Foreword

The writing of Japanese history has made great strides since World War II. The nature of that progress deserves explanation, for it reveals some important things about international cooperation and cultural exchange.

The first thing to note is that in the West the study of Japanese history was taken up again—one might almost say was begun—at a very strategic time. The Japanese world of scholarship was emerging from a prolonged period of relative isolation. In the face of governmental pressure and patriotic emotion, it had substantially given up work of a broadly comparative or analytic nature. Many historians had retreated into silence; others had sought refuge in the esoteric or in rather barren chronological and political approaches. Their relief on being freed from psychological and political pressures and their new freedom to speculate, to deny, and to doubt made the years around 1950 a period of great ferment and excitement. It was at this moment that Western, and especially American, scholars and students first contacted their counterparts in Japan.

The contact came after Japan had broken with the state ideology of emperor and uniqueness. Historians were now free to view the succession of military regimes that had existed for eight hundred years as something more than an aberration from the proper path of ruler and subject. They could look again, think again, and write for a wider audience. A “history boom” began, one that has yet to run its course. Publications large and small, prestigious and modest, brought the Japanese public a popular history that, in excellence and interest, has few equals and fewer superiors.

On the Western and especially American side, training in the language and culture of Japan that was carried on during the war years under military auspices helped prepare for expanded scholarly contact. Military language programs produced a small cohort of students from which the future specialists emerged in the graduate schools of postwar years. By 1950 they were entering Japan as the students, colleagues, and co-workers of Japanese academics. These future specialists were a new phenomenon. They were committed to professional training and work in a field that had scarcely existed before their time. With the exception of Edwin Reischauer and a handful of others who had begun training before the Pacific War, those who wrote on Japanese history had been gifted amateurs who pursued the subject as an avocation during lulls in diplomatic or other careers. Some of them had lectured after their retirement, but more often they were gentlemen who substituted haiku for Horace as a pastime. The specialist careers for which the new generation prepared, by contrast, were made possible by the awareness of university and foundation leaders of the need for international studies in the postwar world. Sir George Sansom, the greatest of the amateurs, became the first of the professionals as he turned to lecturing in America. But the future belonged to the full-time specialists who began as instructors and assistant professors at the major universities of England, Europe, and especially the United States. It was their hope to give Japanese history full representation in the faculties and curricula of Western institutions of higher learning. At the transition point their efforts frequently built on the work of distinguished Japanese scholars—Asakawa at Yale, Anesaki at Harvard, Tsunoda at Columbia—who had given their best years to begin that process by serving as bridges across the scholarly world of the Pacific.

The new specialists crossed that ocean and entered directly into a scholarly environment they helped create. As cooperation developed, young Japanese scholars spent prolonged periods in residence at major universities in the West, and Western scholars, in turn, joined research seminars in the great historiographical centers of Tokyo and Kyoto. Patterns of influence became increasingly reciprocal, an exchange well symbolized by the long association of John Whitney Hall with Kanai Madoka of the University of Tokyo's Historiographical Institute.

Of the many fields of Japanese history transformed by this sort of

cooperation, that of institutional history, the subject of this volume, proved particularly rewarding. In 1940 the Tokugawa shogunate, the last of Japan's Bakufu, was only an old man's life away. Its documents survived in awesome numbers, but they were in the hands of former baronial families too poor to publish them and too proud to share their contents. The war damage diminished the bulk of those collections, and the owners who survived were grateful for public assistance to house and order what remained. New national and regional universities, staffed by historians who realized the potential of what they had at hand, began to benefit from the help of prefectural and local governments anxious to contribute to scholarship and publication that might enhance the name of Okayama, of Tosa, or of Tottori. Documentary compilations, monographs, and popular histories provided a three-tiered coverage that had never been available before. Much of this work is excellent, and the sophistication with which the papers collected here treat the theme of the allocation and location of power in Japan exemplifies the heightening competence in Japanese history.

The theme the editors have chosen goes to the heart of our understanding of Japanese history and society. The multiple overlapping rights that complicated the decline of the imperial court can be compared to the multiple cultural levels that Tsurumi Kazuko has found characteristic of Japan. Viewed in this light, the shift of influence from court to camp, from Kyoto to Bakufu, becomes far more interesting, gradual, and complex than it has previously appeared. And those with an eye to the ironies of more recent history will suspect that a similar process, telescoped into the six short years that followed World War II, accompanied the attenuation of military control under the final Bakufu that was known as Supreme Commander, Allied Powers.

John Whitney Hall has been a prime mover in the progress of cooperative scholarship that has been sketched here. At Michigan's Okayama Center, at the University of Michigan and at Yale University, in the Conference on Modern Japan, in the Joint Committee of Japanese Studies of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council, in the United States–Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Exchange, in the Japan–United States Friendship Commission, in the Japan Foundation's American Advisory Committee, and in a hundred other forums, seminars, con-

ferences, and committees, he has stood for mutuality of effort with the academy of Japan, opened new areas to investigation, and encouraged other explorers to enter them. This collection of essays by his students and their students gives some measure of the debt that Japanese studies, in Japan and in the West, owe to him and to his scholarship.

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The Bakufu in Japanese History

THE PROVINCES OF MEDIEVAL JAPAN