types which limit American understanding of Japan by virtue of their proclivity to use simple answer formulas to explain a nation and a relationship which is for more nuanced, complex, and tied to the international context than these ideas allow. An examination of the changes in US-Japanese relations in the post-war period and how they impacted the American image of Japan will help to demonstrate why Americans have failed to limit the use of stereo-types and ideas of Japanese national character in their analyses of Japan. The post-war US-Japanese relationship, and the power relations which influence the American image of Japan, are the subjects of part III.

PART III: THE POSTWAR US-JAPANESE RELATIONSHIP

The patron-protégé relationship which developed between the United States and Japan as a result of the Second World War was unnatural and in the long run untenable. The almost unlimited power the United States held during the Occupation of Japan and its continued hegemony over the Japanese in the years that followed did not provided a realistic foundation for relations between two ambitious and powerful countries. Rather, it was a function of an ephemeral aberration in the relative power of the two nations. Nevertheless, in the immediate post-war years, the US-Japanese relationship benefited from a confluence of mutual interests. For the Americans, the primary concern was keeping the Japanese out of the Soviet orbit. For most Japanese, it was the rebuilding of the prestige of their defeated and war-torn nation. While these goals proved to be complimentary in the first two decades after World War II, they were, in the long run, in need of revision. Japanese recovery contrasted with a decline in the US economic position relative to Japan and the rest of world. As this happened, the mutual expectations each country held for the alliance began to change. In regard to the American image of Japan these changes led to a re-emphasis of some of what were perceived to be the negative aspects of Japanese national character.

For the US, there was a gradual change in terms of American priorities and concern with regard to Japan. At the most fundamental level, this change was marked by an evolution of concerns based on security arrangements, to one in which economic relations began to take a greater and greater role. The riots of 1960, the textile wrangle, and contention over automobiles are indicative of this transition.

While the image Americans were delivered with regard to Japan varied in theme with these transitions, the substance, and the stereo-types, remained similar to many of the war-time stereo-types discussed above. This was in contrast to the more benign and/or

positive evaluations of the Japanese which were predominant in the years directly following the war and the Occupation. In other words, different events and/or states of relations caused a relative emphasis or de-emphasis of certain aspects of Japanese national character. There was never, however, a wholesale re-evaluation or reformulation of the American image of Japan. Thus, up until the point that Americans began to feel threatened by Japanese economic success, they were content to see Japan as a "little brother" who was succeeding via hard work, and a mix of traditional culture and American modernity.

The more positive characterizations of Japan which began almost immediately after the war should not mislead one into believing that Americans had abandon their stereotypes of Japan or Japanese national character. Rather, the new found respect for Japan and Japanese culture was a function of the fact that Japan, as a nation reduced to rubble, was no longer a threat to the US. The acceleration of the Cold War and the "loss of China" provided a further encouragement for Americans to find things to admire about Japan. Americans believed they could do good during their Occupation of Japan. They believed they could transform Japan and the Japanese appeared to ready and able pupils.

A good example of this transformation is the September 1945 cover of *Leatherneck: The Magazine of the Marines.* On the cover, just a few weeks after the Japanese surrender, an American soldier is holding a "irritated but already domesticated and even charming pet" monkey on his shoulder.[76] This was a far cry from the vicious simian characterizations of the Japanese produced during the war. However, it was also a far cry from an overhaul of US images of Japan. There was still a "Jap," only now he was not threatening.

There was nothing for Americans to fear out of such a characterization of Japan. The quaint, (backward?) nation provided a nice contrast to modern America, and tourists, as well as tourist books appeared in increasing numbers and drew a wider and wider readership. Books such as Oliver Statler's *Japanese Inn,* an American best-seller for

almost six months in 1961, provided a picture of an historic, almost mystical Japan. By telling a partly true, partly invented history of a Japanese inn called Minaguchi-ya, Statler took his readers on a romanticized journey of Japanese history and endeared them to Japan and Japanese culture. During the same period Japanese movies, art, architecture, and cuisine became more common in America and began drawing larger and larger audiences.

It is important, however, not to confuse this interest in Japan with a genuine redrawing of the paradigm through which most Americans viewed Japan. There was little which was less ethnocentric, or less Orientalist, to these views of Japan than the earlier stereo-types. Rather, Americans seemed to be drawn to Japan for many of the same reasons they hated and feared Japan during the war: a romanticism of Japan's samurai and feudal past, Japanese concepts of duty and obligation, loyalty, hard work, a strict set of behavior codes. Only this time, minus the war, and minus any sort of threat from Japan, Americans tended to focus on the positive or the more gentle, esthetic aspects of the same characteristics which they disparaged during the war and which they latter held up as signs the Japanese could not be trusted or dealt with in economic relations. For example, loyalty became fanaticism, hard work became an obsession of "economic animals" with the Japanese GNP, pride and self-confidence became nationalism or arrogance, and all of these traits were related back to a Japanese national character which bears a marked relation to what was portrayed during the war.

This continuity in the core stereo-types is at the heart of what many observers have called America's dual image of Japan. On the one-hand Americans seem to admire a good deal about Japan, for example Japanese "industriousness" is praised more than any other Japanese characteristic by Americans.[77] On the other hand, Americans have become increasingly quick to accuse the Japanese of taking advantage of American generosity, or of being unduly nationalistic in their economic policies. What explains the dual nature of the American image of Japan is the fact that both the good and bad images of Japan are

rooted in the Orientalist, national character approach through which American ideas of Japan are so often based. As Fredrick L Schodt, author of *America and the Four Japans* phrases it, " part of the problem is our lack of knowledge about a complex nation, and part of the problem is our subconscious tendency to indulge in the same sort of mythologizing that the Japanese do."[78]

In order to understand these transitions in the attitudes Americans held toward Japan, one must understand the general frame-work and issues of post-war US-Japanese relations. During the sixties and early seventies, the patterns of anger and frustration which have characterized the relationship in more recent years began to gel in the minds of those involved in managing the alliance and correspondingly in the general American perception of the Japanese. In a broad sense, and from the American side, this was manifest by US. frustration with what they viewed as the intractability of the Japanese on trade and investment matters, as well as the Japanese reluctance to take up a greater burden in international and military affairs. In other words, the US was demanding more from the Japanese than the Japanese felt they should have to or were capable of delivering. As such, the increasing tension of the period was a function of the changing expectations which came with changes in the relative economic strengths of the two nations.

For example, in a 1971 article in *Foreign Affairs*, Frank Gibney pointed out that due to America's role as the conquerors of Japan, Americans were viewed as "larger than life." In terms of the long-term relationship, this created some problems. As Gibney states it,

> Accustomed to thinking of the United States, variously, as elder brother, a cornucopia, or an abode of inexhaustible resources, the Japanese find it hard to realize that a certain proportion of their own prosperity is coming out of America's hide - and that this is increasingly resented across the Pacific.[79]

In other words, economic changes created pressures which had not existed in the immediate postwar years. The American emphasis on the quaint aspects of Japan no longer applied when the Japanese stopped being as tractable as Americans had come to expect. The US reaction was to see the Japanese as "unreliable," "nationalistic," or "arrogant" in their relations to the outside world. These are reactions which are rooted in an Orientalist concept of the Japanese as "an other." A look at the basics of the US and Japanese approaches to their post-war relationship will help to explain how Americans shifted from extracting the positives out of Japanese national character to focusing on the negative and threatening side of the same issues.

Since the end of the Occupation the foundation for the US-Japanese relationship has been the Security Treaty which binds the two nations together. For the US, these treaties have been important due to Japan's strategic location and its potential economic and political strength. Indeed, Japan is one of what George Kennan called the five major military, industrial bases necessary to American security - the other four being the United States, Germany, Central Europe, and the Soviet Union. Not surprisingly, given Japan's importance, the US desired a strong, prosperous, stable, and friendly government in Japan. The security treaty provided the US the opportunity to maintain close relations with the Japanese, maintain a degree of leverage over Japanese foreign affairs, and thus protect US interests vis a vis the Soviet Union.

Part and parcel to the security treaty was the concept of US economic assistance to Japan. In addition to the hundreds of millions of dollars in aid and assistance the US provided Japan in the first two decades after the war, the US also sponsored Japan's entry into GATT in 1955, despite strong British objections, and helped Japanese entry into the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development in 1964. The US also provided the Japanese with a huge and relatively open market for their exports, while at the same time allowing the Japanese to place restrictions on imports. Furthermore, the US put up with "Japanese restrictions on foreign investment while giving Japan preferential treatment

to US capital markets (through exemption from the interest equalization tax) as late as 1965."[80]

This unbalanced relationship made sense to American decision makers because it served American security objectives. It made sense to the most powerful Japanese decision makers because it allowed them to pursue their goal of economic recovery without having to worry about the free flow of raw materials or having to pay large amounts for military security. However, in return, the Japanese had to tow the US line in international affairs and tolerate the continuation of US bases on Japanese territory. Neither of these conditions were particularly popular in Japan, however, most Japanese, especially those in a position to control policy, believed that the sacrifices were well worth the benefits received from its association with the US. For example, polls taken in 1970, in the middle of the textile wrangle and in the "height of the 1970 anti-treaty (US-Japanese Security Treaty) campaign," showed that only 14% of the Japanese were in favor of an immediate abrogation of the treaty with the United States.[81]

In addition to being functional, the US-Japanese alliance also fit nicely into each nation's psychological conception of itself vis a vis the other nation. For the Americans, the alliance conformed to the idea of the US as an example to the world. The Americans fancied themselves as Japan's teachers. They felt they had transformed Japan into a Western-style democracy during the Occupation and they hoped to continue that relationship as Japan redeveloped its economy. This image of the US as Japan's teacher and as the yardstick for Japanese development contributed greatly to the ethnocentric analyses produced in the US with regard to Japan, and was reflective of a conceit which probably explains, at least in part, the lack of interest most Americans took in Japan as well as the consistency in American stereo-types of the Japanese. As expressed earlier, the view of the US as the worlds most modern and successful nation carried the corollary belief that the US did not have a lot to learn from nations such as Japan.

From the Japanese side, the relationship corresponded to the lack of options which Japan could realistically follow as well as the fact that many became used to expecting special treatment from the United States. As the Japanese economy recovered, however, these concepts became less and less tenable. For example, in a speech in 1969 Ambassador Meyer stated that "The United States cannot tolerate unendingly a trade deficit with Japan soaring into the billions of dollars."[82] According to the Ambassador this statement generated some comment in the Japanese press, including a statement by the *Asahi* which discussed the fact that, "'Japan's tendency to depend on a certain softness and special consideration in the American attitude' had been a 'characteristic feature of Japanese-American relations since the war.'"[83] This example is a taste of how the expectations of the alliance fit psychologically but no longer coincided with reality. In other words, given Japan's economic strength and trade surplus with the United States, Americans felt it was unreasonable for the Japanese to expect the same type of special treatment they had received from the US when the Japanese economy was weak. The Japanese, of course, did not tend to see the situation as the Americans saw it and this led to an increasing sense, from the American side, that the Japanese were a threat.

These concerns were reinforced by the rapidity with which the Japanese economy was growing relative to the American economy. For example, while Japan's exports totaled only a little more that two billion dollars in 1955, by 1965, the first year that Japan had a trade surplus with the United States, Japan exported nearly eight and a half billion dollars worth of merchandise. Or in another example, in the years from 1952 to 1973 the Japanese economy grew at an annual rate of approximately 10%, a sharp contrast to the approximately 3.3% increases in the US economy. Furthermore, despite the fact that Japan's imports were increasing at a substantial annual rate, their exports were increasing at an even faster pace. Again, this was in direct contrast to the trend in the United States where US exports were increasing at a slower pace than imports. In 1971 this trend was manifest by the fact that the US had an over-all trade deficit - a situation the United States

had not experienced during the twentieth century. In contrast, the Japanese continued to see an increase in their trade surplus.[84]

These changes in the relative strengths of the two nations created pressures within the alliance because they ran counter to the general assumptions under which the alliance had been formed and managed. Namely, the concept of the United States as a protector/teacher and Japan as a weak and developing student. For example, in his essay on US-Japanese trade relations, Hidoe Kanemitsu divides US-Japanese relationship into three periods based largely on the changes in the relative strengths of the two economies. As Kanemitsu sees it, the period from 1952-1963 was a time characterized by a patron-protégé relationship, the period form 1963-1972 was a leader-follower relationship, and the period from 1973-1982 is best seen as a time of a rival relationship. While it is difficult to divide up the stages of a relationship in terms of years, Kanemitsu's three periods seem to accurately reflect the general trends and feelings of US-Japanese relations. By the early 1970s, the Americans were beginning to view the Japanese as economic competitors as much as political and military allies.

To complicate matters even more, the US was also going through a painful re-evaluation of its foreign policy and its place in the world. This is clearly evident in the approach Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger took in foreign affairs. As it related most directly to the Japanese, US foreign policy under Nixon no longer saw the world as a bi-polar struggle predicated on ideology. Rather, Nixon envisioned a multi-polar world of autonomous countries which balanced the actions of the others. Two quotes from Nixon - the first one coming just nine days before his announcement that he would go to China, and the second coming from Nixon's report on US Foreign policy for the 70s, will help to illustrate Nixon's vision of the world and the US role in international relations. In his Kansas City speech of July 6, 1971 Nixon stated,

So in sum, what do we see?....we see five great economic super-powers:
the United States, Western Europe, the Soviet Union, Mainland China,
and, or course, Japan.....These are the five that will determine the economic
future, and because economic power will be the key to other kinds of
power, the future of the world in other ways in the last third of this
century.[85]

Along the same lines, Nixon's report (published in 1972 and thus after both Nixon

Shocks and the Textile Wrangle) sheds some light on the Administration's justification for

their approach to US Japanese relations. Speaking specifically about the Nixon Shocks,

the report reads as follows:

We recognize that some of our actions during the past year placed the
Japanese government in a difficult position. We recognize that our actions
have accelerated the Japanese trend toward more autonomous policies.
We regret the former, but could not do otherwise. We welcome the latter
as both inevitable and desirable - inevitable because it reflects the reality of
Japanese strength in the 1970's - desirable because it is a necessary step in
the transformation of our relationship to the more mature and reciprocal
partnership required in the 1970's.[86]

These quotes put some perspective on how the Nixon Administration viewed

relations with Japan. On one hand, there was a desire to maintain good relations with a

powerful nation. On the other hand, there was the desire to see Japan take a more

independent position vis a vis the US and, as a result, to stop expecting that the United

States would always take special consideration of the needs and desires of Japan. Rather,

the US, shaken by Vietnam, concerned about the relative decline in its economic situation,

and desiring to find a way to mitigate the tensions of the cold war via détente - was not

willing to put amiable relations with Japan ahead of either its broader foreign policy goals

or its concern with the US economic situation.

This, of course is a rough sketch of American-Japanese relations from the war until

the mid-Seventies, with the Nixon Administration serving as a sort of turning point after

which economic issues begin to grow in importance. Nevertheless, it correctly portrays the changing relations of the two nations based primarily on changes in the American world view in general and Japanese economic success. In terms of the American view of Japan, the two were intimately related. As the American expectations of Japan changed, so too, did the language used to explain Japan. It is the manifestation of the old stereo-types, rooted in Orientalism and a simplistic reading of Japanese history, as they appeared in media reports of events which are indicative of the above transition, that is the focus of the part IV.

PART IV: AMERICAN MEDIA COVERAGE OF JAPAN AND ITS RELATION TO THE AMERICAN IMAGE OF JAPAN

The 1960 demonstrations over the US-Japanese Security Treaty, the textile wrangle, and the debates related to the importation of Japanese automobiles are indicative of the transition described above. These events also provide examples of the degree to which the old stereo-types of Japan influence American media coverage. This is so in that Japanese national character is posited as one of the main factors in each event. Furthermore, discussion of Japanese national character is usually carried out in a somewhat patronizing way which betrays both a lingering Orientalism and the related difficulties Americans have in dealing with a powerful Japan.

John Dower address this issue both directly and eloquently in the last chapter of *War Without Mercy*. According to Dower,

> As the transition of Japan and the Western powers from war to peace demonstrated, the hard idioms have a soft underside; but by the same token, the softer idioms often conceal a hard and potentially devastating edge.....Nothing illustrates this better than the relationship between Japan and the Western powers since the late 1970s. To the historian, there is certainly a humorous side to the reincarnation of the Japanese 'superman' in a business suit four decades after he was first observed in military uniform in the skies of the Pacific and the jungles of Southeast Asia......Like his predecessor in khaki, the current version of the superman has inspired the emergence of a veritable cottage industry of commentary on Japan. That is only to be expected. More tantalizing is the fact that many of these presumed expert accounts end up speaking of "secrets" and "miracles" which ultimately trace back to some non discursive realm of intuition and quasi-mystical bonding unique to the Japanese. Even in the capitalist marketplace and on the frontiers of high-technology, the Japanese are presented as being different from all other races and nations engaged in the same practical, profit making endeavors.[87]

The "secrets," and "miracles," based on "intuition and quasi-mystical bonding unique to the Japanese," are, of course, the product of the influence of ideas of Japanese national character as discussed above. As opposed to concrete analyses, these statements just posit that Japan is a certain way because the Japanese are that way. This does little to explain anything and is at the root of Dower's frustration at the nagging consistency with which old stereo-types, or to borrow his word, "idioms" continue to be used as a way to measure or explain Japan. Even when Japan enjoyed a relatively more positive image in the United States, (from the Occupation until the "late Seventies," in Dower's chronology), the same Orientalist stereo-types were being used to define the Japanese.

Such a regression to the negative images of the war-time stereo-types was possible because the core of the basic image of Japan had not changed. Even before the 1970s, these ideas were clearly visible in the media reports on a variety of subjects, from Mishima's suicide, which happened in 1970, to the treaty riots and the textile wrangle. For example, as we are about to see, with regard to the anti-treaty demonstrations, the Japanese are seen as challenging the teachings of the US and they were evaluated as students who were only partly successful due to their unchanging national character. Because of their national character, the Japanese could never quite reach the American level, never quite achieve democracy on a par with the West, and thus never quite measure up to American standards. When the Japanese rebel, or challenge these standards, it is due to these deficiencies, and their exceptionalist past.

II. The 1960 TOKYO RIOTS

By 1960 there was great pressure from the Japanese for change in the US-Japanese relationship. The Japanese far Right and the Left, for a number of reasons, were concerned with Japan's relationship with the United States. In particular, they were worried about: unfairness in the alliance, the military nature of the alliance, and the

intentions of the US vis a vis its Communist adversaries. In other words, they were concerned that the US alliance might pull Japan into a war which was not in Japan's best interest. Furthermore, because it was widely assumed that the next war would be nuclear, they feared for the destruction of Japan itself. These fears were encouraged by the tense international atmosphere of the late 50s and early 60s, Prime Minister Kishi's militaristic past, as well as by direct challenges by the Soviet Union and China. For example, with regard to Prime Minister Kishi, a class A war criminal, the socialist Narita Tomomi said that he "is imbued to the core" with a "militaristic spirit."[88] Or in an example of Soviet effort to drive a wedge between the US and Japan, Krushchev told Haragui Yukitaka, Minister of the General Council of Japanese Trade Unions, that Japan would be safe from nuclear attack if the Japanese did not allow US nuclear weapons into Japan.[89]

Kishi himself desired change in the alliance and he was not shy about saying so. As Roger Buckley relates, Kishi's efforts reflect a "defiant approach" by the Japanese government. In fact, policy papers left by Kishi and other Japanese officials with Ambassador MacArthur read more like "a declaration of independence than an aide memoir to one's closest ally."[90] From these letters, Ambassador MacArthur concluded,

> many Japanese have come to believe that (the) foreign policy of (the) US is ultimately a policy of war aiming at overthrow by force of communist bloc, and that Japanese-American cooperation under existing formula amounts to subjugation (of) their country to US policies that may lead Japan to war. This sentiment of (the) Japanese people has been fully exploited in peace offensive of (the) Soviet Union and Communist China and also by left-wingers in Japan in their anti-American propaganda.[91]

Nevertheless, there were sharp political division in Japan, including a large degree of factionalism in the LDP. Kishi's opponents, both inside and outside, the LDP, as well as in the press, began to put a good deal of pressure on him by stirring up opposition to the treaty. When Kishi held a special session of the Diet to "ram" ratification of the treaty through on May 20th, the protests over treaty revision were transformed to a different

level of intensity. The opposition, a large portion of public opinion, and Kishi's rivals within the LDP accused him of having acted in a way which was undemocratic. Throughout May and June of 1960 protesters, led by leftist groups such as *Zengakuren*, crowed the streets of Tokyo, eventually succeeding in getting the Japanese government to request that President Eisenhower cancel his planned trip to Japan, a humiliation, the White House saw choice but to accept.

How then did Americans respond to these protests, and how were they portrayed in the American press? In 1960 it was the idea of Japan as a bulwark against Communism, and not the Japanese businessman which dominated the American image of Japan. At the time of the Security Treaty Crisis of 1960, Americans did not think of Japan as a serious economic competitor. There was some fear of the growth of Japanese exports to the United States but these concerns were localized to industries such as the textile industry and the sporting goods industry. Neither of these concerns compared to the importance of Japan as a bulwark against Communist influence in Asia. Indeed, in 1960 the media reports of Japan's economic success were largely congratulatory remarks which played up the role of the US as a teacher for the Japanese and of Japanese hard work and devotion. There was little mention of the negative aspects of Japanese national character as they related to economics. Rather, reports on the riots dominated the American media coverage of Japan, and these comments focused on the role of American style democracy, and on the paradox of modern Japan as represented in the mix between the traditional Japanese character and American inspired modernity.

For example, most of the articles focused on the "amazing impact"[92] of Americanization on Japan. "What stands out," *US News* stated "in the way people eat, dress and live, is just how American they have become."[93] These same ideas are repeated over and over again, and they manifest an ethnocentric analysis of Japan. Americans were more concerned with their legacy in Japan, and how well Japan would handle its responsibilities as a US ally, than on what exactly was happening in Tokyo and why. For

Americans, the pertinent question at the time was--how will this affect us vis a vis the Communists? This was the question which was asked, and the lens through which the Japanese were viewed.

From the American perspective, this emphasis is understandable. What is important in terms of the American image of Japan is the scarcity of analysis of Japan in any deep or penetrating way, the emphasis on the American impact on Japan, and the couching of the issue in a manner which made sense to Americans, but which did not give a full picture of what was really happening in Tokyo.

In their article "US. Elite Images of Japan: The Post War Period," Priscilla A. Clapp and Morton H. Halperin do an examination of the media similar to what is being done in this essay. With particular reference to the articles written about the riots, the authors state, American lack of interest and knowledge in Japan created a tendency for sensationalized, easy answer approaches to an analysis of issues. "The circumstances surrounding the Security Treaty revision of 1960 were the most obvious example."[94] For Americans, the authors continue, when confronted with the baffling,

> spectacle of public clamor in Japan over a treaty that to Americans was a continuing commitment by the United States to look after the best interests of Japan. The easiest and most comprehensible explanation in the public mind was that there was a serious Communist threat in Japan. Typical of this attitude was James Reston's comment that Japan is 'one of the three major objectives of communist policy....many of the intellectuals in Japan, many of the Socialists, and many of the trade union leaders have either cooperated with the communists or acquiesced in their activities.' The reaction in Japan to the Security treaty was considered a slap in the face to American munificence.[95]

Another example of this tendency of the media is illustrated by Sam Jameson, the *Los Angeles Times* Tokyo Bureau Cheif. According to Jameson,

What ultimately ended as an anti-Kishi protest was interpreted in the United States as a pro-communist, anti-American upheaval.....The motiviations of the average Japanese who took to the street went unreported by the American media and overlooked by the U.S. government which accepted Kishi's "cat paws" [or international communismt] excuse.....The fundamental trouble....was the fact that the reasons for the opposition to the treaty revisions did not make sense in an Amerian cultural context. A pro-communist, anti-American expanation was the easy way out.[96]

These examples clearly demonstrate the agenda setting power of the international context and the degree to which the American self-image serves as a lens through which Americans view Japan. This is an extremely powerful dialectic. The international context and the event itself, define the direction from which analysis will proceed, as well as the questions which will be asked, while the self image works the reverse side of the equation in that it mediates the answers by providing the lens of analysis. In terms of the American reaction we see the importance of Japan in terms of US security, an example of the American view of the US as the correct standard of comparison with regard to morality and modernity, and examples of the easy answer, national character based approach to the analysis of Japan.

What is interesting for our purposes is the manner in which the traditional stereo-types of Japan are employed, within this framework of ethnocentric analysis, in order to understand the event. To examine this, one needs to look both between the lines, and at the background/support articles which often accompanied the pieces on the riots themselves. When this is done, the persistence of the stereo-types discussed above becomes clear.

As stated before, the flip side of American modernity as discussed in these articles, is Japan's traditional "feudal unconscious." In discussion of the riots, this aspect of the Japanese national character is usually editorialized in a separate article designed to provide back up information to the riot piece. In 1960, Japanese national character, still outshone

in American eyes by their success during the Occupation, was found in the "paradox" of Japan's less than total embrace of the Occupation's legacy. This paradox was referred to again and again in the articles if not in the titles of the articles themselves. For example, the June 20th issues of *Newsweek* includes a special six page article on Japan entitled, "Japan Today--The Paradox." Other examples of the central importance of paradox are found in *US News and World Report*'s article "The American Way--but Anti-American Violence," and *Life's*, "Isolation, repression and rude awakening: heritage of a nation."

The general consensus one can gleam from these works is that repressive Japanese traditions created a Japanese character which does not mix well with democracy, and that because of this, Japanese democracy is unstable. As Nathan Glazer has pointed out, these fears have roots in American views of the Japanese as inherently unpredictable, and inscrutable. For example, one can point to the ultimate expression the paradox of Japanese national character as expressed in the opening chapter of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. As Benedict phrases it, the Japanese are "to the highest degree, both aggressive and unaggressive, both militaristic and aesthetic, both insolent and polite, rigid and adaptable, submissive and resentful of being pushed around, loyal and treacherous, brave and timid, conservative and hospitable to new ways."[97] Such a people could clearly have only half a mind to pursue democracy.

The result of this instability was a challenge to the most "American" aspect of Japan, its democracy. The issue, of course, was not whether the US had done a good job as Occupier. The issue, rather, was whether or not the Japanese were able to handle it. And the insecurity about their ability to do so, of course, goes back to Japanese history and the relationships between people and the government.

These reservations about Japan's potential to maintain an American style democracy manifest the continuation of many of the negative stereo-types Americans held of the Japanese during the war. Despite the more positive images of Japan which Americans cultivated after the war, the Japanese "retained in Western eyes characteristics

of the herd, the undifferentiated masses. Formerly 'all bad,' they now became all (or almost all)--what? Diligent, peace-loving, pro-American, and anti-Communist."[98] While these are certainly not bad traits, they represent the American proclivity to assign general "herd" traits to the Japanese. Thus, despite the fact that many of the negative traits for which the Japanese had been attacked (deviousness and cunning, bestial and atrocious behavior, homogeneity and monolithic control, fanaticism divorced from legitimate goals or realistic perceptions of the world, megalomania bent of world conquest) had, in many cases been shifted to explain the Communist threat, ideas of Japan, based on American ideas of Japanese national character persisted.[99] When the Japanese acted in a way which created fear in America that they might cease to be pro-American and anti-Communist, the negative side of the old stereo-types were still around to be utilized.

For example, with regard to fears that Japanese character might lead the Japanese to let the US down vis a vis the Communists one can look at some statements made as the Occupation came to an end. At that time some Americans worried that Japan's,

> Oriental identity would, in the end, prove decisive and lead to some kind of accommodation between the Japanese and the Chinese Communists. Every ethic argument is on my side, thundered Senator Everett Dirkson....'when I say they are Asiatics and they will be Asiatic.[100]

Or one can look at John Foster Dulles comment that "the Oriental mind, particularly that of the Japanese, was always more devious than the Occidental mind."[101] In concrete terms Americans dealt with these concerns over the untrustworthiness of the Japanese by "structuring the US-Japanese security alliance in such a manner that it ensured Japan's permanent military subordination to the United States."[102] These fears of 1952 are clearly linked to those discussed above in relation to American coverage of the riots in 1960, and together, they point to a lineage between the war-time stereo-types of the Japanese and concern regarding Japanese behavior in 1960.

Some other examples of American media coverage of Japan 1960 demonstrates how ideas of an unchanging national character lived on in the minds of many Americans. In August 1960, just a few months after the riots, *House Beautiful* did a special issue on Japan. It is ironic, that this issue, which dealt with what Japan has to offer American in terms of esthetics based on simplicity, harmony, and beauty, came on the heals of these riots. Nevertheless, the issue provides a good example of how stereo-types of Japan's feudal core continued to be disseminated, at virtually the same time as the riots.

In particular, a few of the *House Beautiful* quotes of Lafcadio Hearn will help to make the point. For example, *House Beautiful* opens an extended excerpt of Hearn's work with the caption, "....these excerpts from the work of Lafcadio Hearn are as penetrating today as ever, providing the unchanging character of the Japanese people."[103] They then go on to print Hearn relaying some particularly good advice he had received about the Japanese. As Hearn phrased it, his advisor told him "when you find, in four or five years more, that you cannot understand the Japanese at all, then you will begin to know something about them."[104] These two quotes, both appearing in lead articles are clear examples of the feudal unconsciousness, special history, unique institution, exclusivist mumbo jumbo so often used to explain Japan. It is totally meaningless, worthless as an analytical tool, designed to cut off debate, and popular beyond all reason. Except if one remembers the proclivity to accept the fact that the Japanese have a defining trait, or as *House Beautiful* has phrased, it "an unchanging national character."

It is, it seems, this defining character which provides the other half of the "paradox." When juxtaposed to the American concept of the US as the most modern nation on earth, Japan is clearly viewed as an "other." In later years, when the economic competition between the two nations became greater, the ideas behind Japanese national character moved from under the shadow of security and the Cold War to once again take a more prominent place in many American analyses of Japan.

Both the coverage of the riots and the excerpts from *House Beautiful* are reflective of the type of information Americans were likely to read about Japan in the media. The feudal, harmonious, Japanese national character half of the paradox is never held up to analysis, and never questioned as a basis for analysis. Furthermore, there is clearly a residue of the war-time studies discussed in the previous section. These stereo-types are not questioned. What is questioned, is Japan's ability to over-come these limitations and to fully modernize as a truly democratic and dependable US ally.

III. The Textile Wrangle

Another event which clearly demonstrates the cleavages and tensions within the alliance by the late 1960s and which generated a good deal of comment in the media is the "textile wrangle." From 1969 until October of 1971 the US-Japanese alliance struggled, unsuccessfully, to come to an agreement regarding the limitation of Japanese textile imports into the United States. What makes the textile wrangle so noteworthy is not that the US. and Japan differed over how to solve the problem, but that the disagreement continued, intensified, and was allowed to be a sour note in the Alliance for over three years. This demonstrates that at some point in the mid-sixties, "the foreign policy consensus in each country began to weaken"[105] Thus, while the "textile wrangle" exacerbated tensions within US-Japanese relations, it was as much a symptom as a cause of the tensions within the relationship. The importance of the textile debate is evident when it is viewed in contrast with the assumptions which had underlined US-Japanese relations in the post-war world up to that point. As alluded to before, the US and Japan benefited from a tremendous degree of cooperation and mutual interest in the immediate post-war years. As has already been discussed, this cooperation was challenged most strongly in 1960 with regard to the Security Treaty. By the late 1960s, however, a new challenge had emerged. This time Americans were concerned with Japan as a reliable

trading partner in the global economy. By the end of the 1960s, however, both countries were willing to put specific economic concerns over the good of the over-all relationship. While this is not to say that either the United States or Japan was willing to do away with their alliance, it does demonstrate that there were severe strains in the relationship.

The "textile wrangle" was a long and complicated affair. The direct cause of the issue was candidate Richard Nixon's promise to the textile industry to get an agreement which limited the amount of man-made fabrics and wool which the Japanese could export to the United States. The long and difficult negotiations which followed were a painful display of a lack of understanding and consideration between the two nations. The negotiations dragged on for three years and included "two summit conferences, two cabinet-level ministerial conferences, and at least nine other major negotiations."[106] Americans felt Japan's "arrogance" and intransigence" demonstrated Tokyo's relentless drive for economic gain regardless of its consequences for Japan's allies. From the Japanese perspective, the US effort was unreasonable and Japan's resistance to US demands was "in the words of a leading newspaper, and 'epoch-making' exercise in 'independent foreign policy.'"[107] In other words, the complication and anger generated by the textile wrangle was exactly parallel to the broader issues of contention which have been outlined above.

Destler, Fukui, and Sato point to two developments to demonstrate why the textile issue lasted as long and unfolded the way it did. As they put it,

> One was the weakening, in both capitals, of predominant conceptions of national interest which had previously encouraged the US government to moderate its economic pressure and the Japanese government to accede to that pressure. Many Japanese were now questioning both American benevolence and Japanese weakness; many Americans were now seeing in Tokyo as much an economic adversary as a political-military ally.....The second development was the loosening of the bipolar international system, making it less likely that the United States would subordinate specific economic grievances to maintenance of the 'free-world' coalition.[108]

In other words, the changes in the relative economic positions of the two nations, combined with changes in the international arena, produced strains and the potential for fundamental change in the US-Japanese relationship. As the psychological needs of the US and Japan changed, so too did the image the two nations had of each other. As the media reports show, despite the fundamental change in issues, there was a strong element of what can be called the traditional stereo-type of Japan.

One example of this is the quickness with which Americans were ready to label the Japanese as "arrogant" or unreasonable with regard to the textile question. For example, Robert S. Small, the president of Dan River Mills was quoted by the *New York Times* as claimed that the Japanese were demonstrating "incomprehensible arrogance," in their refusal to discuss quotas with Maurice Stans. No high American official in recent years," he went on to say, "has been treated so discourteously by Japan, a country enjoying a fat trade balance of over one billion and whose budget for defence in effect is paid for by the American tax payer."[109]

These frustrations were not limited to private individuals. After a year of negotiating with little progress, US negotiators used words such as "rudeness and arrogance," to describe the manner in which their Japanese counterparts were acting. For example, they described "the final Japanese proposal of March 9th," as "'unique' and 'fantastically arrogant' in that it sought to tell the US how to go about determining injury to its own textile industry."[110] These are surprising comments coming from a nation which was in the process of telling Japan how and what they could export and it demonstrates the continuation of ideas of the United States as the teacher and Japan as the student. In other words, it is fine for the US to give instructions to Japan, but not the other way around.

In order to explain how it was possible for the Japanese to be doing so well economically, Americans fell back on the "under" or negative side of old stereo-types of the Japanese. For example, with regard to Japan's economic boom during the period

leading up and following the textile wrangle, Westerners still had a reassuring negative idiom to fall back upon; now the Japanese became 'economic animals,'--aggressive, even impressive, but still a species apart.[111]

These fears are clearly reflected in a few quotations printed by Hiroshi Kitamura, but taken from Gallop polls conducted in 1970. As Kitamura presented them in his essay, the quotes are as follows,

> Their culture itself is such that they are not dependable." Man, 25 production supervisor, Michigan, 1969.
> They have an entirely different sense of values than we have, after all, they are orientals and their ideas and ways are entirely different from ours." Woman, 74, retired insurance saleswoman, Nebraska, 1969.
> You never know what they think. They are unpredictable." Woman, 43, farmer, Missouri, 1969
> They turned on us before, and they will most likely turn again." Man, 27, policeman, Ohio, 1970.
> They would start trouble with us in a second if they could find half a reason. Orientals just cannot be trusted." Woman, 44, wife of railroad employee, Norht Carolina, 1968.
> They might pull another Pearl Harbor." Man 22, construction worker, California, 1970.[112]

The idea here is not to say who was right or wrong in the textile wrangle, but merely to point out that for many Americans, the idea of the teacher/student relationship no longer provided an adequate way to define the relationship. As this became more and more clear, American anger betrayed the continuation of old stereo-types about the degree to which the Japanese could be trusted and the degree to which Americans and Japanese could expect to get along.

IV. AUTOMOBILES

Unlike textiles, which were not worth the attention it got in terms of the US-Japanese economic relationship, automobiles were an extremely important, high wage, high value added industry. In 1980 the American auto industry was directly or indirectly responsible for about one out of every six manufacturing jobs in the United States.[113] In that same year, about 300,000 workers, approximately 40 percent of the labor force was "progressively laid off over the spring months, and roughly double that number were idled in the auto-related industries."[114] The rapidity with which Japanese companies gained market share in the US and the damage done to US industry, especially in presidential election year 1980, made the importation of Japanese cars and important national topic. Indeed, the media coverage increased from 87 articles on problems in US-Japanese trade relations in December of 1979 to 254 articles in May of 1980, with 178 of these dealing specifically with the auto industry.[115]

This increase in the attention given to the case of automobiles was a result of the severe impact Japanese cars were having on the US industry as well as efforts to publicize the problem by the UAW, the US auto companies themselves, and Congressional action. In particular a trip to Japan by UAW president, Douglas A. Fraser, in February of 1980 increased press coverage and awareness of the difficulties being faced by the US auto industry. A survey of the increase in sales of Japanese cars in the United States is quite striking. In the decade of the 1970s, the US auto industry averaged about 10.1 million units per year. During that decade, the percentage of imported cars bought in the US market increased from about 10 to 22 percent. However, the increase in the percentage of Japanese imports rose from about 18 percent to 76.3 percent.[116] There were a number of reasons for this sharp increase in the importation of Japanese cars. One of the most important was the oil shortage of 1979. This shortage was followed by higher gasoline prices which led to an increased demand for smaller, more fuel efficient cars. These facts, along with the high quality of Japanese products and the fact that the US industry did not

have the capacity to fulfill the demand for small cars greatly contributed to the rapid escalation of sales of Japanese cars.

The media coverage regarding the flood of Japanese cars into the US followed patterns similar to the coverage of the textile wrangle and the riots of 1960. For one thing, as already noted, there was a rise in the number of articles on Japan. This follows the pattern whereby the US media focuses only on the more sensational aspects of the US-Japanese relationship. Secondly, it is the background/support articles which provide most of editorializing on the Japanese national character. And, as one might expect, these articles rely on Japan's national character, as developed out of its exceptionalist history, to explain Japanese success in building automobiles.

For example, the April 21, 1980 issue of *Time* contained an article titled "Japanese Capitalism." After discussing Japan's astounding post-war growth *Time* went on to say,

> The Japanese variant of capitalism cannot be readily or precisely copied, except perhaps by a few Asian countries, because it is rooted in a homogeneous, hierarchical society with a not so distant feudal past. Changes are slowly taking place, but disciplined workers still display an almost mystical loyalty to their companies, and paternalistic employers reciprocate by guaranteeing job security. Leaders of business, banking and government are members of a unitary elite, and they have a snug relationship.[117]

Another example can be found in *Business Week*'s printing of the editorial, "It Took the Japanese to build Japan," by Kyonosuke Ibe, chairman of Sumitomo Bank. According to Ibe, Western analysis of Japanese success which focus on Japanese use of high technology production, quality control, and "financial acumen, and a nurturing bureaucracy," unfortunately miss the point. The real reason for Japan's success, is, of course, Japanese society itself. Ibe's piece is instructive of the dialectic through which Japanese self-stereo-types influence American ideas, and his essay is worth quoting at some length Of particular interest are Ibe's comments to the effect that,

the key element in our economic growth is the Japanese society itself. It has been shaped by history and geography to be austere and adaptable.....When Japan's industrial revolution, the Meiji Restoration, took place in 1868, the austere character of the society was already well-defined within the feudal system. Change came so quickly that the feudal ties of loyalty were not eroded but were transferred. Instead of the samurai warrior swearing fealty to his lord, the newly industrialized worker gave his loyalty to the employing corporation.......These two national characteristics, austerity and total loyalty to the company, have been the basis of the spectacular rise of our economy.....Of course, it was considered extreme when a perfectionist Honda assembly worker was observed after work adjusting windshield wipers on his company's products parked on the street. We thought his impulse was correct, but found him a little overzealous. This special feeling of proprietorship and protectiveness by company personnel is also the root of Japan's cooperative labor-management relationship....Memories are still fresh from the years following 1945, when management and labor together picked up the pieces of what had been industrial Japan......[118]

The ideas expressed by Ibe, are remarkably similar to ideas of Japanese national character as presented in the books discussed in Part II of this work, as well as the references to Japanese national character in the media representations which have been presented in this section. In terms of the this paper they are important because they are another example of the use of ideas of Japanese national character and the continuities between pre-Meiji and postwar Japan. Or as Gluck phrased it, the "stitching together," of the two periods of Japanese modernization, to the exclusion of other important factors. According to Ibe, samurai ethics were merely "transferred" to modern day business practices, and this accounts for Japan's success. This statement, along with Ibe's characterization of Japanese labor history are gross simplifications which ignore all conflict in Japanese society. Japan appears to have just evolved into the successful capitalist state which it is due to the Japanese character. No conflict, no repressive, constrictive business practices, no labor strikes or turn-over in the work force. Even the name of Ibe editorial, "It took the Japanese to Create Japan," attests to his overzealous

application of ideas of Japanese character as virtually the alpha and omega of Japanese success.

This is especially striking when one considers that he is talking about Japanese economic success and not Japanese society or culture. In other words, what can this title possibly mean unless there is an underlying feeling that Japan and the Japanese are uniquely, unique. This, it seems, is the point, and its printing in *Business Week* promotes this mumbo-jumbo as a fact to be filed away by the American public and used to whatever misleading purpose it appears worthy to explain.

These types of generalizations are dangerous in terms of their impact on the US image of Japan, in that by emphasizing Japanese distinctiveness, and the influence of pre-Meiji ethics on contemporary business, the Japanese set themselves up to be stereo-typed as enigmatic weirdoes, driven by a "feudal unconscious" which can never quite be trusted by the rest of the world due to the fanatical loyalty, and by extension nationalism which propels it. This self-stereo-typing contributes to the continuation of an American image of Japan which emphasizes the extreme aspects of Japanese society.

Such a process leads to, *Fortune* magazine's referral to Toyota, as "Lord Toyota," and to its production headquarters as its "fiefdom."[119] They also contribute to ideas such as those expressed by the head of a US trade delegation to Japan in 1983 when he referred to, "those little yellow-men, you know Honda."[120] Or, in another example, the 1992 cartoon which shows George Bush committing *hara-kiri* with a steering wheel labeled made in Japan.[121] While coming at a latter date than the articles so far discussed in this section, this cartoon exemplifies the continuation of the martial, fanatical, feudal elements of Japanese culture. Other examples of this phenomena, are the 1980 cartoon of a group of Japanese businessmen raising the Japanese flag over a junk-heap of American cars in a manner which calls to mind the famous picture of the US Marines raising the American flag at Iwo Jima.[122] and a commercial run by a local Cadillac dealer group just after the Gulf War. The commercial, aired nationally on a special McNeil/Lerher segment on the

American image of Japan, showed a Cadillac on the beach with machine guns in the front. The car was shooting down a barrage of Mitsubishi Zeros as they attempted to invade the United States. The footage of the Japanese appeared to be taken from an old World War Two movie and depicted them in the worst possible light. In any event, the Cadillac was, successfully defending the luxury car market for American cars.

The emphasis on cultural, and racially "unique traits" as an explanation for Japanese success spreads fear and suspicion, cuts off debate, and creates an environment which encourages the perpetuation of negative stereo-types. Ideas which can be traced at least as far back as the racial attacks on Japanese during the Second World War, are used today to explain Japanese economic success. For example, when a White House Chief of Staff "likened the Japanese to his sheep dog, which had to be 'whacked over the head' to get its attention--a figure of speech that calls to mind Henry Stimson....speaking of the Japanese as puppies who would back down before the whip."[123] Such images are clearly linked to war-time images of Japan, a connection which is easy to maintain and revive, as the tendency to focus on ideas of Japanese national character have changed very little since that time. This despite the drastic changes in US-Japanese relations and the fact that Japanese success has lead to a level of respect for Japan and Japan's place in the world far greater than what anyone might have guessed just a few decades ago. What this essay has demonstrated is that even this respect and portrayals of the Japanese in a more flattering light, have failed to break the pattern whereby ideas of Japanese character are utilized to define Japan in a way which credits their success and their failures to "secrets," "mystical bonds," and to an "unchanging national character." In other words, positive or neutral images of Japan are often just the "soft under-side" of the old, more negative idiom.

Part V: Conclusion

What, then, does all of this mean, how does it fit together, and what's the point? The point has simply been to demonstrate and document the somewhat surprising degree to which the core of the US image of Japan has stayed the same at least since the war-time studies. To point out that analysis has often been grounded in a simplistic, misleading, concept of national character, which while it is often disavowed as a means to explain a nation, is nevertheless frequently used to explain Japan. To show that these generalizations serve to reinforce the idea of Japan as paradoxical, unstable, and to a degree inscrutable. And finally to demonstrate the relationship between this overly-simple analysis, the American self-image, and the international geo-political, economic context in which the process of American images of Japan are created, and re-enforced.

This essay has also suggested that the prevalence of these images of Japan carries some inherent dangers for the future of US-Japanese relations, as well as difficulties for a more sophisticated, less ethnocentric understanding of Japan itself. In terms of the dangers, it appears that the continuation of easy answer approaches to the study of Japan, encourages Americans to hold to views of Japan which make it difficult and somewhat threatening for them to accept Japanese power and independence in the international arena. In terms of these difficulties, Hiroshi Kitamura's essay "Psychological Dimensions of US-Japanese Relations," demonstrates the problems posed by the American proclivity to think of Japan by employing broad stereo-types. According to Kitamura, American problems in understanding Japan are derivative of the cultural dissimilarities between the two nations. As he sees it, American dominance in the history of US-Japanese relations has led Americans to view Japan with "cultural arrogance," an "anti-value image," a "double image" of Japan, a` la Ruth Benedict, and a "sense of enigma."[124]

While Kitamura does not come out and say it, all of these categories of psychological misperception are in part derivative of the Orientalist analyses which treat Japan as an other and as having a "feudal unconscious." The danger of these feelings in

terms of US-Japanese relations is that they make it more difficult for Americans to accept the new position of power enjoyed by the Japanese in the international arena and to treat them as equals. Thus, both the textile wrangle and the debates over automobiles followed patterns similar to those suggested by Kitamura's analysis of the psychology of US-Japanese relations. According to Kitamura, American dominance has created a situation in which Americans expect Japan to do as America asks them to do. When the Japanese refuse, Americans tend to get "irritated, frustrated, or even angry" at what they see as Japanese ingratitude.[125] Furthermore, they begin to suspect that they cannot trust the Japanese. This tendency to shift quickly from viewing the Japanese as trustworthy to viewing them as untrustworthy, is, in Kitamura's view, due to an American lack of knowledge and tendency to stereo-type the Japanese.

In terms of the difficulties these images create in regard to a better and/or more sophisticated view of Japan, Chalmers Johnson has some valuable insights. In the introduction to *MITI And The Japanese Miracle*, Johnson criticizes analysis based on the idea of a Japanese national character by writing,

> My reservations about the value of this explanation are basically that it is over generalized and tends to cut off rather than advance serious research. Consensus and group solidarity have been important in Japan's economic growth, but they are less likely to derive from the basic values of the Japanese than from what Ruth Benedict once called Japan's 'situational' motivations: late development, lack of resources, the need to trade, balance of payments constraints, and so forth. Positing some 'special capacity to cooperate' as an irreducible Japanese cultural trait leads inquiry away from the question of *why* Japanese cooperate when they do (they did not cooperate during almost half the period of study here) [1925-1975], and away from the probability that this cooperation can be, and on occasion has been, quite deliberately engineered by the government and others.[126]

Johnson goes on to discuss his belief that MITI is one of the real reasons Japan has enjoyed such astounding economic success. The point here is not to say that Johnson is correct about MITI, although he very well may be, but rather to provide an articulate

debunking/warning of the over-use of stereo-types based on Japanese national character as analytical tools. This essay has demonstrated the prevalence of these stereo-types, their manifestation over time in books and articles about Japan, and some of their roots.

This essay has also demonstrated that stereo-types used to define and analyze Japan have been adapted to meet the needs of Americans both in terms of their relationship with Japan in particular, and with regard to the contemporary international context. One expecting a massive transformation of American images of Japan in the post-war world will be disappointed to see that at the core of the image, old stereo-types are merely adapted to meet contemporary needs in a manner which reinforces these stereo-types to the exclusion of other pertinent factors. This is particularly true in the media reports which tend to center around some crisis or exotic occurrence, in which extreme characterizations seem to fit better than they would with regard to more mundane events. To quote again from Clapp and Morton, "the press coverage tends to focus on the more exotic events, such as student riots, Mishima's suicide, the sergeant lost on Guam since World War II, the extreme aberrations of political revolutionaries, interspersed with images of Japan, Inc.[127]

Thus, in 1960 most of the articles written on Japan came during the summer and virtually all of them focused on the riots, the Cold War, and the radical elements of Japanese society. What is frustrating, is not that there was coverage of these events, but that it dominated the media on Japan and was presented in a way which reinforced ideas of Japanese exceptionalism. This was combined with an ethnocentric style of analysis, in which the US was held up as the proper scale with which to measure Japan. The result was the continuation of an image of Japan as an inscrutable, paradoxical, unstable "other."

This is particularly striking when one considers the fact that the riots clearly did not represent the views of the vast majority of the Japanese population. If such was the case, and clearly it was, why were the riots portrayed as a threat to democracy and as a

sign that the Japanese might not be able to handle the responsibilities of a democracy? The reason, it seems, is due to fears of Japanese national character

One would expect that to the degree that more studies are done on Japan and to the degree that there is a more realistic and critical reading of Japanese history -- one that includes conflict, the manufacturing and manipulation of culture, and influences totally unrelated to Japanese national character -- that there will also be a decline in use of simple, national character based explanations for Japanese society and economic success. These types of studies are already being done by many scholars. The effects of these works on the understanding of Japanese history, was expressed very well by John Withney Hall as long ago as 1965. In his opening essay in *Changing Japanese Concepts Toward Modernization*, Hall states,

> Stories which were once told in bold phrases of Western impact and native reaction, or samurai counter-revolutionaries and agrarian innovators, of economic imbalance and failures at democracy have been retold. In the retelling, some of the contrasts have lost their dramatic distinctions, but the nuances of color are more subtly revealed. Some of the villains--the samurai, the zaibatsu, the Meiji constitution, Confucianism--have been found less pernicious; others--the lower class samurai, the parasitic landlord, the warmongering general--have lost their clear identity......We have lost perhaps the comfort of certainty (within the limits of some conceptual system), yet we have gained in depth of appreciation of the total process of modern change in Japan.[128]

What Hall saw as having happened, or least what he felt was beginning to happen, in the historiography on Japan, has not happened to a sufficient degree in the general works or the media reports which try to explain Japan to Americans. These works, to an unfortunate degree, still take "comfort in certainty." Partly, this is a function of the fact that they are simply general works and not monographs. However, the degree of continuity, and the continued use of feudal stereo-types with regard to the Japanese, betrays the fact that the general lack of American knowledge and interest in Japan has

continued and that analysis is still too often couched in simple answer formulas of Japanese character.

To quote again from Hall, with regard to general studies of Japan, Hall believes, "Western writers have tended to swing between hope and alarm, or between admiration and disparagement, depending upon the particular comparisons they have chosen, and especially upon the manner in which they have reacted to the Japanese impact upon the national interests of their respective countries."[129] For American writers, this "swing" has meant a reading of Japan hinged on traditional stereo-types. The image, while it certainly altered, has never swung off the hinge, in other words there never been a true break from the Orientalist approach to the analysis of Japan. The result is the tendency for Americans to slip back and use old stereo-types to address questions which they are not capable of answering.

The degree to which the more sophisticated analyses of Japan will be incorporated into the popular image of Japan remains to be seen. What is more certain, is that when these ideas make their way into popular perception, they will be mediated through long standing ideas about Japanese national character, as well as through the contemporary international context.

ENDNOTES

[1]It is very difficult to guess exactly how much the "average" American knows about Japan, or the extent to which this imaginary "average" person thinks about Japan. However, if one looks at the work of Nathan Glazer and Sheila K. Johnson, two authors who have tackled this question, one can surmise that most Americans are, to borrow a phrase from Glazer in "general ignorance" of Japan. What is somewhat surprising is the consistency in the level of press coverage and of popular books on Japan. As Glazer has pointed out, a study of the *Reader's Guide* demonstrates that American coverage of Japan has remained consistently at one tenth of one percent of all the articles listed in the guide. This is about one half the coverage accorded to Great Britain and one fourth the converge given to Germany. Furthermore, Johnson's listing of all the Japan related books to appear on the New York *Times* Best Seller List, demonstrates that there has been about one Japan related book every year and a half to make this list. There has never been a two year period, except the years 1968-1975, in which at least one such book has not made the list and there has rarely been more than two books appearing in the same year. This points to what one could term a persistent and consistent level of "general ignorance." It is also important to remember that fiction books such as *Shogun,* and *Sayonara,* have sold more copies than any of the other Japan related best sellers. See "From Ruth Benedict to Herman Khan: The Postwar Japanese Image in the American Mind," in Akira Iriye eds. *Mutual Images: Essays on US-Japanese Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), and Johnson, Shiela, *The Japanese Through American Eyes.* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 14.

[2]Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 3-4.

[3]Ibid., 13.

[4]Shiela Johnson, *The Japanese Through American Eyes.* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 9.

[5]Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Economic Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925-1975.* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982), 7.

[6]Ibid.,7.

[7]H.D. Harootunian, "America's Japan/ Japan's Japan," in H.D. Harootunian and Masao Miyoshi ed. *Japan in the World.* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 200.

[8]Ibid., 200.

[9]Ibid., 199-206.

[10]Ibid., 205.

[11]Ibid., 220-201.

[12]Ibid., 200.

[13]Ibid., 209.

[14]Ibid., 208.

[15]Ibid., 216.

[16]Ibid., 202.

[17]Carol Gluck, "The Past in the Present." In Andrew Gordon eds. *Postwar Japan as History.* (Berkeley: The University of California Press), 81.

[18]Sheila K. Johnson, *The Japanese Through American Eyes,* 3-8.

[19]Ibid., 3-8.

[20]Nathan Glazer, while coming to different conclusions than I have, has used a similar methodology. Glazer, claims that his idea for using this approach comes from the success of Harold Isaacs' work *Scratches on Our Minds* (1958), which traces American images of China, and India based on what a few, well chosen experts and opinion makers had to say. Glazer explains and justifies this method of analysis in the following way. "The essence of the method is to study in depth the attitudes and images of those relatively few individuals who count, either in shaping attitudes and images in general in this country, or who even without the capacity to shape attitude and image directly, express significant attitudes because they hold important positions in economy and society and can act upon and change reality," (ibid, 145).

[21] Carol Gluck, "The Past in the Present." In Andrew Gordon eds. *Postwar Japan as History,* 65.

[22]Ibid., 65.

[23]Roy Andrew Miller, *Japan's Modern Myth: The Language and Beyond.* (New York: Weather Hill, 1982), 21-26.

[24]Minear, Richard H. "The Wartime Studies of Japanese National Character." *Japan Interpreter* 13 (Summer 1980): 36.

[25]Hans Kohn, *American Nationalism*, 135.

[26]Ibid., 135.

[27]Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 134.

[28]Ibid., 105.

[29]Hans Kohn, *American Nationalism*, 135.

[30]Ibid., 139.

[31]Ibid., 152.

[32]Ibid., 143.

[33]Akira Iriye, *Across the Pacific: An Inner History of American-East Asian Relations.* (Chicago: Imprints Publication Inc., 1967), 6.

[34]Ibid., 6.

[35]Ibid., 7.

[36]Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 105.

[37]Frank F. Chuman, *The Bamboo People*, 73.

[38]Ibid., 72.

[39]Ibid., 72.

[40]Ibid., 70.

[41] Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World Supremacy.* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921), 297-303.

[42]David Nichols, eds. *Ernie's War: the Best of Ernie Pyle's World War II Dispatches.* (New York: Touchstone Books), 367.

[43]John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race & Power in the Pacific War.* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 77-181.

[44]Ibid., 77-181.

[45]Samples of many of the aforementioned authors' work can be found in Silberman, Bernard S. eds. *Japanese Character and Culture: Selected Readings.* (Tuscon: The University of Arizona Press, 1962).

[46]Richard H. Minear,. "The Wartime Studies of Japanese National Character." *Japan Interpreter* (Summer 1980): 36.

[47]Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum And The Sword.* (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1946), 217.

[48]Kerling, Fred. "Behavior and Personality in Japan: A Critique of Three Studies of Japanese Personality." In Bernard S. Silberman eds. *Japanese Character and Culture: Selected Readings.* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1962), 401.

[49]Douglas Harring, "Japanese National Character: cultural Anthropology, Psychoanalysis, and History," pp. 388-391. In Bernard S Silberman, eds. *Japanese Character and Culture: Selected Readings.* (Tuscon: The University of Arizona Press, 1962).

[50]Herman Khan, *The Emerging Japanese Superstate: Challenge and Response.* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1970), 17.

[51]Ibid., 19.

[52]Ibid., 17-18.

[53]Ibid., 75.

[54]Richard Halloran, *Japan: Images and Realities.* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 215.

[55]Ibid.,72.

[56]Ibid., 83.

[57]Clyde V. Jr. Prestowitz, *Trading Places: How America is Surrendering its Future to Japan and How to Win it Back.* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1988), 192.

[58]Ibid.,180-217.

[59]Ibid., 198-199.

[60]Ibid., 210.

[61]Tetsuo Najita, and J. Victor Koschmann ed. *Conflict In Modern Japanese History: The Neglected Tradition.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 9.

[62]Ibid., 9.

[63]Prestowitz, Clyde. *Trading Places*, 198-99.

[64]Richard Halloran, *Japan: Images and Realities, 267.*

[65]*Newsweek*, May 17, 1965, 80.

[66]Ibid., 80.

[67]Ibid., 81.

[68]Miller, Roy Andrew. *Japan's Modern Myth*, 101.

[69]Ibid., 100-101.

[70]Ibid., 100.

[71]Ibid., 101.

[72]Johnson, Sheila K, *Japan Through American Eyes*, 137.

[73]Iyenaga, T. and K. Sato, *California and the Japan Problem.* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1921), 87.

[74]Ibid., 17

[75]Richard Halloran, *Japan: Images and Realities*, 153.

[76]John Dower, *War Without Mercy*, 186.

[77]Fredrick L. Schodt, *America and the Four Japans: Friend, Foe, Model, and Mirror.* (Berkeley: Stone Bridge Press, 1994), 104.

[78]Ibid., 106.

[79]Gibney, Frank. "The View From Japan." *Foreign Affairs* no 50 (October 1971): 98.

[80]I.M. Destler, Haruhiro Fukui, Hideo Sato. *The Textile Wrangle: Conflict in Japanese-American Relations, 1969-1971, 26.*

[81]Armin H. Meyer, *Assignment Tokyo: United States Ambassador to Japan, 1969-1972*, 70.

[82]Ibid., pg. 71.

[83]Meyer, Armin H. *Assignment Tokyo*, 220.

[84]Hideo Kanemitsu, in Akira Iriye and Warren Cohen eds. *The United States and Japan in the Post War World*, 145-149.

[85]quoted in Graham T. Allison, in Henry Rosovsky eds. *Discord In The Pacific: Challenges To The Japanese-American Alliance*, 16.

[86]Ibid., 17.

[87]John Dower, *War Without Mercy*, 312-313.

[88]Roger Buckley, *US.-Japan Alliance Diplomacy 1945-1990*, 71.

[89]Ibid., 71.

[90]Ibid., 82.

[91]Ibid., 81.

[92]*Newsweek*, June 20, 1960, 77.

[93]*Newsweek*, June 20, 1960, 77.

[94]Priscilla A. Clapp, and Morton H. Haperin "U.S. Elite Images of Japan." In Akira Iriye eds. *Mutual Images: Essays in American Japanese Relations.* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 206.

[95] Ibid., 206.

[96]Tenhover, Gregor R. *Unlocking the Japanese Business Mind.* (Washington D.C: Transemantics, Inc., 1994), iii.

[97] Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, 2.

[98]John Dower, *War Without Mercy*, 309.

[99]Ibid., 309.

[100]Ibid., 310.

[101]Ibid., 310.

[102]Ibid., 311.

[103]*House Beautiful*, August, 1960, 6.

[104]Ibid., 48.

[105]I.M. Destler, Haruhiro Fukui, and Hideo Sato, *The Textile Wrangle*, 26.

[106] I.M. Destler, *The Textile Wrangle*, 7.

[107]Ibid., 7.

[108]Ibid., 320.

[109]*New York Times.* June 20, 1969, 59.

[110]*New York Times.* April 3, 1970, 59.

[111]Ibid., 312.

[112]Hiroshi Kitamura, "Phychological Dimensions of U.S.-Japanese Relations," 25.

[113]Gilbert R. Winham, and Ikuo Kabashima. "The Politics of US-Japanese Auto Trade." In Destler, I.M. and Hideo Sato ed., *Coping With US-Japanese Economic Conflicts.* (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1982), 73.

[114]Ibid., 73.

[115]Ibid., 88.

[116]Ibid., 75.

[117]*Time*, April 21, 1980, 52.

[118]*Business Week*, October 6, 1980, 17.

[119]*Fortune*, August 11, 1980, 109.

[120]John Dower, *War Without Mercy*, 313.

[121]*Komiku Nichi-Bei Masatsu*: Not Just A Laughing Matter. (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1992), 138.

[122] Ibid., 196.

[123]John Dower, *War Without Mercy*, 313.

[124]Hiroshi Kitamura , *Psychological Dimensions of U.S.–Japanese Relations, pp. 17-28.*

[125]Ibid., 17.

[126]Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle*, 8.

[127]Priscilla A. Clapp and Morton H. Halperin, "U.S. Elite Images of Japan: The Postwar Period," 205.

[128]John Whitney Hall, "Changing Conceptions of the Modernization of Japan," 40.

[129]Ibid,. 9.

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