A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FAR EAST

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PREFACE

THE PURPOSE of this book is to provide an introduction to the contemporary Far East. The readers whom the author has in mind are thoughtful, educated Americans who have no previous contact with the region and who desire such a survey as will give them background for an understanding of the peoples, the cultures, and the current problems of that area. It is hoped that the book will be of use to two types of constituencies. One is composed of the somewhat hypothetical "general readers," those who wish such a knowledge of the lands on the east shores of Asia as will enable them to read intelligently the newspaper dispatches and the magazine articles that pass by them in endless and often bewildering procession. The other is college and university teachers and students who desire a textbook for a general course on the Far East.

The volume is primarily designed for Americans. It therefore devotes a somewhat larger proportion of its pages to relations between the United States and Far Eastern peoples than it would had the entire English-reading public been in mind.

However, the book is in no sense intended as a work of propaganda in which the case for the policies and actions of the United States is set forth and defended. Nor is there any thought of presenting in favorable light those peoples with whom most Americans are for the moment in sympathy or of providing justification for the enmities which the majority of Americans cherish. The book is based upon the conviction that the American public will best be served by as objective and dispassionate a treatment as the author can achieve.

Underlying the volume is the assumption that the present can be understood only through a knowledge of the past. The story, therefore, is made to begin with the dawn of recorded history. Approximately half of the space is devoted to the pre-nineteenth century course of events and to the cultures of the region before the changes wrought by the coming in force of the Occident. Always in that

narrative, however, the objective of elucidating the contemporary scene is kept in mind. Men, events, and movements that have contributed to the Far East of today are stressed, and from time to time the fashion in which these are still potent is pointed out.

In the treatment of the subject, history is thought of as including more than past politics. Because so much of public interest is focused on political events and the relations between governments, the larger proportion of our space is devoted to this side of the story. However, other phases of human activity and achievements may prove quite as significant as the political. Frequently, too, the political cannot be explained without taking into account other aspects of culture. For instance, Japan's activities upon the neighboring continent remain unintelligible without some comprehension of the economic situation and of the religious history and presuppositions of the Japanese. Moreover, the basic structure of China's culture, including the political theories and organization of the land, rests upon philosophical convictions inherited from a remote past. We must, therefore, cover all phases of the history of man's thinking and acting in the region we denominate the Far East.

By the Far East we mean the eastern portions of Asia and the adjacent islands. The land which is largest in population and the most influential is China. Next in population, and recently outstanding in political power, is Japan. To these two countries the major part of our attention must be devoted. Also included are regions which in whole or in part have at one time or another been included in the Chinese imperial system and some of which have lately partially or entirely been under the control of Japan—Korea (or, to give it the name the Japanese prefer, Chosen), Formosa (Taiwan to the Chinese and Japanese), Manchuria (from 1932 into 1945, in Japanese terminology, but not so officially recognized by most of the rest of the world, Manchukuo), Mongolia, Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan), Tibet, Annam, and Tongking. Also within the Far East are the Russian possessions in Eastern Asia, Cambodia, Cochin-China, Laos, the Malay Peninsula, Siam (or Thailand), the Philippine Islands, and the East Indies. To these, lesser sections of our pages will be devoted. We must, too, say something of India and occasionally mention Ceylon and Burma, not because they are in the Far East but because through geographic propinquity and, in the case of India, because of cultural influence, they have entered into the Far Eastern story. Yet we must confine our consideration of these last three lands chiefly to the events

and the movements through which they have affected the countries properly included in the Far East.

Indeed, at the outset we must disabuse ourselves of one of the commonest misconceptions of Occidentals, that the Orient is a unity. We speak of the Occident and the Orient. By the Occident we mean peoples which have a common heritage. The Occident embraces most of Europe and those nations in America, Australasia, and South Africa who are Europeans by physical and cultural descent. Although it displays great variety, it finds a unity in its Greek, Roman, and Jewish-Christian antecedents. Perhaps because the Occident designates a cultural entity, the common assumption is that the Orient is also a unit. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Orient means merely those sections of the Euro-Asiatic continent, with the adjoining islands and with the related portion of North Africa, which are not included in the Western European tradition. They embrace the major part of Euro-Asia. Indeed, Europe is simply a large peninsula of that land mass. The only unity in the Orient is that it is not the Occident. To be sure, the peoples of the Orient have influenced one another, but they have also influenced the Occident. Indeed, the Occident is largely a development from the Western Orient. Yet among the major cultures of the Orient as great differences in history, background, and outlook exist as separate the Occident from the Orient. Between the civilizations of India and China, for instance, in spite of the contributions of the former to the latter, fully as wide a gulf yawns as between those of India and Europe.

Although affected by other civilizations of Euro-Asia, particularly by those which geographically lie closest to it, and although, like Europe, displaying within itself varieties, the Far East has been and still remains an entity. Geographically and culturally it has been and is as much apart from the rest of Asia and of the world as is Europe. As we have said, until the latter half of the nineteenth century China was the dominant feature of the Far East. It presented, and, indeed, still presents, the largest unit of population. It was the chief empire. It shaped its neighbors. The Japanese, next to the Chinese the most numerous people of the Far East, derived civilization chiefly from China, and their culture is a variant of that of China. Culturally as well as geographically the Far East belongs together.

The very term, the Far East, is part of the clue to our story. It is of Occidental mintage. To Occidentals it designates the part of the Orient which is most remote from them. The distance is not only

geographical but also cultural. Until the latter part of the nineteenth century, fewer contacts and less interchange existed between Western European and Far Eastern peoples than between the Occident and any other of the civilized folk of Asia. In the latter part of the nineteenth and in the twentieth century, the Occident came in augmented power to the Far East. The revolutionary disturbances wrought by that impact have been among the most extensive ever experienced by any major group of mankind. They are by no means concluded. They constitute a large portion of our narrative.

The Far East as a term has still further import. While it was coined by Western peoples, it has a counterpart in the Far East itself. Nippon, in its more familiar form, Japan, means the land where the sun rises, or, to give it a free and euphonious translation, the Land of the Rising Sun. To the Japanese this has peculiar significance. They regard their Emperor as the descendant of the Sun Goddess and as having a divine origin and mission. In the expansion of Japanese power on the continent of Asia and in the island world of the Far East, which has been one of the striking features of world history of the past half century and more, they see steps toward the fulfillment of that destiny. In employing the term Far East, it need scarcely be added, we are not intending to endorse the Japanese claim. An alternative designation might be Eastern Asia. This, however, is not as inclusive as the Far East. The latter embraces island groups not strictly in the former. The Far East is, therefore, the title we employ.

A word needs to be said concerning the organization of the book. First, as is proper, is a chapter on geography. This is succeeded by a long section, approximately half of the book, describing India and the Far East before the revolutionary impact of the Occident. This section has first a chapter on India before the nineteenth century, to serve as an introduction to the bearing of that country and its culture upon the Far East. Then follow chapters which describe the history and culture of the Far East before the time when, in the nineteenth century, the Westerner came in force and inaugurated the sweeping changes of the past two generations. After that is a section, also nearly half the volume, in which we enter upon a somewhat more detailed account of the Far East since these changes began.

To each chapter two bibliographies are appended. The first is brief and is made up only of such books as should be in the library of every moderate-sized city and of every college and university. The second is longer, and includes books that should be in the

libraries of all the larger cities and of the major universities. Very few books in languages other than English are given. A large list of these might be included, but to the average American general reader and undergraduate, because of linguistic handicaps, they would be of little use. Nor have many references to magazine articles been made. For Japan an excellent selected brief bibliography is H. Borton, S. Elisséeff, E. O. Reischauer, *A Selected List of Books and Articles on Japan in English, French, and German* (Washington, 1940). For China fuller bibliographies, but still selected, will be found in K. S. Latourette, *The Chinese. Their History and Culture* (New York, 3d edition, revised 1945). For the Far East in general the best bibliography is R. J. Kerner, *Northeastern Asia. A Selected Bibliography* (Berkeley, 1939).

In a sense, this is a thrice-told tale. For about thirty years the author has been narrating all or part of it annually to successive relays of students. In previous books on China and Japan, he has covered most of it. Yet all this may bring a certain advantage. To the author, at least, the story has never become trite. To have lived with it for a generation and to have presented it again and again should enable one to separate the essential from the nonessential and to give vividness to the outstanding features. Long meditation and familiarity, moreover, should have given birth to insight. As to whether the author has made the most of these advantages the reader must be the judge.

The author is indebted to many for assistance in the preparation of this volume. He recalls with gratitude his introduction to the Far East by instructors in his student years at Yale; his immersion in the life of the Far East and the Chinese language through his period on the teaching staff of Yale in China; the opportunity for giving instruction in the Far East afforded by Reed College, Denison University, and Yale University; the students who by the stimulus of their presence and their questions have aided his thinking and the organization of the material; the labors of the specialists without whose compilations of sources and whose writings this book would have been impossible; the kindness of William Trufant Foster, who first made possible the offering of the course, in Reed College, in the years 1914–1916; the unvarying courtesy and helpfulness of the staffs of the libraries of Yale University; and the skillful typing of the manuscript and the suggestions as to style by Mrs. Charles T. Lincoln. To all of these this volume must in large part be attributed.

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Chapter I. THE GEOGRAPHIC SETTING

THE HISTORY AND PRESENT PROBLEMS of the Far East have been profoundly influenced by the geographic setting. This seems a banality and it should be. Yet it is sometimes forgotten. We must not only begin our account by a brief description of the geography of the region, but again and again we must revert to the bearing of the physical environment upon events.

General Features

At the outset, we must remind ourselves of certain general features of the Far East which influence the whole.

First of all is the pre-nineteenth century remoteness of the Far East from other great centers of civilization. The Far East, as the very name indicates, is at the extreme eastern edge of the Euro-Asiatic Continent. On this land mass and its closely associated northern shore of Africa was until the sixteenth century practically all of the advanced civilization of mankind. The only exceptions of consequence were the ancient cultures of Mexico, Central America, and Peru, and these were separated from the civilizations of the remainder of the human race by vast and almost untraversed stretches of ocean and by the forbidding route through eastern Siberia, the Bering Strait, and the northwest coast of America. Not until the close of the fifteenth century did Western Europeans, by the development of new sea routes, begin to overcome the barriers that separated them from the Far East, and not until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries did Westerners come in such force that the major peoples of the Far East radically reconstructed their cultures to meet the menace.

Incidentally we must note a fact of primary importance in our story: it was the Occident and not the Far East which bridged the distance separating the two extremities of Euro-Asia. The fact of the Occidental initiative is of basic significance in the recent history of

the Far East, as it is for every other cultural area of the globe. The reason or reasons for the initiative, if they can but be determined, are of even greater import. To both the fact and the causes back of the fact we must recur in a later stage of our narrative.

The remoteness of the Far East from other major cultural areas was accentuated by formidable land barriers. Between the Far East and one of the nearest of its civilized neighbors, India, rose the highest of mountain ranges, The Himalayas and the Pamirs, and the greatest elevated plateau on the globe, Tibet. Some contact was established by sea, but that had been in spite of the intervening, southward-jutting promontory on which Burma, Thailand, and Indo-China are situated, which culminates in the Malay Peninsula, and which lengthens by hundreds of miles the voyage between India and the Far East. Between the Far East and the majority of the cultures of Central and Western Asia stretched desert and semidesert regions. From very distant, probably from prehistoric, times trade and travel, taking advantage of mountain passes and oases, existed across what is variously known as Chinese Turkestan and Sinkiang. By these routes influences entered from India, from Central Asia, and even from more western lands. Yet the distances were great and the roads were difficult.

A second general feature arises from the barriers interposed by nature—isolation. The Far East was long more nearly cut off from other areas and peoples having high civilizations than have been any other major centers of culture except those in the Americas before the time of Columbus. It developed, therefore, with fewer contributions from the outside than did any other section in Europe, Asia, and North Africa. Because of the geographic obstacles, moreover, the resulting changes in civilization, particularly in China, were the more revolutionary when once the intervening seas and land were overcome by invaders from the Occident. In spite of the achievements made possible by the mechanical devices of the past few generations, distances have not yet been annihilated. The Far East is still remote from the Occident, even the American Occident. Because of the protection afforded by the great intervening reaches of sea and land, Japan, equipped with the machines of the West, has been formidable, quite out of proportion to her intrinsic strength, to the armies, navies, and air forces of the Occident. Were China similarly armed, it is doubtful whether even a united Occident could impose its will upon her. For similar reasons of geography, the Occident need have slight

fear of effective attack from the Far East. The possibility of a Far Eastern conquest of the world or of any important part of the Occident, a fear harbored by some alarmists in the West and a hope lately cherished by a few extreme chauvinists in Japan, is so slight as to be negligible. Geography has made the Far East the Far East. It still makes it so.

A third general geographic characteristic of the Far East is the sufficiency of its natural resources for the maintenance of high preindustrial cultures, and, compared with the Occident, the paucity of natural foundations for an elaborate industrialized civilization of the modern type. For a preindustrial culture the natural provision was almost lavish. This was particularly true of the largest Far Eastern unit, China. To a lesser degree it was true of Japan, and, with some qualifications, of some of the other portions of the region. Fertile valleys and plains, some extensive, some small, in the aggregate provided food adequate for a teeming population and sufficient cotton, silk, and other fibers to clothe it. Enough timber was grown for fuel and housing. Over much of the area climate was favorable. Iron, copper, gold, and silver were mined in quantities equal to the needs of a nonmachine age.

For an industrial civilization of the type developed in the Occident in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the Far East is poorly supplied with some minerals and sadly deficient in several others. It has sufficient tin, tungsten, and antimony. In the East Indies, in Burma, and possibly in some other sections fairly extensive reservoirs of petroleum exist. Yet the two chief countries, Japan and China, are woefully lacking in petroleum. Coal, while by no means wanting, is not nearly so abundant as in the Occident, and in iron, so necessary to modern industry, the deposits in the Far East are notably scanty. With modern means of transport, in a peaceable world with low tariff barriers and few trade restrictions, these deficiencies would not prove particularly grave, for the Far East has abundant supplies of various materials important in world trade which it could exchange with other parts of the globe for what it needs. In tin, antimony, rubber, copra, hemp, quinine, sugar, tea, and silk, it provides important portions of the world's supply. In Japan and China an industrious and numerous population is an ample source of labor for an immense factory development. However, in a world subject to wars and with nationalistically accentuated barriers to international trade, the Far East is at a disadvantage.

From these general features of the geography of the Far East, we must now turn to a more detailed survey, country by country.

China Proper

First of all we must speak of China. This is partly because the Chinese Empire which we see on most of our maps and which, as a legal fiction and to a large extent in fact, is still in existence, is the most extensive of the Far Eastern countries. It is also, and this is more important, because the Chinese are by far the most numerous of the peoples of the Far East. Indeed, they constitute about two-thirds of the population of that region. As we suggested in the preface, it is also because the Chinese were long dominant both politically and culturally. The Far East has been traditionally the area of Chinese culture. Obviously this culture prevailed in China itself. It also influenced practically all the other nations and tribes of the Far East, and the largest of these, the Japanese, had as their traditional culture a variant of that of China which had been imported and adapted to their own genius and needs.

The Chinese Empire is divided into two parts. The first is China Proper. China Proper is the historic China. Here the vast majority of the Chinese live. The second consists of the outlying dependencies. These, proceeding from south and west to the north and east, are Tibet, Sinkiang (literally, the New Dominion) or Chinese Turkestan, Mongolia, and Manchuria. Several of these have periodically been ruled from China. In all of them some Chinese are found. In one of them, Manchuria, the overwhelming majority of the population is now Chinese.

It is not an accident that China Proper has been the home of the dominant culture of the Far East. Of all the areas of that region, it is the best equipped by nature for that role. It presents the largest alluvial plains, the most extensive fertile valleys, ease of communication between its various parts, and a favoring climate—a combination of conditions unparalleled elsewhere in the Far East.

The main strength of China Proper has been and continues to be in the valleys of two great streams, the Yellow River (Huang Ho)[1]

[1] In the romanization of Chinese names for English usage, what is commonly known as a modified form of the Wade system is generally employed. The chief differences from the ordinary English pronunciation are as follows. *A*, as in the word *Yang*, or *Yangtze*, is like *a* in *father; i*, as in *hsi*, is like *e* in *she*, and, indeed, *hsi* is approximately *she; hai*, as in *Shanghai*, is like the English *high; ei* as in *wei*, is like the English *ei* in *weigh; ua*, as in *huang*, is much like the English *wa* as in *was* and

and the Yangtze River. Both have their rise in the great mountains and plateaus to the west which constitute the backbone of Asia. From this same mass of highlands issue the chief rivers of India, Burma, Thailand, and Indo-China. As in China, the valleys of these drainage systems from the roof of the continent afford support to dense populations and are centers of culture.

The Yellow River takes its name from the color of its waters. This is due to the heavy load of sediment carried by the stream. This in turn is derived in part from a type of soil, the loess, which is widely distributed in the northern part of China Proper. The loess, which the Chinese call by a name which means "yellow earth," is of wind-blown origin. It is a very fine silt, of yellowish-brown color, originally deposited by the wind, but in places reworked by water. It blankets much of the land in North China, often to the depth of many scores of feet. It erodes easily. The main river of North China, the Huang Ho, is heavily laden with it and with soils of somewhat similar properties but of different origin. With this sediment the Yellow River has built up a huge alluvial plain on either side of the Shantung promontory. The loess is very fertile, and it is not surprising that on the plains in which it is a large constituent were most of the main centers of China's earliest civilization and that on these plains today much of the most densely settled portions of the country are to be found. To be sure, parts of these plains are rendered infertile by alkali, salt, and sand. However, in general their soil invites agriculture. Because the Yellow River carries so much silt, on the sluggish margins of its lower courses it builds up its banks higher than the plain. That means that in time its bed also becomes higher than the adjacent country. The process is accentuated by the dikes man builds to safeguard his fields from floods. In time of flood, the river often breaks these banks, natural and artificial, and seeks a lower level. Disastrous

is sometimes written *hwang; ê*, as in *fêng*, is close to the English *u* as in *slung; u*, as in *Hunan* and *Hupeh*, resembles the English *oo* in *hoop; ü*, as in *Hsü*, approximates the German *ü; t*, as in *Shantung*, is much like the English *d; t'*, as in *t'ung*, is near the English *t; ch*, as in *chang*, is close to the English *j; ch'*, as in *ch'ang*, is near to the English *ch; p*, as in *pu*, is close to the English *b; p'*, as in *p'u*, is not far from the English *p; k*, as in *Kansu*, is like the English *g* as in *go; k'*, as in *K'ang*, is like the English *k* as in *kind; hs*, as in *hsi*, is akin to the English *sh*. To the beginner, this sounds very confusing. It is complicated by the fact that in common English and American spellings a few of the prominent geographic names have become fully anglicized. Thus we say *Peking*, giving all the letters their ordinary English sounds (*Pē-kĭng'*), rather than the more correct *Peiching*. However, with a little close attention, even the tyro may readily acquire a reasonably accurate pronunciation of the main Chinese names.