

**JAPAN'S NEW INTERNATIONALISM  
AND THE LEGACY OF NITOBE INAZO:  
SIXTY YEARS LATER**

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## **JAPAN'S NEW INTERNATIONALISM AND THE LEGACY OF NITOBE INAZO: SIXTY YEARS LATER**

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I bring you greetings from a memorial ceremony and symposium which were held on October 15 in Morioka to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Nitobe Inazo's death. About 300 persons attended the ceremony and 225 the symposium which preceded it. A tour group of some sixty-odd from Morioka plans to visit Victoria early next month to mark the same event. The evidences of improved transportation and communication that these proceedings reflect could not have been easily foreseen by Nitobe. Yet they emphasize the continuing need for each of us to remember Nitobe's quiet message: that thinking people from all countries must seek understanding across international and racial differences.

The keynote lecture of the symposium in Morioka was entitled "Why Study Nitobe at this Time?" The difference between this title and that of tonight reflects a divergent perception of Nitobe's importance. Japanese in the city of Nitobe's birth emphasize how one of their own introduced Western culture into Japan and himself embodied it. The title chosen for tonight, in contrast, presupposes a broader significance to Nitobe's activity. We note how his acts, particularly those of his final years, demonstrated the difficulty which his sincere attempt to espouse an international point of view in Japan before 1945 brought down upon him. His acts also link events before World War II to contemporary internationalism. They help us understand what we see happening around us today.

### **I.**

Let us begin with an introduction to the man. Inazo was born in 1862 in Morioka, then the castle town, which is to say "capital", of Nambu. Nambu was the largest among the 250 or so small semi-independent states which then made up Japan. The years between 1600 and 1868 are known as the "Edo Period" because the shogunal family who ruled during these years resided in Edo, present Tokyo. Inazo's family was one of most important in Nambu, belonging to the highest reaches of what

we would call the civil-servant class. Inazo's grandfather for years had charge of Nambu's finances. During Inazo's childhood, the grandfather also arranged a peaceful end to Nambu's part in the civil war which brought the new Meiji government into power in 1868. Nambu had sided with the Edo regime. Inazo was bred to assume positions of responsibility but as an individual was sensitive and introspective.

After early schooling in Tokyo, he studied among the first young men at the Sapporo Agricultural College, a new institution modelled after America's land-grant colleges and largely, during Nitobe's student days, staffed by American instructors. Here he became a Christian in the American nineteenth-century tradition. A university choir commemorated this facet of his life at the recent Morioka ceremony by singing "What a Friend We Have in Jesus", "Nearer My God, to Thee", "There's a Land that is Fairer than Day", and "God Be With You Till we Meet Again," all gospel hymns central to the life of nineteenth-century Protestant America. Nitobe next studied in Tokyo University. According to his later recollections, it was here that in response to a routine question from an instructor about why he hoped to continue his study of English, he replied that he wished to become "a bridge across the Pacific". The rudimentary instruction afforded by the young Tokyo University failed to satisfy him, and his restless ambition led him to the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore where he studied in a seminar with, among others, the young Woodrow Wilson. His alma mater offered him a job teaching in Sapporo contingent upon three years' further study in Germany, so he moved there and attended a number of institutions before he received a doctorate from the University of Halle in 1890. He specialized in what would probably now be called "development economics," and in the process achieved remarkable fluency in German as well as English. While he studied in the United States, he had become a Quaker, and on his way back to Japan he married Mary Elkinton, the daughter of a leading Philadelphia Quaker businessman. Nitobe had met her when he studied in Baltimore.

Returning to Sapporo in 1891, he engaged for six years in a flurry of activity, the main object of which was to educate young men to exploit the resources of Hokkaido. His constant involvement in teaching, religious activities, the formation

of schools for working students, consulting with government officials and even overseeing dormitories, exhausted him, so that he had to resign his position to recuperate. He settled on the west coast of California where as strength returned he wrote *Bushido, the Soul of Japan*, probably the single most influential volume on Japan in the English language and a modern Japanese classic in translation.

Recovered, in 1901 he took a position in Taiwan to employ his specialized knowledge of agricultural economics in the improvement of Taiwan's faltering economy. Taiwan had become a colony of Japan in 1895 after the Sino-Japanese War. Taiwan at the time seemed almost unfit for human habitation because of disease. Its economy could not produce enough in tax income to pay administrative charges. Nitobe's plan to encourage the growth of sugar cane led to a rapid improvement of the economy and to a position in higher education for himself. He taught as professor of political science, first at Kyoto and then Tokyo Universities. In 1913, he became professor of colonial policy at Tokyo University. This was the only chair of colonial policy ever established.

As the number of students increased, some began to take detailed notes of his lectures. These, when reduced to written form, were published under his name. His complete works, about one fifth of which appeared in English, amount to almost 15,000 pages in 24 volumes.

While he continued to lecture at Tokyo University, he at different times presided over two other educational institutions. The first was the Number One Higher School in Tokyo, Japan's most prestigious preparatory school for men. He also became the first president of Tokyo Women's Christian College, one of the earliest institutions of higher education for women. This proliferation of activities ended when, immediately after World War I, he was named Undersecretary of the League of Nations in Geneva. This was the highest international post ever held by a Japanese, never surpassed and only equalled by the current appointment of Akashi Yasushi, who has also served temporarily as the director of the recent UN Peacekeeping operation in Cambodia. While in Geneva, Nitobe became the most eloquent spokesman for the League and founded the International Committee for

Intellectual Cooperation. This would develop in the United Nations after World War II into UNESCO. Nitobe's avuncular personality and sincere interest in those with whom he worked made him the individual among the executives of the League most admired by its rank-and-file workers. Here Nitobe also made the acquaintance of the young Canadian lawyer Larry Mackenzie. This chance meeting developed into a friendship which led in the end to Mackenzie's proposal to develop a Japanese garden in Vancouver to honour Nitobe's memory.

Nitobe retired at sixty-five in 1927 and returned to Japan, where he engaged wholeheartedly in a number of activities that reflected his many interests. They included the directorship of the Japan Branch of the Institute of Pacific Relations; regular advice to senior members of the Japanese government, including the Emperor, on international relations; renewed interest in the area of Nitobe's birth, Morioka; active volunteer participation in campaigns for better labor relations; and the development of health insurance.

Nitobe suffered in 1931 with the army drive into northeast China, then called "Manchuria." Its brazen takeover of an area two times larger than Japan mocked Nitobe's lifelong efforts to achieve a respected standing for Japan among the nations of the world. Shortly thereafter the government used Nitobe to attempt to gain international acceptance of its position that "Manchukuo", a puppet government it had installed in Manchuria, represented the will of its people rather than Japanese greed. They sent him on a punishing lecture tour of the United States in 1932 in the attempt to change anti-Japanese opinion and hoped that his participation in a private conference in August 1933 would accomplish the same end. He failed, and Nitobe died, at least in part because of a broken heart, in Victoria on October 15, 1933.

This brief description of the work of a lifetime impresses one with the intense and multifaceted activity which it appears to reflect. How does one find a single noun with which to identify Nitobe? Let us briefly consider some of the elements which study of his biography brings to the fore.

The first is the field for which he had trained, agricultural economy and its application to the administration of colonies. The American land-grant colleges were

taken as a model for the Sapporo Agricultural College because they trained technicians to deal with the engineering problems of development who at the same time received military training. This combination seemed to them perfectly suited for Hokkaido, though military training in Sapporo did not impress the students nearly as much as the contents of other courses. Nitobe never considered himself in any way a military man.

It was the rational, intellectual approach to agricultural development that Nitobe perfected out of this early training. He put the techniques he had learned in Japan and Germany to good use in his plan for sugar-cane production in Taiwan, but even here he emphasized the human and attitudinal aspects of production. Not the physical techniques themselves alone, but the way that the individuals worked with them seemed to him important. Nitobe continued this humanistic emphasis in his lectures on colonial policy at Tokyo University. It is one of the ironies of his life that this concern for the individual in the modernization process should have been most thoroughly repudiated by the Japanese army in Manchuria.

Another noun which could be used to describe Nitobe's career is "educator." He emphasized the cultivation of the whole person and individual character. Some students at the First Higher School, which had been modeled after a German *gymnasium*, tired of his moralizing, but most seem to have appreciated the concern for them that it represented. The women at Tokyo Women's Christian College similarly recalled his kindly interest in them as individuals.

This view of education, the development of responsible personality, carried over into another partial career, that of essayist. Most of Nitobe's early essays dealt with self-help and emphasized what the individual could do to improve his or her own character. They reflected Nitobe's early interest in the works of Carlyle and his concern with how to develop individuals with strong inner direction. The articles appeared in magazines published for adolescents as they sought how to prepare for lives endowed with meaning. After Nitobe had retired from the League, he also published frequent newspaper articles in English. They allowed him somewhat more freedom from the attentive interest of the government censors of newspapers than

Japanese articles would have attracted. This was perhaps simply because the censors themselves had difficulty reading Nitobe's English.

The final noun one might use with reference to Nitobe is "diplomat". He never served as a diplomat in the sense that he represented the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In his work with the League Secretariat and his lecture tour of North America in 1932, he served the foreign policy purposes of his government as a special representative of Japan rather than member of the foreign service. This lack of official affiliation with the Foreign Ministry does not mean that the term "diplomat" is here misused. Nitobe's urbane and witty manner coupled with his ability to express minute nuances of meaning enabled him to assume almost automatically the role of diplomat. That he always thought of himself as a representative of Japan in whatever he did further enabled him to act spontaneously in the role of an intermediary between his and other nations.

Professor, development specialist, moralist, literary critic, author and diplomat: all describe his career in part, but only in part. The single characteristic which runs through his working years is that his major income always came from the Japanese government. He worked as a public official at the apex of whatever branch of government he served, and his superior language competence and personable American wife meant that wherever he worked he frequently dealt with Japanese affairs as they affected individuals of other nations.

In terms of his basic personality, he seems to have possessed a rational and optimistic view of human potential. His speciality in development studies kept him at the forefront of major technical change, but as a person he seemed more bellwether than prophet. He did not overtly oppose what other leaders in his society may have proposed, but rather tried to work from within what seemed to him the consensus of modern and enlightened opinion.

At the same time, Nitobe always acted as a personal representative of his people. His adopted daughter, who joined the family as an elementary school girl, remembered in her old age that his first words to her were that the family usually ate Western food, and that she would have to handle the necessary implements so that

Western guests would not laugh at her. He always considered himself a leader, and his elitism included a sense of responsibility for those in less fortunate circumstances. This sense of insured position within Japanese society seems to have given way to a recurring slight unease when he turned his attention abroad, that his countrymen might not be respected by representatives of other advanced nations.

This consistent preoccupation with Japan's national aims and achievement means that a description of Nitobe's life can best be furthered at this point by reference to the climate of international relations within which Japan operated during his lifetime.

## II.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the nations of Europe and North America, generally known as the "Western" nations, were expanding their influence throughout Asia. Spain had held the Philippines for centuries, and the British were extending their incursion into India and China. Japan had insulated itself from invasion for two and one-half centuries by self-imposed isolation. During this period, Japanese society had flourished, but it lagged behind the tremendous changes in the nations which now came pounding on its doors. In many ways, the 19th Century crisis resembled that which had brought on the isolation policy in the first place. At that time, Japanese authorities had become convinced that Catholic missionaries from Spain and Portugal came as the precursors of military and political takeover. The result had been to cut Japan off from Europe.

Much the same could be said in the mid 19th Century. Military vessels came to deal with Japanese officials in the name of international trade. From the beginning, their actions reflected a strong interest by the crews of the ships in Christianity. The most obviously important changes since Japanese had shut themselves off from the West had occurred in three fields: military hardware, communications and international relations. State-of-the-art guns on Western warships mocked the puny seventeenth-century cannon which protected Japanese harbours. Steam propulsion enabled the ships to go anywhere at will. The telegraph provided instantaneous land



communication. And an intricate framework of international treaties supported by well developed ministries of foreign affairs in each country set the rules of intercourse across national boundaries. Japanese possessed none of the skills necessary to cope with nations which employed these forces.

Very quickly the Japanese decided on two policies. The first and more simple of the two was to procure for themselves the ships, cannons and communications which made the Western powers so fearsome. The second was to gain themselves a position of equality within the new international-relations system of the West.

Even before the Meiji government took over in 1868, the Japanese had started to procure Western arms, and improvements in warfare made with them shaped the nature of the civil war which ended Edo rule. Tremendous Japanese expenses on everything connected with the increase of military strength continued through to the end of the Pacific War, the Japanese name for the warfare against China and then the rest of the major powers which lasted for about fifteen years. Until defeat in 1945, their considerable successes against China and Russia between 1894 and 1905 achieved them status as a major power of the world.

The second element in Japan's program to improve their position in international relations proved more difficult. Foreign relations required great skills in language and in the knowledge of the societies of the nations with which one dealt. Although hard pressed to say so for themselves, Japanese also suffered in contacts with Western nations because of major differences in the assumptions they and Westerners made about human relations. Japanese, as part of the Chinese cultural zone assumed that individuals were almost never equal. Gradations in rank upon which all society rested separated each individual from others. The same held true for nations. China considered itself the center, and all other nations related themselves to China in varying states of dependency.

Japan had succeeded in keeping its dignity and independence from China through most of history, but it agreed with the hierarchy of individuals and nations which formed the core of the Chinese philosophy. In the early nineteenth century, Japanese thinkers on international relations had begun to posit a Japanese system of

international relations similar to the Chinese one but with Japan at the center.

The crisis between the two systems came in 1854 when American warships brought a letter from the president of the United States which requested that the Japanese end their isolation policy and allow foreign ships access to their ports. The fire power of the ships allowed the Japanese no alternative but to sign. The inauguration of the Meiji government fourteen years later provided the momentum to set up an international-relations network like those of the other Western powers. The first such offices were established in 1872.

As they learned about the new system, Japanese discovered that it did not rest upon a hierarchy of powers like the Chinese system but upon a presumed equality of all nations. This view of the relations between nations took shape in the treatment accorded diplomats in capitals throughout the world. It reflected the Christian belief that all individuals were equal before their common maker, God. As time passed, Japanese diplomats further realized that, though Christian theory presupposed the equality of all before God, in fact Christians themselves tended to feel that true equality existed only between Christians. To gain such equality, then, would require Japanese to become Christians. Such a prospect threatened much that they held dearest about the traditional system; no one would become a Christian lightly.

The young Inazo could not know that the quandaries that beset Japanese diplomats in early Meiji would affect his later life, but he seems to have acted in just the right way to prepare himself personally to enter the Western world. Available information does not say anything about the motivation for his conversion to Christianity, but detailed examination of his own conversion by Nitobe's closest friend, Uchimura Kanzo, reveals that patriotism played a large part in Uchimura's decision. Inazo decided at almost the same time. In the world into which they all grew, to become Christian and act like a British gentleman, seemed the best way to make of themselves Japanese who were at the same time international men.

As the young Nitobe moved to study abroad, the philosophic system known as "Social Darwinism" attracted much attention. Originating in Great Britain, it set forth in

pragmatic terms a world view which confirmed Japan's worst suspicions. The philosophy is usually summarized by the phrase "the survival of the fittest", a term translated by the Japanese with four Chinese characters which read "strong eat, weak meat" (*kyoshoku, jakuniku*), the strong eat, and the weak become their food. This philosophy, while apt enough as an expression of British Imperial self-confidence, provided little solace for those who suspected they might become part of the stew.

The attempt to catch up, both in terms of machinery and ideas, occupied much of Nitobe's thought and that of many Japanese until very recently.

### III.

Gradually as Nitobe moved into his career, the prestige of Japan's new international relations network rose dramatically because of Japan's military prowess. In 1902 the British approached Japan for a treaty of friendship in which each pledged to aid the other in the event of war. With the outbreak of World War I in Europe, Japan promptly moved to take over German colonies in East Asia as its contribution to Britain under the Treaty. When requested to enter Siberia to insure the continued operation of the Trans-Siberian Railroad at the time of the Russian Revolution, Japanese troops joined in a multi-national force. At the end of the war, Japan presented its request as one of the victors for inclusion in the supervision of the new League of Nations. Nitobe's appointment as one of the Under Secretaries marked the high point of Japan's diplomatic activities before 1945. As the only one among the top administrators who was not European, Nitobe could be seen to represent all of the other peoples of the world in this "international" organization.

Unfortunately, just as Nitobe assumed his post, the actions of the Japanese army began to threaten the diplomatic position that Nitobe represented. Though quick to relieve Germany of its East Asian possessions in 1914, Japan had sedulously avoided further assistance to its ally Britain, finally responding with the dispatch of two destroyers to the Mediterranean though Britain had requested and greatly required further assistance. This the Japanese could easily have afforded. Also, though the other powers had quickly removed their troops from Siberia at the end of

hostilities, the Japanese army remained with the apparent intent of making the area east of Lake Baikal a Japanese colony. Japanese forces did not leave, and then only after strong international pressure, until four years after the War.

These Japanese attempts seemed inappropriate in the new climate of respect for national aspirations espoused by President Woodrow Wilson of the United States. Britain and its colonies in particular soured on Japan. In what was perhaps the most important symbolic defeat of the period, Japan's request that the Covenant to the Charter of the new League of Nations contain a statement of racial equality was turned down, largely at the request of Australia backed by Britain and Canada among others. That this assurance of equality would not be part of the new organization diminished the importance of Nitobe's position and the organization he represented in the eyes of Japanese. In addition to this rebuff, Britain set about to remove itself from the treaty with Japan. It was replaced by a number of new treaties which clearly favoured China and attempted to limit the burgeoning military and naval threat of Japan.

Nitobe's service in the League Secretariat occurred, therefore, against other activities where Japan's success in the first of its international aims, the development of capable self-defense, threatened its diplomatic success. The two become mutually untenable after 1931 when Japan's army, acting on its own, swiftly took over northeast China "Manchuria". Nitobe, at the time four years retired from his post in Geneva, lived in Tokyo, actively engaged in his post-retirement pursuits, one of which was his chairmanship of Japan's branch of the Institute of Pacific Relations. He lectured frequently throughout Japan and on one occasion, at a small provincial city in the spring of 1932, spoke what appears to have been his true mind about current developments in a meeting which he believed to be "off the record." At this time, he said that Japan faced two great threats, international Communism, with which no Japanese at the time would have disagreed, and the Japanese army. He went on to comment that, if asked, he considered the Japanese army the greater threat of the two. A newspaperman, who later claimed that he had entered the meeting late and had not heard the announced agreement that Nitobe's remarks would be off the

record, reported the comments in the local newspaper. It put them on page one, apparently as part of its publicity to increase circulation. Within a few days army assassins murdered a number of Nitobe's close friends and colleagues in positions of high authority who had been known for their moderate views. Nitobe was given police protection, and his granddaughter remembers leaving the family house for school with guards at the front gate.

Later in the same year, Nitobe lectured in North America at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to sway public opinion in Japan's favour. The trip lasted eleven months, and included many appearances. Nitobe visited with President Hoover and spoke on the first coast-to-coast radio hookup in US history. As an example of his schedule, let us look at appearances at the end of the itinerary which brought him to the Pacific Northwest. In the morning of one day he spoke in Seattle, then at noon at Western Washington University in Bellingham. During the following two days in Vancouver, he spoke five times including addresses to the students of UBC, the Canadian Club, Japanese immigrants in Steveston, and a radio broadcast. In a day when most travel was by rail, this represented a gruelling load for a seventy-year-old.

Leaving Mary to recuperate from a heart ailment in California and returning to Japan in early in 1933, Nitobe reported to the Emperor about his speaking trip. He also learned that Japan, following official reprimand by the League of Nations for its invasion of Manchuria, had walked out the League. The Army's actions had thus scuttled all that Nitobe had attempted to achieve and left Japan dangerously exposed.

One last possibility to lessen the diplomatic damage remained. An international conference had been planned by the Institute of Pacific Relations for the summer of 1933. The Institute had been founded shortly after World War I by a number of Americans concerned with the increasing suspicion of Japan and the fear that it would result in war in the Pacific. Members were to represent themselves alone, and those in positions of government responsibility for Pacific policy were not eligible to attend as delegates. In a day when international conferences were a rarity instead of a routine occurrence, the Institute planned for conferences every two years. Perhaps the single most important one had been held in 1929 in Kyoto. Nitobe, the

new chairman of the Japan Branch, had acted as host, and the young John D. Rockefeller III had attended and so gained his first acquaintance with Japan. Rockefeller's numerous benefactions to Japan after 1945 grew out of contacts first made at this conference. The next conference was held in 1931 in Shanghai shortly after the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident. Here the ailing Nitobe tried to defend Japan's actions when it was too early to have any real appreciation of exactly what had happened. The Canadian Larry Mackenzie also had his first direct experience with Asia at this meeting.

Nitobe, as continuing chairman of the Japan branch of the Institute, would also lead the Japanese delegation to the 1933 international conference in Banff which was scheduled for mid-August. Nitobe appears to have sensed his approaching death and considered himself a victim of Japanese international policies. He sailed with the delegation for Vancouver, entrained to Banff and there tried to avoid the issue of Manchuria. The Secretariat of the Institute had planned that the conference focus on issues of economic development in the hopes that the acrimony of the 1931 meeting could be avoided. Official Japan probably wanted to keep proceedings close to the original agenda. They could have hoped that success in the plan could be construed as acceptance of their policy in Manchuria. Nitobe's many friends among the Westerners at the Conference noted his strained reading of prepared texts. The group photograph of those who attended the conference, taken in front of the Banff Springs Hotel with the Bow Valley in the background, shows Nitobe seated in the center of the front row, his legs bent in what appears to reflect considerable discomfort. The day after the conference, he walked with young colleagues down to the railroad station to get the train for Vancouver. His good friend, Henry Angus, recognized for his support of Japan in his role as a professor of economics at UBC, noted that Nitobe tired easily and had to rest a number of times on the short walk.

From Vancouver, he went directly to the Oak Bay Beach Hotel in Victoria where Mary awaited him. Early in September, he spoke in Vancouver at a dinner sponsored by the Japanese Consulate and then returned to Victoria. A few days later he entered the Royal Jubilee Hospital with what appeared to be a minor complaint.

While in the hospital the Japanese government requested him to go to Geneva to represent Japan in the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation which he had founded. They even included the necessary funds for the travel with the request. Though the Japanese had left the League, Japan retained its membership in the ancillary organization and appears to have hoped to keep abreast of developments in Geneva through Nitobe. He refused. His doctor remained optimistic, but his condition slowly worsened, so that he died in the early evening of October 15. A young Japanese colleague, who apparently suspected poisoning, requested an autopsy, but it reported only that all of Nitobe's organs had shown evidence of advanced wear, so that like the proverbial "one hoss shay" many parts of his body had failed at once. A quickly convened memorial service in Vancouver two days later attracted 750 mourners.

It is unnecessary to point out here that in the years after Nitobe's death the Japanese army moved to take over most of heavily populated China. Their inability to retreat from this involvement in China worsened relations with other leading nations, particularly the United States. It embargoed exports to Japan of materials the Japanese required for their war machine. The desperate need to capture replacements in Southeast Asia led to Pearl Harbour and the subsequent expansion of World War II to Asia. At its height in 1942 the inflated Japanese empire included large areas of the empty Pacific. The solitary shots fired from a submarine at a lighthouse near Victoria constituted the closest the Japanese came to an invasion of North America. Nitobe's lonely death in Victoria thus links his career to the decisive events of the war which twelve years later had reduced much of Japan to ashes.

Nitobe's death here also led in part to the selection of Victoria as a sister city for Morioka and this lecture tonight. A historian notes the lack of interest in Nitobe among contemporary Japanese outside Morioka. A comparison can be made to the career of one of Nitobe's classmates in Sapporo, Uchimura Kanzo. Uchimura rates mention in all the history books as the single individual who challenged the attempt of the Japanese state to control the minds of its citizens and for three decades supported himself through writing and speaking on the Bible in terms reminiscent of

the Old Testament prophets. Nitobe did not speak out. He appears in contrast to have hoped through work from within the government to further the considerable Japanese success in fashioning a liberal democracy on the Western model.

Postwar Japanese historians and citizens alike, disgusted with what they learned about the excesses of their army in the Pacific War, seem to have wished that Nitobe had publicly broken with army leaders. While one agrees with the desirability of such action, it is hard to imagine how Nitobe could have done it. He had brought his wife a stranger into a strange land. She had identified completely with him and molded her life to his. His sudden death would have left her much more exposed than it would have left a Japanese wife. Further, he had the ear of the Emperor and was the single Imperial advisor who could report with authority on events outside Japan. Any outright objection to Army policy would have led to Army pressure on the Imperial Household Ministry which then would have refused Nitobe access to the Emperor and robbed the Emperor of his mentor. Finally, outright objection was simply not Nitobe's style. He had always belonged to the privileged insider group, and his great abilities, particularly in language where he had the greatest capability of any Japanese public figure in his generation, meant that he and other Japanese leaders believed that points Japan wanted to make to the other nations could most effectively be expressed by him. Few if any individuals anywhere would have disagreed with this assessment.

Nitobe kept an English-language diary from his early days in the Sapporo Agricultural College until his death. Family members plan not to release its contents to researchers until their findings can no longer adversely affect others. Only with the opening of this source can we anticipate answers to the fascinating questions of what motivated Nitobe during his last years.

#### IV.

Nitobe returned to the consciousness of most Japanese in the mid 1980s when the Ministry of Finance put his likeness on the new issue of ¥5000 notes. Ministry representatives have not said how they came to the decision, but one possibility which



seems to deserve considerable credence is that Prime Minister Ohira had studied under Nitobe and admired him. The ¥5000 note is less used than the ¥1000 and ¥10000 notes. They bear the likenesses of the much better remembered Natsume Soseki and Fukuzawa Yukichi. Now, with Nitobe on people's minds but with little context into which to put him, the sixtieth anniversary of his death enables one to note how many of the elements that marked his career have become an accepted part of contemporary Japanese life. Four deserve comment here.

The first is the Japanese renunciation of war. Neither Nitobe nor any other Japanese directly introduced this concept into Japan. There can be no doubt that General Douglas MacArthur himself and in his own handwriting first suggested the wording of Article Nine in the Japanese Constitution of 1947. It pledges the Japanese never again to indulge in armed aggression abroad. Yet it is not the origin of the concept but the quick and universal acceptance of it by Japan that attracts the attention of the historian.

This acceptance has continued for almost a half century as one element in Japanese life which commands almost universal respect. Since it was a concept which no sane individual would have considered feasible during Nitobe's lifetime, it is impossible to surmise his attitude toward it. But it is clear that he agreed with those known to historians as "Taisho Democrats," Japanese who favoured liberal and democratic domestic policies. Nitobe knew the fellow Christian and Tokyo University professor Yoshino Sakuzo who championed Taisho Democracy. Nitobe himself symbolized the philosophy of international relations which flowed from Taisho Democracy. His pacifist philosophy, though overrun by his nationalism and sense of Japanese mission at the time of the Russo-Japanese War, would have inclined him to a Japan which dedicated itself to a world without recourse to armed expansion. It helps to understand postwar Japanese attitudes toward democracy and international relations if one remembers that a considerable portion of educated opinion in Japan in 1930 espoused just such ideas. These individuals lost all influence in Japanese policy between 1931 and 1945. Their reputations unsullied by association with the wartime excesses, they were available to help develop the new

democratic culture under favourable postwar conditions.

If there can be some doubt about how Nitobe would have reacted to the first postwar constant in Japanese international relations, there can be no doubt about his reaction to the second point: that Japan would dedicate itself to cooperation with other powers, to negotiation and mutual action on behalf of the common good of all peoples. From their first hesitant return to international relations after the end of the Pacific War in 1945, the Japanese have cooperated wholeheartedly with the United Nations and its various undertakings on behalf of mankind. The passage of time makes the postwar twin Japanese decisions to eschew force and promote international cooperation seem almost prophetic. Mankind's contemporary ability to destroy enemies and friends alike with a few massive explosions means that the potential recourse to arms to settle international disputes is less effective than it was when individual weapons had less effect. Increasingly people from all nations recognize that we all simply must sit down, discuss differences and hammer out compromise solutions to more issues and with greater frequency than ever before. It has long seemed to me that Canadians can understand this truth more easily than many other peoples with more bellicose traditions. Canadians have seldom had the sanctions available to them to force their will on others. As a result, Canadian domestic history seems, as it unfolds, to consist of drearily long and drawn-out consultations, but they have resulted in continuing and for-the-most-part enlightened government from which all Canadians benefit. As a result, Canadians, like contemporary Japanese, seem well suited to the greatly increased international consultation which will mark all of our lives for the foreseeable future.

Two institutions within Japan reflect this Japanese understanding of the need for continuing consultation. One is the great support for UNESCO and its works. The best known UNESCO association in Japan is in the city of Fukuoka in northern Kyushu. I suspect it is the most active in the world. Lively and well financed, it regularly sponsors international conferences on a variety of subjects. Another institution that reflects Nitobe's dedication to peaceful settlement of differences is the International House of Japan. The House, founded within a decade after the end of

the Pacific War by a number of Nitobe's disciples and greatly assisted by the Rockefeller family, occupies a striking building in downtown Tokyo. The members of International House have interests similar to those in the Council on Foreign Relations in the United States or Chatham House in England. The building looks out on a classic Japanese garden. Its library, simple housing and eating facilities and conference rooms provide surroundings necessary for quiet meetings. For almost four decades "IHouse" has been a haven for scholars from all nations. Breakfast, which is reserved to those staying in the House and their guests, will normally find Japan specialists from all over the world in animated converse together. A program of regular meetings provides venues for advanced students to share their findings with each other and for established scholars from all over the world to meet colleagues within Japan. The building and the organization which it represents embodies ideas first articulated by Nitobe in Geneva. There he hosted garden parties on the lawn of his house which ran down to Lake Lemman. Albert Einstein, Madame Curie and other European leaders could be seen in lively discussions over tea. Unlike other institutions with similar names, the International House of Japan does not serve as a hostel for students but as a forum for established professionals. It, and the Nitobe Garden in Vancouver serve as the two main material memorials to Nitobe.

Nitobe's interest in communication across national boundaries brings us to the third point of his legacy that has become main line policy in Japan. This is the acquisition of the English language to enable peoples of varied linguistic backgrounds to correspond with each other. Nitobe knew enough English when he went to Sapporo to take most of his courses in it. During his four years there he is said to have read all the works in the English-language library of the young College. His later publications in English began with his graduation thesis at the Johns Hopkins University, continued through *Bushido* and numerous other volumes before they ended with the charming *Reminiscences of Childhood* which Mary published after his death. One could argue that his English ability was so rare that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was able

to coopt his services in 1932 when others of his age and inclinations would have remained at home.

Since the end of the war, the development of English as a second language has become national policy. All students take it for the last three years of their compulsory education, and the more than ninety percent among them who go on to high school take three more years. The trip abroad to an English-speaking society to experience the use of English in its home environment has become an engaging right of passage for thousands of these young people. Each summer they can be seen trooping about Victoria and hundreds of other English-speaking cities. Those among English speakers who have wrestled with the Japanese language will recognize the enormity of the self-imposed task to make English a functioning second language in Japan. Few if any among the leading languages of the world differ more greatly than English and Japanese. Though the resultant mistakes made by the eager Japanese who try their English abroad may bring smiles to the faces of native speakers, they are usually no worse by far than what happens when we try to say something of substance in Japanese. That Nitobe succeeded so well remains a constant inspiration and stimulus to those who know his works.

The fourth point of Nitobe's legacy that has relevance today is his marriage to an American, an "international marriage," to use the Japanese term. This may seem an unusual point to link with the first three, but contemporary Japanese developments justify its inclusion. At the time of Nitobe's marriage, some of his seniors in the Japanese government had brought home wives from their own sojourns abroad, but their numbers were few. The problems seemed, when viewed in the abstract, too formidable to allow of solution. Language, family organization, material culture, isolation: all seemed to doom such a union from the beginning. We know little of Mary. One element we do know is that early in the marriage she decided to subordinate her own considerable abilities and ambition to the support of Nitobe's career, in what she correctly perceived to be the traditional Japanese way. She might well have been pardoned at the end of her life, if she had given up Japan and returned to Philadelphia, yet she, having survived her husband by five years, died in Japan.

Her letters, which have been preserved, hold the key to a fascinating tale of cultural adaptation supported by unquestioning love.

She made a go of her life in Japan in part because her husband could afford to support her in accustomed surroundings and took frequent trips abroad, always in her company. Since 1945, and particularly recently, international marriages have become much more common in Japan. In the countryside where Japanese girls refuse to tie themselves down to life with the son of a family who wants to continue its traditional agriculture, brides who will accept rural conditions are being sought in other parts of Asia. What this means in terms of the traditional myth of Japanese racial homogeneity are not mentioned, yet the implications are clear. One recent newspaper article tells of the problems which have arisen in a rural family where the father has forbidden his wife to speak to their child in Tagalog, her native language. Mary never had a child to whom she taught his or her first tongue. She herself soon recognized that Nitobe's fluency in her own language and his regular supportive attendance on her rendered any attempt on her part to learn his tongue a misuse of time. Yet she stands out a remarkable pioneer in the experience of what happens when the most intimate relation between two individuals must somehow exist and grow across the formidable linguistic and cultural barriers that continue to separate Japan from most other modern states.

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Here tonight, close by the arena within which Nitobe lived out his last weeks, we look back at him over a chasm of change with few parallels in world history. His life tells us much about the dangers which face an individual who tries by himself to represent one culture in its confrontation with another. Yet it also tells us much about how an individual of uncommon ability, perseverance and good will can shape the world and bequeath to his successors an environment somewhat more humane than it was when he entered it.