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Anglo-Japanese Alienation, 1919-1952: Papers of the AngloJapanese Conference on the History of the Second World War

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effective, he can come up with very little evidence to support this conclusion. Moreover, O'Neill does not deal with Ivan Morris' thesis that a major result of Japan's kamikaze strategy was to provide the Americans with a justification for the atomic bombing of Japan.

O'Neill compounds this lack of analysis with a penchant for controversial and unsubstantiated statements. In his introduction, for example, he writes, "I disagree with those historians who cite Japan's greed for conquest and military glory as a major cause of the Pacific War; in my opinion, American policy from 1905 onward was aimed at a showdown with the United States' great Pacific rival, until, because of both racial provocation and economic warfare, Japan had no choice but to seem the aggressor." If the "Rape of Nanking" and Pearl Harbor only "seemed" to be acts of aggression it is hard to imagine what real Japanese aggression would have consisted of. In the same vein is the author's assertion that although the kamikazes apparently failed in all three of their major war aims they "made possible the post-war miracle of reconstruction." Assertions such as these must cast doubt on the author's credibility in other areas of his research.

Suicide Squads: W.W. II is thus a book that must be read with a great deal of skepticism. The pictures and diagrams of several little known suicide weapons may justify its purchase. However, as is sometimes the case in books of this genre, the author cannot integrate his subject into a

historical context. His analysis of both World War II and Japanese history suffers from a lack of background and objectivity. Like the kamikazes that he writes about, the author often misses his target.

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Nish, Ian, ed. *Anglo-Japanese Alienation, 1919-1952: Papers of the Anglo-Japanese Conference on the History of the Second World War*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1982. 305 pp. \$37.50

If you start this book by reading the two final essays first, you will understand what the organizers of this conference hoped for when they brought together a group of distinguished Japanese and British scholars. In the final paper, Donald Cameron Watt writes: "I felt that the historiography of the far eastern aspects of the Second World War so far as English-speaking countries were concerned had come to be dominated by American and Americo-centric historians" In the immediately preceding essay, the doyen of Japanese diplomatic historians, Hosoya Chihiro, expresses the belief that there had been no clash of true interests in East Asia between Japan and the United States and that the real conflict of interests was between Japan and Great Britain. Other essays by Japanese scholars follow Hosoya's interpretation, arguing that Anglo-Japanese conflict, based as it was on commercial rivalry, was deep and long-standing. But Japanese-American

disputes came about primarily because of fears in the United States about Japan's "New Order" for East Asia—a position at wide variance with American scholars who find the roots of confrontation back at the turn of the century and even earlier.

The Japanese argument poses some questions for international historians to ponder, particularly if it can be demonstrated that Japanese leaders were less afraid of American policy than vice versa. After all, a nation's "interests" are a matter for self-definition, not objective analysis. But the complaint about Americo-centric domination is not supported by the papers of the other participants. Instead, we get a picture of Anglo-Japanese diplomacy that always operated within the framework created by their broad relationship with the United States. That is not to argue that Germany, the Soviet Union, China, colonial issues, and a multitude of other factors were unimportant. Rather, it was that the United States—the world's dominant economic and financial power and potentially its strongest military power—could tip the balance in Asia, if it so chose. Moreover, as the Japanese recognized, events in Europe forced Great Britain to stay reasonably close to American policy in the Pacific. In fact, one of the shortcomings of some of the essays is their failure to integrate problems that lay outside the immediate scope of Anglo-Japanese relations.

In large part, the book reflects the rationale behind the conference. As an early attempt to promote Anglo-

Japanese scholarly interchanges, most of the essays are relatively broad surveys in what seems to be an attempt to establish some common ground. While scholars invariably want to publish what they write, the basic purpose of this meeting (and others like it) was to promote cooperation and understanding between two groups of national historians. What arguments crop up take place largely during informal discussions, particularly following prepared critiques presented by other participants. But limitations imposed by space and, perhaps, by the desire for harmony often eliminate such arguments and critiques from the printed proceedings, as in this case. It is a plus for international cooperation and a minus for historical debate.

With all those limits, the book remains useful. Despite the tendency of the essays to touch all bases, taken altogether this is a perceptive survey of Anglo-Japanese relations since World War I, particularly for the immediate pre-World War II era. For Westerners, it offers an invaluable insight into Japanese perceptions of the world they faced in those years, and one is struck by the effect of European ethnocentrism on Japan. At the military level, time and again Japanese scholars point to Tokyo's assumption that Germany would defeat or subdue England; British scholars flip the coin to find that their leaders consistently underestimated Japan's military capabilities.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of this volume, aside from some interesting preliminary analyses of

post-World War II events, is that it may generate future such conferences and additional exchanges of ideas. From similar books and conferences international historians may gain a deeper understanding of the nature and causes of conflicts between all the nations involved, as different national perspectives and documents are brought to bear.

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Short, Philip. *The Dragon and the Bear: Inside China & Russia in the Eighties*. New York: Morrow, 1982, 489pp. \$19.95

In early cold war days, the State Department tried to leaven its Moscow and Nanjing embassies with a Chinese specialist and a Soviet specialist, respectively. The first Soviet expert in China was mugged by the McCarthyites, while the Asian specialist in Moscow was put to work on the embassy's housekeeping chores. The experiment died shortly thereafter for "budgetary reasons." They order things differently at the British Broadcasting Corporation. Peter Short was the BBC's man in Moscow and then in Beijing, serving as bureau chief for six years. From this experience comes *The Dragon and the Bear*.

Mr. Short has no illusions about either country, but he does conclude, "Ultimately, the future of the West depends on its will to resist Soviet expansion." Given this, he hopes "the West and China independently pursue policies of détente backed by military

strength" Before this conclusion is reached, the book has piled up evidence relentlessly to damn both systems: "Where Stalin sacrificed the welfare of the Soviet people on the altar of state ambition, Mao, in the last twenty years of his life, subordinated material interests of the Chinese people to the working out of his ideas." But if this is the view of the top, Mr. Short does not scant the realities of every-day life for the Soviet and Chinese citizen. Examples and anecdotes abound, usually footnoted in the Chinese case to the official Xinhua news agency or to one of the Beijing newspapers. In the Soviet case, the cruelties, stupidities and just plain dreariness of life are well enough known to the West and need no sourcing.

If anything, the author gives the Chinese somewhat the better of it, although his book will give no comfort to the now dwindling ranks of Mao sycophants in the West. He sees Russians as politically passive, the Chinese active (not all recent observers would agree with this last). He finds China better able to cope with change. Political reform is seen as the key to economic change: "Because of this overwhelming political aversion to reform, the Soviet Union, thirty years after Stalin's death, faces economic problems identical to those of China five years after Mao's death."

And what policy recommendations for the West, besides détente and military power? The Taiwan problem needs some resolution, not because failure to do so might lead to