

The Japanese Empire

The Japanese experience of war from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth presents a stunning example of the meteoric rise and shattering fall of a great power. As Japan modernized and became the one non-European great power, its leaders concluded that an empire on the Asian mainland required the containment of Russia. Japan won the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–95) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5) but became overextended in the Second Sino-Japanese War (1931–45), which escalated, with profound consequences, into World War II. A combination of incomplete institution building, an increasingly lethal international environment, a skewed balance between civil and military authority, and a misunderstanding of geopolitics explain these divergent outcomes. This analytical survey examines themes including the development of Japanese institutions, diversity of opinion within the government, domestic politics, Japanese foreign policy, and China's anti-Japanese responses. It is an essential guide for those interested in history, politics and international relations.

S.C.M. PAINE, William S. Sims Professor, U.S. Naval War College, has spent eight of the last thirty years engaged in research and language study in Japan, Taiwan, China, Russia, and Australia. Funding has included two Fulbright Fellowships along with fellowships from Japan, Taiwan, and Australia. *The Wars for Asia* received the Leopold Prize and PROSE Award for European & World History and was longlisted for the Gelber Prize. *Imperial Rivals* received the Jelavich Prize.

The Japanese Empire

*Grand Strategy from the Meiji Restoration
to the Pacific War*

S.C.M. Paine

United States Naval War College



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-01195-3 — The Japanese Empire
S. C. M. Paine
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
4843/24, 2nd Floor, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, Delhi – 110002, India
79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107676169

10.1017/9780511997662

© S.C.M. Paine 2017

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2017

Printed in the United States of America by Sheridan Book, Inc

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Names: Paine, S. C. M., 1957– author.

Title: The Japanese empire : grand strategy from the Meiji Restoration to the Pacific War / S.C.M. Paine (United States Naval War College).

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2016. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2016024973 | ISBN 9781107011953 (hardback : alkaline paper) | ISBN 9781107676169 (paperback : alkaline paper)

Subjects: LCSH: Japan—History, Military—1868–1945. | Japan—Military policy. | Strategy—History. | Japan—Foreign relations—1868–1912. | Japan—Foreign relations—1912–1945. | Great powers—History. | Political culture—Japan—History. | Imperialism—History. | BISAC: HISTORY / Asia / General.

Classification: LCC DS838.7 .P35 2016 | DDC 952.03—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2016024973>

ISBN 978-1-107-01195-3 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-107-67616-9 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-01195-3 — The Japanese Empire
S. C. M. Paine
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

To John P. LeDonne
scholar, mentor, teacher, and friend

Contents

<i>List of Maps</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
1 The Meiji Generation	1
The Industrial Revolution and the New World Order	2
Modernization and Westernization	6
2 The First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895)	15
Underlying and Proximate Causes	16
Policy Objectives and the Elements of Grand Strategy	22
Initial War Plans: The Korean Campaign and the Battle of the Yalu	26
The Naval Balance: The Manchurian, Shandong, and Taiwan Campaigns	32
War Termination	37
The Implications	43
3 The Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905)	49
Underlying and Proximate Causes within a Window of Opportunity	50
Japanese Grand Strategy	54
Russia the Co-operative Adversary	57
The Height of Joint Strategy: The Siege of Lüshun	60
The Battle of Shenyang and the Decisive Battle of Tsushima	67
The Implications	71
4 The Transition from a Maritime to a Continental Security Paradigm	77
The Receding Permissive International Environment	79
The Passing of the Oligarchs	85
The Rise of Political Parties	88
The State Shintō Answer to a Treacherous International Environment	95
The Point of No Return	100
The Misidentification of Japan as a Continental Power	103
5 The Second Sino-Japanese War (1931–1941)	109
Underlying and Proximate Causes	110
The North China Campaign	115
The Road Not Taken	119
The Second United Front	121
China's Illusive Center of Gravity	130
The Interplay of Policy and Strategy	135

viii Contents

6	The General Asian War (1941–1945)	143
	More Proximate and Underlying Causes	144
	The Great Gamble: Alliance with Germany and War with the United States	149
	Peripheral Operations	156
	The Kinetics of War Termination	161
	The Politics of War Termination	165
	The Costs	171
7	Japan betwixt Maritime and Continental World Orders	178
	Arrested Institutional Development	180
	Changed Circumstances	181
	War Termination	184
	<i>Select Bibliography</i>	189
	<i>Index</i>	199

List of Maps

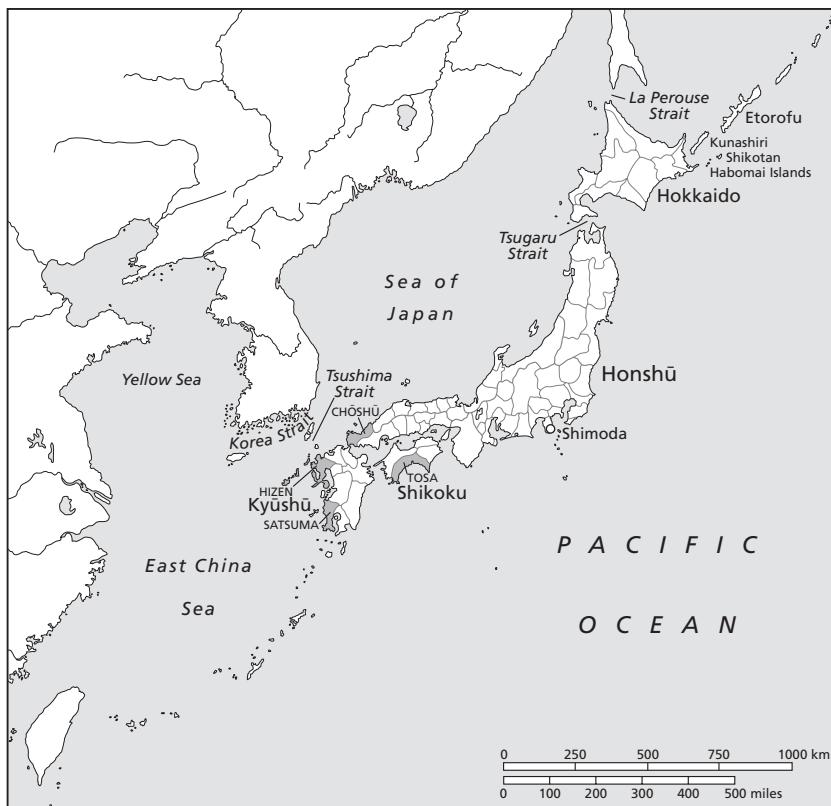
1	Meiji Japan	<i>page</i> xii
2	First Sino-Japanese War	12
3	Russo-Japanese War	47
4	Second Sino-Japanese War	107
5	World War II	140

Acknowledgments

This book relies on the research for my previous monographs, *Imperial Rivals: China, Russia, and Their Disputed Frontier 1858–1924*, *The First Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895*, and *The Wars for Asia 1911 to 1949*, and book series coedited with Bruce A. Elleman on naval topics: blockades, naval coalitions, peripheral operations, and commerce raiding. The present volume turns my previous research inside out to focus on Japan, rather than on China or Russia, and, in so doing, to focus on the security problems faced by a maritime rather than a continental power. The lessons are relevant to the United States, which, like Japan back in the day, is prone to intervening abroad. Like Japan, its maritime location provides relative sanctuary, insulating it from problems elsewhere, so that intervention is often a matter of choice, not of necessity. Yet the choices matter. Some, as the Japanese discovered, are irrevocable.

I am particularly grateful to the superlative anonymous reviewer from Cambridge University Press, who patiently pointed out shortcomings and the necessary readings to resolve the deficiencies. I am also indebted to Robin A. Lima, William Corrente, Heidi Garcia, Jack Miranda, and Julie Zecher at the Naval War College Library for continuous help supplying books through inter-library loan and book purchases; to COL Paul Krajewski USA and CDR Ronald Oard USN (retired) for explaining developments in artillery and fleet tactics respectively; and, most important of all, to Bruce A. Elleman, who has written voluminously on China, Russia, Japan, and naval strategy.

Although the methodology employed in this work comes from senior colleagues at the Strategy & Policy Department at the Naval War College, which grants master's degrees in national security and strategic studies, and war and strategic studies, the thoughts and opinions expressed are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the U.S. Government, the U.S. Navy Department, or the U.S. Naval War College. Likewise, I claim credit for all errors in this work.



Map 1 Meiji Japan