

Conclusion

The shift from empire as a project of territorial acquisition to empire as a project of territorial maintenance altered the meaning of colonial difference at the same time that it altered the meaning of what it meant to be Japanese. Imperial travelers and colonial boosters struggled over the course of the Japanese Empire to place colonized lands within the Japanese nation without abandoning colonial hierarchies. For them, these acts of placing aimed to reorder the space of Japan, to turn Taiwan and Korea into subregions of a Japanese nation-state, and Manchuria into a region (and later state) that was outside of China and in a relationship of natural complementarity with Japan. After World War I, imperial travelers and colonial boosters redefined the space of the nation. Under the geography of cultural pluralism, colonial boosters argued that Japan was a composite of diverse regions, with each territorial unit representing a distinct cultural and ethnic homeland that, when taken together, made up a multinational Japanese state and multiethnic Japanese nation. Acts of placing went beyond representations of land. Indeed, imperial travelers used techniques of placing to fix and refix social hierarchies of language and ethnicity as well as economic hierarchies with an imperial division of labor.

In their endeavors to construct a social and spatial imaginary of the nation that could inhabit colonized lands and incorporate colonized subjects, imperial travelers and colonial boosters promoted a worldview rooted in the tensions between liberal capitalist idealism, anti-imperial nationalism, and global imperialism. They shared with their readers a social imagination of imperial Japan that was conceived of as a space of complementary diversity—of labor, resources, and cultures—yet was, at the same time, unified through the operation of history.

From inner and new territories to commensurable cultural regions, imperial travelers and colonial boosters used concepts of place to locate Korea, Manchuria, and Taiwan and their populations within a shifting imperial social, political, and economic hierarchy. It was not the worldview that critics such as Nakaniishi Inosuke wanted imperial travelers to have, nor was it the end to the uneven territorial-administrative structure of empire that anticolonial activists such as Cai Peihuo sought. It was, instead, a worldview that sustained unequal relations between colonizer and colonized—the “newness” of colonized lands, in the words of Nitobe Inazō—through the production of Korea, Taiwan, and Manchuria/Manchukuo as unique places within the empire and within the world. Such rhetoric rationalized inequality as a feature of cultural predispositions and natural resources, and it transformed the space of the nation and empire into a self-evident hierarchy of natural complementarity.

Place was a mechanism through which imperial elites reproduced a social imaginary that served their interests even as the basic conditions of empire changed. The elite students who embarked on the first school trips to Korea and Manchuria in 1906 experienced empire primarily as a matter of territorial conquest, which demonstrated and bestowed national strength. Yet by 1915, the next generation of travelers began to grapple with empire as an ambiguously temporary stage in historical development, which raised innumerable questions about how the nation of the future would fuse the territories and their populations, and how best to facilitate the resolution of this issue in the present. Travelers in the 1930s encountered empire as yet a different set of concerns, this time as a problem of how to maintain the legitimacy of colonial rule while, at the same time, decentering the inner territory as the cultural and social pinnacle of the nation. Weaving together each generation’s concerns was the common thread of articulating concerns about the future of imperial society in the language of place: Where were Korea, Manchuria, and Taiwan located within the space and time of the Japanese nation? The territory of the Japanese state? What about their peoples?

Each generation of imperial travelers and colonial boosters territorialized different configurations of a Japanese nation on colonized land and used these senses of place to internalize and naturalize their own identities as “good” citizens of an imperial nation. By using the tools of tourism to shape how travelers observed and experienced the landscape itself, placing became a powerful strategy for reproducing a sense of Korea, Taiwan, and Manchuria as acceptable exceptions to the professed norms of the nation and to the liberal international system. Indeed, as the shift from surprise over the continued presence of recognizable markers of colonial difference (e.g., white robes) in the 1910s and 1920s to the *expectation* of such regional difference in 1930s shows, imperial tourism and its associated discourses of placing were quite successful in that endeavor.

PLACING, EMPIRE, AND HISTORY

For imperial travelers and colonial boosters, place worked to naturalize an unequal political system by presenting social problems as problem places. The takeaway is not that travel writing distorted and therefore deceived or manipulated Japanese travelers into becoming willing participants of empire. Such a conclusion suggests that there were nonpolitical concepts of place that existed elsewhere. If place is part of how people imagine themselves within a society—and how they imagine the boundaries and contours of that society—then place is also always already political. Rather than treating certain manifestations of place as distorted, we are better off thinking of concepts of place as situational.¹ Acts of placing are extraordinarily political yet nonetheless fictive frameworks for ordering space into meaningful units and these units into meaningful relationships.

Writing about the relationship of nations to the territories they inhabit without recreating empire's spatial politics presents a challenge to the historian of the modern world. Empire continues to operate as a project of territorial maintenance. In the case of Japan, for example, previously colonized lands, such as Hokkaidō, are represented as the “national exotic,” which, just as it did for Japanese travelers in the 1930s, justifies the differences between the histories and cultures of the region's peoples and those of the colonizing nation but, at the same time, domesticates the act of conquest by representing it as an element of a dead past. The result, as Michele Mason argues, is the representation of colonized cultures as facets of Japanese history—and the detachment of the modern moment from the fact and consequences of dispossession by treating it as an event in Japanese history rather than a living struggle.²

The challenge that this book poses for such a deeply rooted, institutionalized practice is to show how, over the course of a global shift from a world of empires to a world of nation-states, the act of placing took on powerful political overtones. In its narrative, affective, and material registers, imperial tourism constituted a body of national subjects with personal memories of and emotional ties to colonized territories. An imperial traveler claimed a sense of self as a member of a national people—the *kokumin*—who were anchored in a particular national land—the *kokudo*. From this perspective, the territorialization of the nation was an ongoing process rather than an outcome that, once achieved, was settled.³ It required reproduction across generations and across different political circumstances.⁴ Indeed, as scholars of tourism, colonialism, and empire have shown, placing was not a strategy limited to the Japanese Empire. Rather, hegemonic powers around the globe used tourism to naturalize imperial socio-spatial imaginaries throughout the twentieth century as anticolonial groups or other powers challenged their control over colonized land.⁵ Recognizing the existence of such an ongoing spatial politics suggests that progressive historians must shoulder a particular burden: to

approach place as a question, a debate, and a tool rather than a spatial container for the unfolding of an internal historical narrative.

For historians of Japan and the Japanese Empire, the history of spatial politics presented here suggests at least two concrete interventions into the writing of the history of the Japanese Empire. One, analyzing the history of colonial discourses and representations in the aggregate—that is, in the trans-colonial manner that we have done here—is as important as analyzing these phenomena in isolation. There is no better example than Manchuria/Manchukuo, which has been long singled out in the history of the Japanese Empire as a discursive outlier due to the uniquely informal or semicolonial nature of Japan's imperial endeavor there. Examined in conversation with the spatial discourses of Taiwan and Korea, however, the uniqueness of Manchuria and Manchukuo begins to erode. The tendency to focus studies of Manchuria on the post-1932 period, that is, the era of Manchukuo, obscures the way in which Manchuria was the object of considerable ideological production as early as 1906 and the fact that the idea of Manchuria as a uniquely multinational space began to appear in South Manchuria Railway Company guidebooks from at least as early as 1929. In fact, the South Manchuria Railway Company was late to the project of territorializing subnational ethnic identities—what I have called the spatial politics of “fromness”—which, at least in the context of imperial tourism, the Government General of Taiwan inaugurated in 1927. What we learn from analyzing Manchuria through a trans-colonial and longitudinal methodology is that colonial boosters' representations of Manchuria and Manchukuo reflected a much broader, empire-wide, and global shift from a spatial politics based on a geography of civilization and monocultural nationalism to a spatial politics based on a geography (and ethics) of cultural pluralism. Moreover, the particular spatial ideology that the Manchukuoan state adopted to legitimate its territorial claims relied on the emplacement of Manchukuo within a broader spatial order of territorialized ethnic identities that existed beyond the borders of the state. In this sense, analyzing the spatial politics of Manchukuo in a trans-colonial frame illuminates not the uniqueness of Manchukuo but rather the interrelationship of the dominant spatial imaginaries of Japan and Manchukuo in the 1930s. The particular spatial politics of Manchukuo's universal, multinational state relied on the idea that the state's “five races”—in particular, the Chinese—had authentic, territorial homelands *elsewhere*. Thus the spatial politics of Manchukuo, which emphasized the migrant and/or miscegenated nature of each of its ethnic groups, represent a mirror image of the spatial politics of 1930s Japan, where colonial boosters argued that a universal, multinational Japanese state represented the interests of the many ethnic nations and peoples who had authentic territorial claims to regions *within* the borders of the state.

Two, the spatial components of Japanese discourses of imperial nationalism and multinationality—what I have called the geography of cultural pluralism—were

constitutive elements of the history of Japanese imperialism and the history of modern Japan. Analyses of the relationship of colonialism to the formation of modern Japanese national identity have neglected an analysis of spatial politics in favor of an emphasis on questions of race and ethnicity. The spatial component of the social imaginary has largely been treated as an aside to a larger intellectual history of “the national polity,” what was known as the *kokutai*. Yet, in his path-breaking study of discourses of Japanese national identity under empire, Oguma Eiji noted that the idea of Japan as a multinational state appeared first and most emphatically in geography textbooks around 1918—just before Japanese officials began to impose a new round of mobility restrictions on colonized subjects and the newly domesticated imperial tourism industry began to advertise intra-imperial tourism as the right and duty of all imperial citizens. That insight was not followed up on, however, leaving the question of why it was that the determination of a spatial imaginary was so important to the determination of the social imaginary unanswered. What emerges from the present study is the fact that the social imaginary of the nation was inseparable from the spatial identity and spatial order of the nation. The territoriality of national identity had been a concern of the Japanese government from the first days of the modern Japanese nation-state, and this concern increased markedly following the acquisition of Manchuria in 1906. Thus the appearance of the geographic representation of multinational statehood that Oguma noted in 1918 was not the first instance, but rather the latest iteration in the ongoing project of territorializing a Japanese national identity in the face of expanding state borders, an industrializing economic structure, and the rise of liberal internationalism as the moral and institutional core of global politics.

But the 1918 textbook changes did reveal a significant shift in the spatial politics of empire. If, in the earlier era, spatial politics had relied on a geography of civilization that territorialized a Japanese national identity on colonized land by marking colonized subjects as out of place on that land, by the 1920s, spatial politics had adopted a geography of cultural pluralism, which argued that colonized subjects had a legitimate place in the nation, but one that was defined in terms of the contribution of colonized lands and peoples to an imperial whole. The dominant social imaginary of the Japanese nation in the post-World War I era was thus an inherently spatial one, which posited the existence of discrete ethnic identities, rooted in particular regions, that the state would bring together in relations of complementarity. It was this spatial component of the social imaginary that structured the conceptualization and enactment of colonial difference as the politics of “fromness,” which came to inform and legitimate the exploitation of migrant Korean and Chinese laborers, the denial of Taiwanese Chinese demands for self-rule, and the imagination of an essential, internal difference between Japanese and colonized subjects that the use of a national language could bridge but not ameliorate.

RE-PLACING JAPAN

The end of the Japanese Empire came suddenly in September 1945. The local color imaginary of Japan as a culturally pluralistic empire survived in the concept of Japan as a homogenous cultural region that was the authentic homeland of the Japanese ethnic nation. Yet the political space of Japan changed dramatically. The occupation government—in name a collaboration of all the Allied powers, but in practice a project directed mainly by U.S. forces under the leadership of Supreme Commander of Allied Powers (SCAP) General Douglas MacArthur—severed Japanese control over Taiwan, Korea, and Manchuria. Korea was quickly placed under the jurisdiction of its own U.S. Occupation, which, in many cases, governed out of the same civil buildings and military bases that had anchored Japanese colonial rule.⁶ Taiwan came under the control of the Kuomintang Nationalist government, led by Chiang Kai-Shek. Here, too, Taiwanese Chinese people quickly found themselves embroiled in a different, yet no less imperial, standoff as the United States began to draw the line of containment around Taiwan, Korea, and Japan in the burgeoning Cold War. Using language strikingly similar to that of the Japanese Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson called for the United States to establish a “great crescent” of allied countries in Asia to prevent the expansion of Communism.⁷ Manchukuo, invaded initially by Soviet forces, quickly became a battlefield between the Chinese Communist and Nationalist forces and, in 1949, came under the control the new People’s Republic of China.

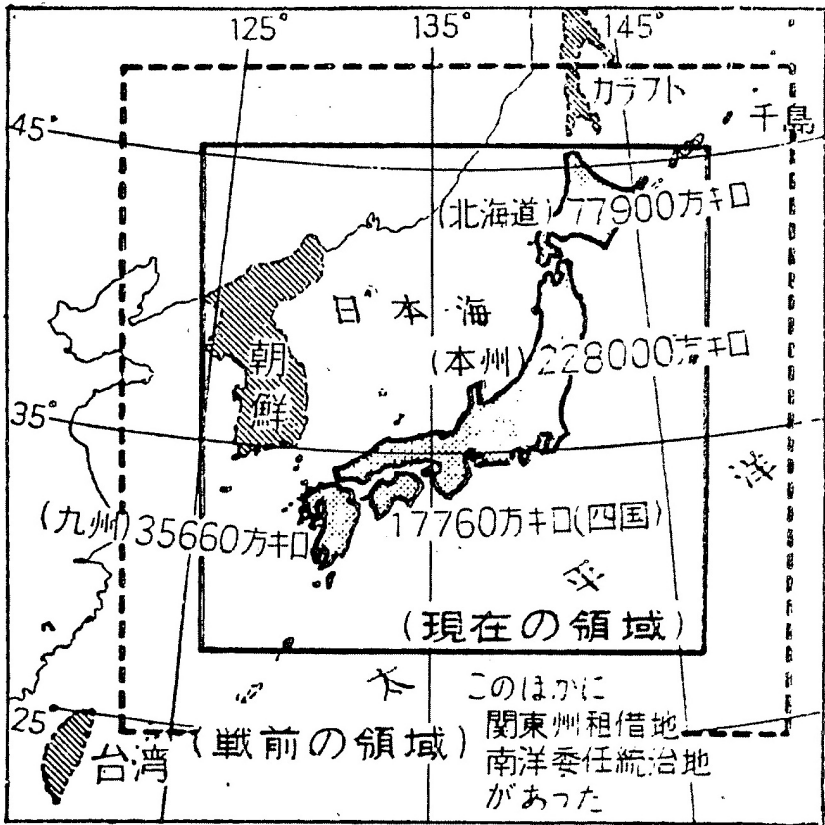
By the time war broke out in Korea, in June 1950, the political geography had changed to such a degree that a minor publishing industry emerged in Japan to educate Japanese citizens about the new map of East Asia. Books with titles such as *Futatsu no Chūgoku: tsuketari Nanboku-Sen Firipin* (The two Chinas, including North and South Korea and the Philippines) promised to bring Japanese readers up-to-date on the political status and recent history of China, Korea and Taiwan.⁸ The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea contributed its own voice to the project, publishing a colorful illustrated tourist pamphlet in 1959 entitled, *Chōsen no meishō* (The famous sights of Korea).⁹

The former new territories were not the only territories that needed to be re-placed in the aftermath of empire. Japan itself also had to be situated within a new spatial order—no longer the cultural and economic center of a vast empire, the Japanese government and the U.S. Occupation agreed that the new era required a new understanding of Japan’s place in East Asia. Contrary to the actions of many Japanese people, who sought through travel writing to explore the relationship between the ghostly remnants of the imperial spatial imaginary and the new post-imperial map, the U.S. Occupation government moved quickly to erase all of Japan’s ties to its former empire and to define Japan as a uniquely “peaceful” nation-state within East Asia.

One element of this project was the denaturalization of former colonized subjects residing in the inner territory. The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff found it difficult to place Koreans and Taiwanese Chinese in the turbulent geopolitical milieu. As the initial post-surrender instructions to General MacArthur stated: "You shall treat Formosans-Chinese and Koreans as liberated people in so far as military security permits. They are not to be included in the term 'Japanese,' . . . but they have been Japanese subjects and may be treated, in case of necessity, as enemy nationals. They should be identified as to nationality, place of residence, and present location. They may be repatriated if they so desire under such regulations as you may establish."¹⁰

The Occupation government encouraged the three million Koreans and Taiwanese residing in Japan to "repatriate" to territories many had never known. By the end of 1945, 1.3 million Koreans had left for Korea. Only able to carry with them one thousand yen (about 20 packs of cigarettes at that time) and faced with an outbreak of cholera in Korea, over six hundred thousand Koreans opted to stay. Members of the Japanese Diet and Occupation government often treated the Koreans who remained as criminals, blaming them for the spread of the black market and for promoting illegal migration. The 1947 Constitution and subsequent Nationality Law placed Koreans and Taiwanese Chinese people firmly outside of Japanese society by defining Japanese nationals as holders of Japanese household registrations. Koreans and Taiwanese Chinese residing in Japan lost the right to vote. In the words of the Ministry of Justice in 1952, the effect of the law was dramatic: "All Koreans and Taiwanese, even those on the home islands, lost their Japanese nationality. . . . In order for a Korean or Taiwanese person to become Japanese, he will need to undergo the same naturalization process as any other foreigner. The fact that he used to be a Japanese subject or is a person who had lost his Japanese citizenship makes no difference."¹¹

The Occupation and Japanese government's move to denaturalize former colonized subjects was paired with the troubled re-naturalization of Japanese settlers. Former settlers found themselves subject to scorn and derision as they traveled back to the metropole. Over five million repatriates poured into the country from Korea, Taiwan, and most especially Manchuria between September 1945 and December 1946. The metropolitan press referred to them as "overseas brethren" (*kaigai dōhō*). But reports also circulated that described how the repatriates were being treated as a "distinctive kind of people."¹² The word "repatriate" (*hikiagesha*) contained the distinction within it—repatriates were people who were *coming back* to the patria; they were people who had been "lifted and landed" back in Japan.¹³ They were out of place. Kazuko Kuramoto, who wrote about her experience as a repatriate in her memoir, *Manchurian Legacy*, described her first encounter with the sense of difference contained in the word *hikiagesha*: "[My cousin] Taro always referred to us as 'repatriates,' as if we were of another race, not 'real' Japanese. I had



日本範囲の縮小と四大島面積図

FIGURE 13. “Nihon han’i no shukushō to yon dai shima no mensekizu” (The reduction of the area of Japan and area map of the four main islands). The 1954 textbook map of Japan shaded the former colonial territories (Taiwan, Korea, and Karafuto) to mark the extent of the prewar territory of Japan.

SOURCE: Muramatsu Shigeki, *Chūgaku shakai: Nihon to sekai: Chiriteki naiyō o omo to suru mono* (Tokyo: Teikoku shoin, 1954). Courtesy of Teikoku-Shoin, Co., Ltd.

first heard this term, *hiki-age-sha*, at the Sasebo Port when we had arrived in Japan. The man who welcomed us had said, ‘Welcome home my fellow repatriates.’ He had not said, ‘Welcome home, my fellow Japanese.’”¹⁴

Japanese geography textbooks also struggled with how to define the past and present of East Asian geography. One 1954 middle-school textbook positioned Ja-

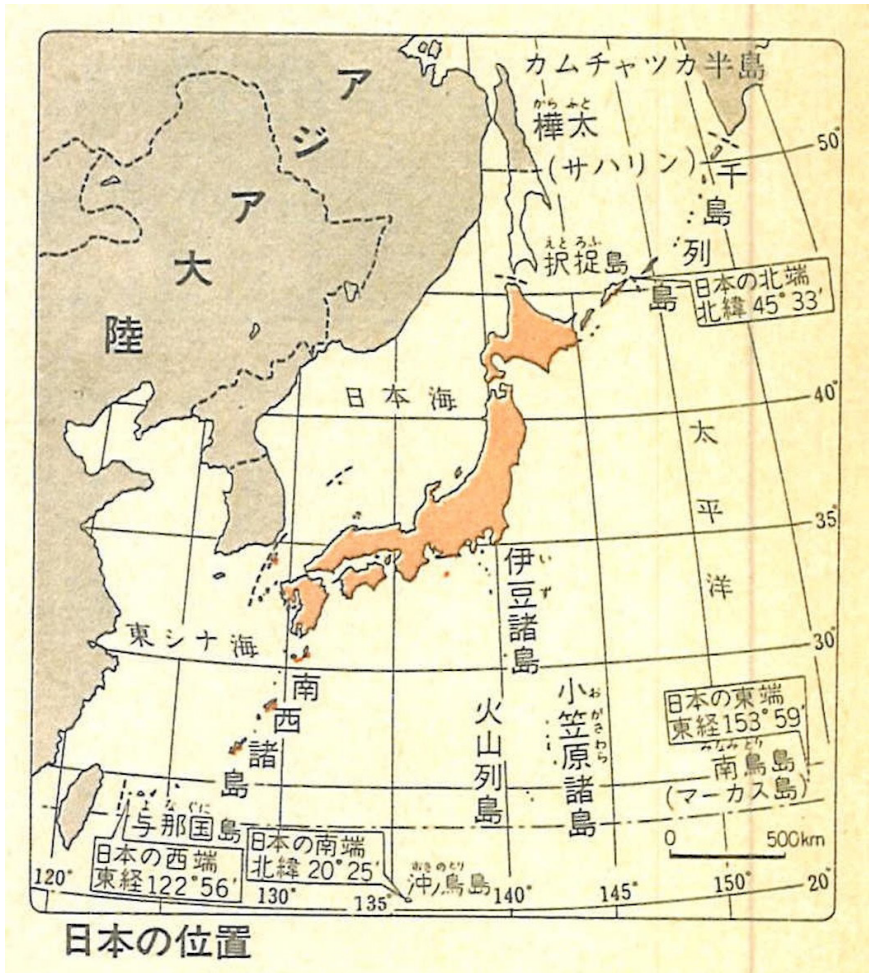


FIGURE 14. “Nihon no ichi” (The place of Japan). The 1974 textbook map of Japan shaded only the current territory of Japan, with the islands of Hokkaidō, Honshū, Shikoku, Kyūshū, and Okinawa marked in orange. There was no mention of the former empire.

SOURCE: Nō Toshio, Yazawa Taiji, Tanabe Ken'ichi, and Satō Hisashi, *Chūgaku shakaika chiri hatsu teiban* (Tokyo: Teikoku shoin, 1974). Courtesy of Teikoku-Shoin, Co., Ltd.

pan in East Asia in relation to its former territories—the map shaded in Korea and Taiwan and marked them as “prewar territories.” Not until 1974 did this textbook series show Japan in East Asia as an “island nation” (*shimaguni*).¹⁵ Place names, too, presented a particular challenge to textbook publishers. One 1955 textbook dealt with the issue by writing Korean and Chinese place names in *kanji* (characters) and then including the former Japanese pronunciation and the present-day

pronunciation as *furigana* (superscript) above the characters. Seoul, for example, appeared as 京城 with *Keijō* written on one side in *hiragana* (the syllabary used for Japanese words) and *Seoul* written on the other side in *katakana* (the syllabary used for foreign words). In the entry on Manchuria (which all textbooks continued to treat as a distinct region within China), the textbook included a helpful mnemonic for those who still oriented themselves to the imperial map: the text represented Shenyang in characters, with the *katakana* and *hiragana* pronunciation on either side, followed by the statement in parenthesis “the former Hōten.”¹⁶ Only in 1964 did the publisher revise this practice, opting instead to represent now-foreign place names in *katakana* and including the Japanese characters only as superscript above the name.¹⁷

THE SPATIAL POLITICS OF POST-IMPERIAL TOURISM

In the midst of this massive reordering of the spatial politics of East Asia, the Occupation government partnered with the Japan Tourist Bureau to reintroduce Japan as a tourist destination. For Occupation planners and the Japan Tourist Bureau, the biggest appeal was economic. Public opinion in the United States stood against the revival of Japanese industry. As a February 1950 memo from the Economic and Scientific Section to the Occupation's General Headquarters (GHQ) stated, “The tourist industry . . . is probably the only industry which Japan can actively advertise and promote without being subjected to attack by special pressure groups abroad.”¹⁸ For its part, the Japan Tourist Bureau supported GHQ's plan to revive Japan's foreign tourism industry. Commissions on ticket sales had made up over 80 percent of its prewar income. With the end of leisure travel under the Occupation, the bureau found itself in such dire financial circumstances that it considered selling romance novels and magazines to keep its doors open.¹⁹

Without the resources or desire to revamp the entire permit system that governed the entry and exit of foreign nationals in Occupied Japan, the promotion of tourism occupied a relatively minor place on the Occupation's hierarchy of needs in 1948. Yet as GHQ focused on stabilizing Japan's internal economy and resource pool, transportation companies scrambled to get a jump on the emerging market for tourism. On January 15, 1948, for example, Northwest Airlines submitted to GHQ a proposal to initiate tourist travel to Japan, precipitating a study by members of GHQ's Economic and Scientific Section (ESS) as to the feasibility of opening the country to tourist travel.²⁰ Whereas in October of 1947, the Civil Transportation Section (CTS) had declared that “fostering tourism is not feasible at this time,”²¹ by June 1948, SCAP approved “the idea” of tourist travel and set representatives of ESS, CTS, and Public Health and Works (PHW) to work on figuring out the details. Stumbling blocks included, but were not limited to, logistical support for nonofficial travel, entry procedures, and the lack

of available hotel beds in the Tokyo metropolitan area (the Western-style hotels were full of GIs). To minimize these potential problems and any potential drain on the limping Japanese economy, it was decided that “logistic support, including fuel oil and tires for motor vehicles, [would be] provided by the SCAP Revolving Fund.” Furthermore, tour groups were limited to twenty-four people, as opposed to the initially proposed twenty-five, so that they would fit in one rail carriage. SCAP also began the arduous process of rearranging the allocation of hotel space in the Tokyo area in order to liberate the rooms that tourists would require.²² On June 25, 1948, SCAP sent a memo to the Japanese government’s Board of Trade and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, signaling approval of the Japan Tourist Bureau’s plan to conduct seven-day tours for up to twenty-four individuals.²³

The opening of Japan to foreign visitors did not immediately result in a tourism boom. Yet, here and there, a few tourists arrived for the regular seven-day itinerary or a “special tour” whose details had been prearranged with Japan Tourist Bureau and SCAP. Joe Merider and Olive Boxley participated in one such special tour, which had been arranged for them by Pan-American Airlines and the Japan Tourist Bureau. The two-day tour took Merider and Boxley first on a motor tour of Tokyo, including the Imperial Palace, Diet Building, and the Nihonbashi shopping area. On the second day, Merider and Boxley visited the Hachiman Shrine and Stone Buddha at Kamakura before returning to Tokyo. The Japan Tourist Bureau conducted “overland” tours as well for passengers of steamships. A two-day overland tour for passengers of the S.S. *President Wilson* began with the Imperial Palace Grounds and Heian Shrine in Kyōto and ended the second day with a motor coach tour of Kamakura.²⁴ By the end of 1949, SCAP had approved standard two-, three-, seven-, thirteen-, fourteen-, twenty-three-, and thirty-one-day itineraries.²⁵ In January of 1950, the Japan Tourist Bureau’s English-language publication, *Travel News*, reported that nine thousand foreign tourists had visited Japan in 1949.²⁶ Following the rise in tourist traffic and expecting further increases, Pan-American proposed the construction of a one-thousand-room hotel in Tokyo in March of 1950.²⁷

Only three years removed from the end of World War II—and surrounded by civil and anti-imperial wars—“peaceful Japan” became the overarching message of the GHQ/Japan Tourist Bureau tourist narrative.²⁸ As the Tourism Division of the Ministry of Transportation (Un’yushō kankōkakarī) wrote in 1948, “Because at heart, even looking historically, we are a people who love peace, the tourism industry can work to recover our reputation in the world. Though the nation (*kokumin*) known as the Japanese people for a very short time became conceited and committed a grave mistake, we still have not thrown it [peace] away.”²⁹ Tourist pamphlets published by the Japan Tourist Bureau emphasized the “peaceful” character of Japan. The cherry blossoms on the cover of one pamphlet “symbolize

Peaceful Japan.” Another pamphlet even suggested that “Peaceful Japan” was a particular place, not to be confused with other Japans out there: “Now the procedures to secure entry to peaceful Japan are very simple,” it stated, and laid out how to arrange for a Japan Tourist Bureau package tour through a steamship or airline travel agent.³⁰

The emphasis on the peacefulness of the country was not just for foreign consumption. The Ministry of Transportation combined peace with the promotion of Japan’s history of grassroots democracy in its revisions to the Japanese-language *Nihon annai ki* (Guide to Japan), with the central goal of removing all references to militarism or warrior prowess and increasing the number of sights and emphasis on popular movements and peaceful, “cultural” history. The revised editions abounded with references to churches, none of which were included in the 1932 version, and the Ministry of Transportation removed many references to the imperial line. Statements such as, “the founding of the country by Jimmu Tennō” became “the myth of the founding of the country” with no reference to Jimmu Tennō, the mythical first emperor of Japan.³¹ The new guidebooks also translated imperial calendar years into Western calendar years (i.e., “Meiji 43” became “1910”).³²

References to Japan’s empire disappeared as well. While it makes sense that the Japan Tourist Bureau and Ministry of Transportation ceased publishing on travel to Korea, Manchuria, and Taiwan—given the impossibility of any Japanese travelers actually visiting these areas in the immediate postwar period—the removal of references to “the empire within” is not so easily written off. For example, the revised edition of the *Nihon annai ki* volume on the Kinki region, which appeared in 1949, altered the significance of Kyōto’s Higashi Honganji Temple to reflect Japan’s newly shrunken borders. While in 1932 Higashi Honganji constituted a significant player “in the religious world of our country, spreading the faith in first the inner territory, Korea, and Manchuria, then China and even as far as North America,” in 1949 Higashi Honganji had been reduced to “constituting an important role in the religious world of our country and endeavoring to proselytize.”³³

THE COUNTRY THAT IS BOTH CLOSE AND FAR AWAY

Despite GHQ’s attempt to distinguish Japan from the rest of East Asia, Japanese commentators grappled publically with the past places of the Japanese Empire and their significance for the present moment. In the 1949 introduction to *Futatsu no Chūgoku: tsuketari Nanboku Sen, Firipin*, Mizuno Masanao argued that despite the restructuring of political relationships in the immediate postwar, Japan’s future still lay with East Asia: “Although Japan is in the special state of being under occupation, Japan is an East Asian nation-state and cannot help but be significantly influenced by how the situation in East Asia changes.”³⁴

In the early years of the postwar period, the theme of imperial travel served as a site for plumbing the fraught question of how to define social relations between a newly constructed and confined Japanese nation (made up of metropolitan Japanese and repatriates) and the peoples of the former colonized territories. Was there a relationship? Writing for *Tabi* in 1951, novelist Kitabayashi Tōma struggled to articulate the responsibility that he felt toward his former Korean countrymen (*dōhō*) as they now suffered civil war. The impetus for his contribution, a recollection of a trip to a hot spring in Manchukuo, was the press coverage of the war in Korea: “When I hear the names, ‘Keijō,’ ‘Suiden,’ ‘Taikyō,’ ‘North Korea’s Heijō,’ and ‘Kaijō,’ what I remember is the Korea of eighteen years ago.” Kitabayashi indicated that he intended for the characters of these place names to be pronounced with their Japanese readings to draw a link between the liberated Korea of 1951 and the colonial Korea he visited on his way to Manchukuo in 1933.³⁵ Reminiscing about his previous travel to Korea, he wondered what had happened to the people he had met. The youth were probably divided into north and south, carrying guns and fighting. The women who wore white robes while doing the laundry on the banks of the Han River had perhaps fled their homes.³⁶ “When I think of these things, a feeling of pain comes over my chest,” Kitabayashi wrote. He continued in this vein, expressing a feeling of responsibility toward Korean society, albeit one that borrowed more from the colonial discourse of Japanese colonialism as an act of rescuing Koreans from bad government than from any interrogation of the responsibility of ordinary Japanese citizens for the violence of imperialism: “You know, the Korea of that time was, in fact, peaceful. Even if we take into account the Manchurian Incident, which took place on the opposite side of the Yalu River, it had nothing to do with ordinary Koreans. Even us travelers, when I think of it now, were so carefree it’s funny.”³⁷

To illustrate the contrast, Kitabayashi recounted a story of his visit to a hot spring known as Goryūhai in Manchuria. Upon his arrival, he found that the town’s sole hotel was completely booked. The scene at the station was so deserted that he described it like landing “in an American Western.”³⁸ The stationmaster suggested that Kitabayashi try to find a place in Hōten, which Kitabayashi compared to arriving in the Japanese hot spring town of Atami (near Tokyo) and being told to look for a place in Kyōto. He finally got into the hotel the next day, at which point he discovered that it was under near constant attack by bandits. The hot spring itself was nice. The whole experience, however, was strange and unsettling. On a tip from the hotel’s Korean maid, Kitabayashi then returned to Korea in search of a more relaxing hot spring adventure. He eventually settled on Kaiundai hot spring before “repatriating” (*hikiageru*) to the inner territory. He marveled at how he could not remember much from the peaceful, Korean portion of his trip, except that at the hot spring, he recalled sharing a bath with “rich-looking Koreans and shrinking back from the garlic smell.”³⁹

In contrasting “peaceful Korea” to “dangerous Manchuria,” Kitabayashi’s tale of hot springs adventure differed little from accounts of the Korea-Manchuria border during the 1930s. In his ending, however, Kitabayashi attempted to carry the story forward, mixing racist tropes of Korean laziness from the colonial era with post-imperial nostalgia and a sense of displacement. He did not, or could not, articulate what that future would look like. “Whatever happened to those people?” he wondered. “My memories and my impressions are only of calm and lazy people and yet, as I wrote in the beginning, I am filled with something like deep emotion.”⁴⁰

Others tried to find a language to rearticulate memories that relied on a now-obsolete geography. Mizutani Chōzaburō, a member of the House of Representatives during the 1930s and early 1940s and a two-time minister of commerce and industry in the postwar period, recalled how the history of socialist struggle against militarism and economic inequality was woven through the history of his travels around Japan, the empire, and the world. Perhaps because he was writing as one of the more well-known names of the Occupation-era government, Mizutani aimed particularly to articulate how Japan’s loss of international power and prestige affected the current generation of students, who would not enjoy the same experiences and opportunities that he had. He bridled at a statement by General MacArthur, who declared in 1945 that Japan had “fallen to a fourth-rate nation.” “When I was a student,” Mizutani reminisced, “it was a time when the ‘Great Empire of Japan’ had joined the world’s Five Great Powers. (Today’s ‘Fourth-Rate Nation’ Japan is one of these five great countries only in terms of population.) When I compare [my life then] to the lives of students, who are pressed by part-time work, now, my student years seem like a total dream world. From this blessed earthly paradise, I spread my wings wide and flew.”⁴¹

Mizutani lamented the loss of Taiwan. Unlike Kitabayashi, Mizutani made clear that he held Japanese imperialism responsible for the perpetration of enormous social and political injustice. Yet, rather than consider the specific injustice of colonialism, Mizutani lamented the violence and inequality of imperial society as a whole. He located the problem in the time period, not the specific relationship: “The police suppression tactics of that era were so unreasonable that young people today can not imagine even a little bit what they were like.” As a member of the Marxist Labor-Farmer Party, he had come “very close to being arrested” during the mass arrest of Communist Party members in 1928. It was under this cloud that he traveled to Taiwan in 1928, only to find that police suppression there was no better: “Because I was a member of the House of Representatives, the police restrained themselves with me. Instead, when I lectured at Taiwanese gatherings, they did harassing things like ordering my Taiwanese translator to stop translating.”⁴² His second trip to Taiwan, in 1941, also suffered from political unrest, in this case in the upset after the Minseitō political party expelled Representative

Saitō Takao from the Diet for questioning the legitimacy of the army's "holy war" in China in 1940. Mizutani and a few others were also expelled from the Social Masses Party for protesting the expulsion of Saitō. Traveling together to Taiwan, the expelled MPs "traveled like 'social outcasts.'" ⁴³

For Mizutani, the loss of empire was the loss of the potential for a powerful Japan to be a force for social progress in East Asia. Implicitly reflecting the right-wing socialist motives that had circulated through much of the argument for pan-Asianism and the Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, Mizutani critiqued the wealth and power of government officials, who stood between the emperor and the people. "When I went to Taiwan . . . the travel of the governor general was more ostentatious than the imperial processions of the Japanese emperor." Perhaps as a result, the war was lost, and "Taiwan drifted away from the hand of Japan to become the land of Chiang Kai-Shek's government-in-exile. Even my black eyes," he lamented, "have come to see the extremes of fate."⁴⁴ For Mizutani, the most unfortunate result of such failed government was that the empire was never given a proper chance to succeed: "In the postwar, when I had become a minister, Taiwan was no longer part of the territory of Japan. So, it came to pass that I never got an opportunity to travel to Taiwan squarely before the eyes of the people."⁴⁵

For Japanese travel writers, past places eventually settled into a present map of ambiguous relations. The Japanese government normalized relations with the Republic of China (Taiwan) in 1952, Korea in 1965, and the People's Republic of China in 1972 (which abrogated the previous agreement with Taiwan). And once again, in 1964, Japanese citizens began to travel abroad for leisure. The government of South Korea, which had established its own National Tourism Corporation in 1962, eagerly sought foreign tourists for the boost they would bring the Korean economy.⁴⁶ Japanese tourists were among the largest group of foreign travelers to arrive in Korea, growing from fewer than two thousand in 1964 to over four hundred thousand in 1973.⁴⁷ More than 90 percent of these travelers were male, and a large number of them traveled for a combination of business and sex tourism.⁴⁸ At the same time, many Japanese also returned to see their old homes and visit with former classmates.⁴⁹

The lingering ties of empire that continued to trouble the place of Japan in Asia came to have their own name: the country that is both close and far away (*chikakute tōi kuni*). The phrase appeared first in 1956, in the title of a travelogue by Kinoshita Junji, and then with increasingly frequency in the 1960s and 1970s. In this period, it almost always referred to Korea. Such language recalled the spatial politics of empire and its insistence on the complementary difference of Korea and Japan—a place that is so different yet so close, as Kobayashi Chiyoko wrote for *Tabi* magazine in 1935. Yet by the 1970s, travel writers used the trope of being both far and close to ask questions about the responsibility of Japan toward its former colonial territories. As Satō Sanae wrote in her 1972 *Dare mo kakanakatta Kankoku*

(The Korea that nobody wrote about), “Korean attitudes toward Japanese . . . were not born in a single day and night.” For that reason, Satō traveled to Korea to learn from ordinary Koreans (*shomin*) about the present state of Korea and to teach Japanese readers about “the faces of the neighbors who are both close and far away.” For Satō, who went on to become a prolific author of books on war memory and the Japanese diaspora, international boundaries could not erase the colonial and imperial past. Rather, the memory of that encounter constituted the fundamental subtext of Korean-Japanese relations: “To answer the question of what we are supposed to do now with this country that neighbors Japan, this friendly nation, we must try once to go back to the starting point and think about [Korean-Japanese relations] again.”⁵⁰

With this statement, Satō signaled that place best remained a question, an opportunity to explore the many layers and scales of history, rather than a framework for fixing relations outside of history. For nationalists, place will continue to serve as a tool for rationalizing the politics of the moment. Yet for others more inclined to challenge rather than reproduce the status quo, attempts to fix relations between people by naturalizing particular spatial orders should continue to raise questions about the work that such placing does. As we embark on a new era of spatial politics—of battles over islands in the South China Sea, of independence movements in naturalized colonies, and of fights to right the increasingly reified inequalities of global economic interdependence—the history of placing in the Japanese Empire suggests that each attempt to produce a shared spatial imaginary must always be met with a simple yet powerful question: Whose map?

