

Doctoral Thesis

Cultural Understanding and Heritage Protection in War and Occupation:
A Study of the United States' Occupation of Japan (1945-1952)
-- With a Comparative Reflection on the Occupations of Afghanistan (2001-) and Iraq (2003-)

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Graduate School of Integrated Arts and Sciences
Hiroshima University

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'A nation stays alive, when its culture stays alive'
Plaque at the entrance of the National Museum of Afghanistan

'These are the memories of mankind, and they are lost forever'
Donny George Youkhanna, former Director General of Iraq Museums

*'They say the cup in Shōsō-in was brought to Japan from Persia by way of China
and Korea.'*
Inoue Yasushi, from The Opaline Cup, Translation by James T. Araki

'By the way, I shall see the Oxus, where they fought....'
Langdon Warner, writing from Central Asia

'I was simply in love with history, culture and literature...'
Ehsan Yarshater, Founder and Chief Editor, Encyclopedia Iranica, on his 95th birthday

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Chapter I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preface

This is a study of cultural understanding and cultural heritage protection in war and occupation, its primary focus, the post-WWII American Occupation of Japan (1945-1952).¹ The research looks in tandem into the place of culture and of cultural property protection, initially through the influence of Japan specialists and scholars during the planning phase leading to the Occupation, and thereafter through the work of relevant staff at the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) headquarters in Tokyo, specifically within the Arts and Monuments (A&M) Division of the Civil Information and Education (CIE) Section.

Though the Occupation of Japan is the central concern of this study, a comparative context is considered throughout, i.e., measures and modalities of that particular occupation, held as a general template, to raise questions about preparatory measures and initial United States-led policies in advance of the occupations of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, also as seen through the prisms of cultural understanding and heritage protection. While these comparisons are *per force* only schematic, it is hoped that they may raise interest in and fundamental questions about how occupation policies, within one superpower, may have changed over a span of 50 years.

My study sets out to test the following hypotheses:

First, that the American Occupation of Japan was a rare example of a successful effort in integrating cultural understanding into *prior thinking of and planning for an occupation*, and of a commitment to cultural heritage protection from the very start of reform and reconstruction policies.

Second, later cases of US-led occupation and reconstruction policies, notably but not only in Afghanistan and Iraq, pre-, during and post-occupation, have underestimated or outright ignored the intrinsic universal values and significance of national and local cultures and cultural heritage.

In particular, this research will consider the following questions:

(1) The American Occupation of Japan was prepared with an eye to better understanding the enemy country through its culture. How important was this approach to the 'success' of the Occupation?

¹ *World War II, the Pacific War, the Asia-Pacific War* have been used interchangeably, though the Japanese war theatre is often referred to by *Asia-Pacific-War* or even the *15-year-war*. As my focus is mainly on the American side, I refer for the most part to the generic term WWII throughout this study. Equally, Occupation is spelled with a capital O when referring specifically to Japan.

(2) Was the American Occupation a force, in shaping and/or protecting Japan's cultural properties in the very immediate post-WWII months and years, and if so, how and why?

(3) How do pre- and post-WWII American policies regarding cultural heritage protection in Japan compare with similar policies in the immediate weeks, months and years before and after the occupations of Afghanistan or Iraq?

Two distinct but intertwining threads inform this study. The first is the importance of what I have called generically, for lack of a more subtle expression, 'cultural understanding'—in the case of Japan this could refer to an environment that allowed individuals and programs specialized in or devoted to Japanese studies across various US government agencies to influence occupation planning. The second is the importance of respecting and preserving the enemy's cultural heritage, in war and in occupation, as did the United States in Japan. Context is everything. The basic assumption throughout my study is that without the first, it is not possible to achieve the second, i.e. unless a country, its culture, history and society, are understood and appreciated by individuals not on the sidelines but actually embedded or at least influential in the occupation planning machinery, it is hardly realistic to expect that cultural preservation can be considered a priority. No occupying army can justify or sustain the expenditure of human capital and material resources for a cause it, or its political masters, neither understand nor consider paramount.

1.2 Genesis of the Research

The seeds of the present study were sown through two inter-related research projects I was closely involved in between 1994 and 2009. The first, on United Nations peacekeeping and peace-building operations, started in 1994 and continued over a span of 10 years, culminating in seven published studies.² The second, as part of preparations to establish in Hiroshima a United Nation's presence, focussed on post-war reconstruction and was highlighted by an initial conference on a six-country comparative study, the proceedings of which were published in 2003 under the title *Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Japan, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, East Timor and Afghanistan*.³

The decision to compare six post-conflict cases/nations now seems over-ambitious, particularly as no two of the selected cases were even remotely similar. Differences in the wars and occupations that marked each, i.e. differences between Japan and Afghanistan, or South-Korea and East Timor, are gaping, to say the least. There was, however, merit in attempting to establish a framework to learn from past lessons, incomparable as the cases under review seemed to the present. The research also sought to understand similarities in the overall context of each country—i.e., each had emerged from destruction to face the task of reconstruction, and each was influenced immeasurably, in particular in the early phases, by external forces. It was conceptually interesting, maybe even essential, to look for threads that made these cases similar in some respects even as they remained so different in others.

The conference helped me further frame questions about what makes different countries perform differently, when faced with the task of post-war reconstruction, and how outside/occupying forces could influence the process. In the six cases above, the most significant of these had been the United States in Japan, Korea and Afghanistan, the United Nations in Korea, Cambodia, East Timor and Afghanistan, and the former USSR and to a certain extent Japan in Vietnam, with its uniquely Vietnamese-style post-war reconstruction.

The 2002 conference included little or no cultural emphasis, even though participants addressed a vast array of topics related to post-conflict reconstruction, and to what had made for the 'success' or 'failure' of an occupation and reconstruction process. These included the need for national/political reconciliation, disarmament and demilitarization, security and the rule of law, social and economic reforms, new educational and labor policies, and the like. Yet few of the

²Co-organized by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the Institute of Policy Studies, Singapore (IPS) and the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA). Publications co-edited by Nassrine Azimi and Chang Li-Lin, Singapore and Tokyo 1994-2005, volumes I-V published by Kluwer Law International and volumes VI-VII by Martinus Nijhoff Press.

³ Nassrine Azimi, Matt Fuller and Hiroko Nakayama, Editors, *Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Japan, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, East Timor and Afghanistan*, New York and Geneva, United Nations Press, 2003.

participants ever addressed the cultural dimension. Except for Koseki Shoichi, referring to the case of Japan, none of the other speakers discussed for example how occupying nations or entities had prepared themselves to understand the culture and traditions of the to-be-occupied country, or any concrete efforts for cultural heritage protection. Understandably our time was limited, and surely other specialized gatherings did address cultural issues in war, peace and reconstruction. Nonetheless, the impression from the Hiroshima conference was that the cultural element remained missing in mainstream considerations of most occupation studies.

In exploring these questions, gradually the essential 'culture' question became more compelling—i.e., to what degree does prior cultural understanding of a society, and thought-out cultural heritage protection policies, influence Occupier(s) and Occupied. At the time I was professionally involved with Afghanistan, which after decades of war had been occupied, in late 2001, by a US-led coalition. Initially welcomed by the population, occupation forces quickly toppled the brutal and hated Taliban regime, and an international alliance of 'nation-builders' started looking into every aspect of the new post-war Afghanistan, including the drafting of the country's new constitution. I had been to Afghanistan in 2002 and seen firsthand the catastrophic conditions of the civil service (and indeed of most state institutions) so my colleagues at UNITAR and I, too, began working on the design of an executive annual training program, to develop core competencies for the new government's professional cadre.⁴

From 2002 to 2006, traveling frequently to Afghanistan, I could observe first hand the positive impact but also the tremendous shortcomings of the American and international 'nation building' efforts. I laid out the essence of these observations—and the seeds of the current thesis—in a 2007 op-ed entitled 'Do not neglect culture', which highlighted how the culture gap could undercut the success of the entire occupational endeavor. Referring to the nation-building projects of the United States, I wrote then:

Though [...] six of the seven cases of nation-building initiated in the last decade by the United States were in Islamic countries, we do not learn much of the lessons of this extraordinary experience. How, for example, did it inform the dispatch of some 120,000 mostly Christian soldiers to Iraq—a Muslim country and one of the most ancient civilizations on earth?

[...] what kind of cultural preparations, if any, were undertaken in advance of embarking in Afghanistan, also an ancient and proud land, with subtle values and vulnerabilities not readily accessible to the Western mind.

[...] The U.S. occupation of Japan between 1945 and 1952, so often cited as a model for Iraq, was quite different. American planners then appeared to have asked themselves some hard questions about dealing with a country they barely knew or understood, with which they had fought for almost four years, and which lay in ruins.

⁴ See the UNITAR Hiroshima Fellowship for Afghanistan, <http://www.unitar.org/hiroshima/Post-Conflict-Reconstruction-and-UNITAR-Fellowship-for-Afghanistan>

[...] American military and civilian administrators were being put through intensive six-month courses at America's best academic institutions—Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Michigan, Northwestern. They studied with teachers educated in Japanese universities, learning not just about politics and economy, but also the language, and the workings of local government and the educational system of Japan. Certainly those were different times, and Japan was a different country. But the Japanese were probably just as alien to the Americans as Iraqis and Afghans are to Western nation-builders today.⁵

The piece came from observing first hand, the overwhelming domination of military and security aspects, the weaknesses of patchy, donor-driven projects, the disparity and disunity of the myriad actors involved (national and international), the blind faith in and heedless promotion of ‘market forces’ and, as far as this study is concerned, the underwhelming value accorded to cultural understanding, identities or institutions, including and, maybe most significantly, *prior to* the arrival of the foreign troops, civilians or funding. In an occupation when time is of the essence and initial perceptions are key, it was dismaying to note, as just one example, how swiftly private satellite television companies flourished in Afghanistan with all sorts of dubious products, while the National Museum of Kabul still languished in a pile of rubble.

In 2003 the United States, supported this time by just a handful of reluctant coalition members, invaded Iraq. Unlike the Afghan war, Iraq sparked huge indignation and protests in America and across the globe, with the occupation’s very *raison d’être*, legality, necessity, preparations, qualifications and execution widely questioned and condemned. It became clear quite early on that the ‘planning’ phase for the Iraq invasion had been no real planning at all, with little comprehensive or critical assessment of Iraqi realities, in any sphere with the exception maybe of the military.⁶ The failure or rather absence of sound scholarship and expertise in informing policy was the more striking in that the early 21st century pool of academic Middle Eastern specialists in the West—in universities, think-tanks, research institutions, and museums—was incomparably larger than the pool of Japanese specialists that had existed in the United States of the mid-20th century.

One dramatic moment stands out as the beginning of the unravelling nightmare that Iraq gradually became. The depth of disconnect between the Administration’s rhetoric and Iraqi realities, and the disdain for cultural considerations seemed distilled in the terse statement made at a press conference on April 11, 2003, by then Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. On being questioned about the theft of treasures from the National Museum of Iraq by looters while

⁵Nassrine Azimi, *International Herald Tribune/New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/08/opinion/08iht-edazimi.1.5618492.html>

⁶ <https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/168/37146.html> June 2007 as part of larger study on Iraq’s destroyed cultural heritage and institutions, at <https://www.globalpolicy.org/humanitarian-issues-in-iraq/consequences-of-the-war-and-occupation-of-iraq/destruction-of-iraqs-cultural-heritage.html>, Retrieved January 5, 2015.

American soldiers and tanks stood by, clearly a consequence of poor preparation and lax protection measures by Occupation forces, Rumsfeld responded simply “Stuff happens”.⁷ In hindsight that moment may well have boded the beginning of the end of any hopes for a successful transition in Iraq.

The ‘culture question’ kept resurfacing, and deepening. In 2011 and 2012, I had the chance to work on a book about the life and work of Beate Sirota Gordon, who as a 22-year-old staff member at the General Headquarters (GHQ) of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) was involved with the drafting of Japan’s post-war constitution.⁸ Though my focus was mainly on the circumstances relating to the constitutional drafting process of the equal rights article, and more generally on SCAP’s Government Section which led the task, gradually the overall workings of SCAP, both effective and idiosyncratic, became evermore intriguing.⁹ My interests were not those of the cultural or legal expert, which I am not. Rather, I felt that the ramifications of cultural understanding, and the place of cultural heritage in war-torn nations both so central to the success or failure of any war or occupation, remained clearly understudied.

The early part of this research therefore analyzes if and in what ways familiarity with Japanese culture and history, and before that a certain cultural affinity for Japan within American circles of power, influenced post-war perceptions, shaped some of the early policies of the United States and, during the Occupation, impacted the work of SCAP itself.

Throughout the Occupation years competent and qualified American cultural experts, based at SCAP headquarters, worked in close partnership with like-minded Japanese scholars and with the government, to improve and enforce the protection of Japan’s cultural property— one outcome of this partnership was the early passage of the 1950 Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties.¹⁰ The fact that so early on American occupiers had had the foresight to establish a cluster within SCAP, devoted exclusively to the arts and monuments, seemed astonishing

⁷http://www.historycommons.org/timeline.jsp?timeline=us_occupation_of_iraq_tmln&us_occupation_of_iraq_tmln_general_topics=us_occupation_of_iraq_tmln_post_invasion_looting Retrieval corrected/updated May 31, 2016.

⁸ English version ‘Last Boat to Yokohama’ Nassrine Azimi and Michel Wasserman, Three Rooms Press, May 2015.

⁹ Beate Sirota Gordon, in interviews with this author, New York City, January 2011 & March 2012. Upon completing her work at SCAP, Sirota Gordon returned to New York and for the next four decades devoted herself to presenting the best of what Japan, and Asia, had to offer in terms of culture—most notably in the performing arts—first with The Japan Society, later as director of programs at The Asia Society. She continued to work till the end of her life for culture and cultural exchange, which she considered an ‘underestimated’ treasure that can change people’s lives and attitudes. She often repeated that contrary to perceptions, culture had even more value to those who had endured war, as it provided comfort and especially a sense of renewed dignity and identity.

¹⁰ The Agency for Cultural Affairs and most Japanese language sources refer to ‘properties’. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) official depository refers to ‘property’. While meaning and intent are the same, for consistency I maintain ‘properties’ when a reference or direct quote, but refer to ‘property’ otherwise.
http://www.bunka.go.jp/tokei_hakusho_shuppan/shuppanbutsu/bunkazai_pamphlet/pdf/pamphlet_en_03_ver04.pdf
http://www.unesco.org/culture/natlaws/media/pdf/japan/japan_lawprotectionculturalproperty_engtof.pdf

enough. But that was not all. There had been a number of informed and elaborate policies regarding cultural heritage protection in war areas, considered well *in advance* of the actual Occupation. Once the Occupation began, considering that the priorities of both the Occupation and the Japanese government itself were overwhelmingly about survival, security and economic rehabilitation, the fact that Japanese culture and cultural heritage remained a serious component of SCAP's postwar reconstruction plans seemed to me to deserve far greater attention, and it is what I set out to do in this study.

1.3 Methodology and Sources

This research has been conducted from the perspective of post-conflict reconstruction policies. Two important aspects of the US Occupation of Japan take center stage: the first was the extent to which cultural understanding had informed the conception of the Occupation well *in advance* of the Japanese surrender, in particular through a cluster of people knowledgeable about Japan within different United States agencies, notably at the State Department, as well as various scholarly or cultural institutions.¹¹ The second was the importance accorded to cultural heritage protection throughout the war years and then within SCAP itself, immediately upon its establishment.

The study is based on empirical and qualitative findings culled from primary archival sources, general secondary sources and interviews. Letters by or on some of the selected characters directly involved in the war or the Occupation were given special consideration: I consulted, notably, the letters and papers of Joseph C. Grew at the Houghton Library of his alma mater Harvard University, and those of Langdon Warner at the United States National Archives and Record Administration (NARA) in Maryland (both in August 2014). The letters of George L. Stout and Sherman E. Lee I could access through a proxy researcher at the American Arts Archives in Washington D.C. (July 2015 and March 2016, respectively). Some of George B. Sansom's letters were gleaned from a biography published by his wife (1972). Ruth Benedict's papers at Vassar College, unfortunately, I did not have the opportunity to access, so have used mostly secondary sources or her own public writings.

The work of many scholars, researchers, archivists and experts has been invaluable for this study. I refer here succinctly to a few without whose essential work I would not have been able to connect the disparate and distinct sections and themes of my research.

The monumental work of political scientist Takemae Eiji, *Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and its Legacy*, has been a treasure house of information about the general workings of GHQ/SCAP, and especially about the background of its staff and other related personalities.¹² Professor Takemae, who taught at Tokyo Keizai University, has set the standards of Occupation studies and his work provides a lucid analysis of SCAP leadership and its civilian specialists. His study of the personalities involved prior to and throughout the Occupation makes clear how many learned and scholarly individuals and specialists were part of the occupational enterprise. In the same vein, the two 10-volume series, *The Post-War Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952*,

¹¹ Officially the *Department of State* but mostly referred to as the *State Department*, which I use throughout, except when a direct quote requires otherwise.

¹² Takemae Eiji, *Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and its Legacy*, Continuum, New York, 2002. Takemae's book was originally published in the 1980s in a shorter version dealing mostly with labour issues during Occupation (in Japanese).

edited by Roger Buckley, have provided, through books (Series 1) and through pamphlets, journals and other print material (Series 2), a comprehensive and extremely diverse set of perspectives on and assessments of the Occupation years, in English.¹³

My thinking on the workings of the Arts and Monuments team at SCAP was informed and vastly enriched by the 2003 article by Geoffrey R. Scott, entitled ‘The Cultural Property Laws of Japan: Social, Political, and Legal Influences’. The article puts the cultural aspects of America’s post-WWII Occupation policies in historical context, underlining the cultural ties between Japan and the United States since the 19th century, detailing how a long-standing intellectual camaraderie and cooperation among scholars in both countries since the Meiji era had led to a greater awareness of Japan’s culture within the United States government during WWII, and contributed to more enlightened policies and a culturally competent and well-respected team at SCAP, which influenced both the spirit and the letter of ensuing legislation for cultural property protection.¹⁴

Rudolf V. A. Janssens’s *What future for Japan? U.S. Wartime planning for the postwar era, 1942-1945* has been another important source.¹⁵ Janssens, too, does not explicitly address culture or cultural property, but his detailed and informative research on the extensive preparations, debates, discords, seminars, training and the like undertaken by the Roosevelt Administration, the military, academic and scholarly circles throughout the war years in America makes evident the complexity of what was undertaken. Dayna Leigh Barnes’s *Armchair Occupation: American Wartime Planning for Postwar Japan, 1937-1945*¹⁶, further builds upon Janssens’s research and findings, highlighting the diversity of and tensions among the US executive and legislative branches, individuals and bureaus which fought to control the planning process for a (possible) occupation of Japan. She too reaches the conclusion that for the most part the ideas promoted by the Japan specialists came to pass after the Occupation.

Morimoto Kazuo’s comprehensive *Social History of Cultural Property* (in Japanese) highlights the role of certain individuals within the SCAP machinery. He draws attention to how the elitist

¹³ Roger Buckley (Editor), *The Post-War Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952, Selected Contemporary Readings From Pre-Surrender to Post-San Francisco Peace Treaty. Series 1: Books*, Brill, December 2011. <http://www.brill.com/post-war-occupation-japan-1945-1952> and *The Post-War Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952, Selected Contemporary Readings From Pre-Surrender to Post-San Francisco Peace Treaty. Series 2: Pamphlets, Journals, Press and Reports*, Brill, May 2013. <http://www.brill.com/post-war-occupation-japan-1945-1952-0>

¹⁴ Geoffrey R. Scott, ‘The Cultural Property Laws of Japan: Social, Political, and Legal Influences’, *Pacific Rim Law and Policy Journal Association*, 88 pages, March 2003. A few months after first reading the piece I wrote to Professor Scott, a professor of Law at the University of Pennsylvania, who generously agreed to assist with my questions and with whom I established exchanges and discussions, first by email and Skype and, in August 2014, two interviews in person during my visit to the University of Pennsylvania.

¹⁵ Rudolf Janssens, *What Future for Japan? U.S. wartime planning for the postwar era, 1942-1945*, Amsterdam Monographs in American Studies, Rodopi, Amsterdam/Atlanta, 1995.

¹⁶ Dayna Leigh Barnes, *Armchair Occupation: American Wartime Planning for Postwar Japan, 1937-1945*, doctoral thesis, The London School of Economics and Political Science, 2013.

Japanese pre-war policies with regard to Japan's cultural treasures had to undergo a subtle change, due to a certain democratization of culture that could take place under the Occupation.¹⁷ Another important source, from the General Douglas MacArthur Foundation and entitled *The Occupation of Japan: Arts and Culture*, the proceedings of a symposium held in 1984, early on brought invaluable perspective into the overall challenges, achievements and shortcomings of the Occupation in this realm of culture, particularly precious in that some symposium participants had themselves been members of SCAP.¹⁸

A few individual actors—from academic, diplomatic and cultural circles involved in various capacities with the American planning for Japan, or dealing specifically with culture and cultural property prior and during the Occupation—have been presented in more detail. This focus I found necessary for at least two reasons. First, it has allowed me to underline the professional and intellectual quality of some of the American (and other) scholars and diplomats involved with solving the dilemmas and questions that American policy-makers faced about Japan. Second, it has allowed me to trace the lineage and friendships in the field of cultural heritage preservation between American and Japanese scholars within SCAP itself over almost three generations, a *context* lacking in other cases of US occupation.

Initially my queries were anchored around the 1950 Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties (henceforth referred to as the LPCP or mostly the 1950 Law) which, at its adoption, became one of the world's most sophisticated legal instruments for safeguarding cultural heritage (even today some of its provisions are absent in the cultural legislation of many countries).^{19/20} In retrospect it seems remarkable, knowing the dire economic and political conditions of Japan in the late 1940s, that there were lawmakers willing to spend time and political capital, to discuss, debate and pass such a refined piece of legislation. The first phases of my research therefore attempted to understand the LPCP's precedents, genesis, modalities of passage in the legislature and ramifications.

¹⁷ Morimoto Kazuo, *bunkazai no shakaishi: kin-gendaishi to dentō bunka no hensen* (Social History of Cultural Property), *Sairyusha*, Tokyo, 2010. I thank in particular Okahata Michiko for her assistance in reading and translating some of its chapters for me.

¹⁸ Thomas W. Burkman (Editor), *The Occupation of Japan: Arts and Culture*, The General Douglas MacArthur Foundation, Proceedings of a Symposium at Norfolk, Virginia, 18-19 October 1984 (proceedings published 1988, I-House Library). The symposium was sixth in a series sponsored by the Foundation, on various aspects of the Occupation of Japan.

¹⁹ Inada Takashi has pointed out that while from the Meiji era onward and until the prewar years, reference was to conservation (*hozon*), the 1950 law established the term 'protection' (*hogo*), p. 25, footnote 7. « L'évolution de la protection du patrimoine au Japon depuis 1950 : sa place dans la construction des identités régionales », *Ebisu* [Online], 52 | 2015, <http://ebisu.revues.org/1576> Retrieved May 15, 2016.

²⁰ For a more contemporary reading of the evolution of cultural property protection in Japan, see Kakiuchi Emiko, 'Cultural heritage protection system in Japan: current issues and prospects for the future', National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS), Discussion Paper 10-14, Tokyo, 2014. I have sometimes used Professor Kakiuchi's reference to the 1950 Law as 'LPCP', p. 3. <http://www.grips.ac.jp/r-center/wp-content/uploads/14-10.pdf>

But I soon abandoned this line of research. First, more detailed studies of the origins of the 1950 Law, fascinating and relevant to contemporary issues as they may be, are better addressed by legal or cultural scholars of Japan—I am neither. Second, from the perspective of policy-making and post-war reconstruction, the passage of the 1950 Law was almost the end result of a long process. It seemed therefore just as useful to first articulate the *context and circumstances* that had led to such an early passage of the Law in the still-occupied Japan of the late 1940s. The main focus of the research thus shifted to identifying conditions that may have allowed for cultural heritage to remain, during such a difficult period in Japanese (and American) history, a legitimate concern and a bureaucratic component of the Occupation machinery. Finally, my Japanese reading abilities being insufficient, it was clear that without the help of third parties I would not be able to access archives, key documents or book chapters in Japanese on my own. In light of the above, a shift in focus became both sensible and necessary.

With regard to the two case studies, Afghanistan and Iraq, objective and subjective conditions and limitation of access to sources imposed a far more cautious approach. Many internal US government documents have yet to enter the public domain. For Afghanistan therefore I relied mostly on interviews with former colleagues, and in some cases with their family members as well. Interviews with the staff of the UNESCO Office in Kabul and the background material provided by them proved most helpful, considering there is still limited academic literature about the last 15 years from the perspective of culture and heritage protection. For the same reasons and because the security situation in Afghanistan remains so fluid and precarious, many secondary sources are Internet-based.

For Iraq, my direct resources were more limited, so I focused mostly on analyzing the place of culture accorded by the Bush Administration *in advance* of the US military invasion of March 2003, and on what its absence entailed on the ground in the early phase of the Occupation. The book with the greatest pertinence to my work has been *The Rape of Mesopotamia* by Lawrence Rothfield, which methodically dissects the months, weeks and days preceding and following the invasion of Iraq.²¹ Surprisingly, another source has been the United States military itself, which has published rather extensively on the preparations (or lack thereof) of the Iraqi Occupation and must be commended for making many of these sources publicly available. Later I also established contact with John Limbert, the State Department veteran and ambassador who was assigned Iraq's 'portfolio' of culture in the early weeks of the occupation. As a first-hand witness, Limbert's writings and his personal brief comments through email helped further clarify some of the premises of this study.

A few words now on the definition of 'cultural property' as used in this study. In her Foreword to a 1949 State Department publication, Ardelia Hall, the famed post-war cultural affairs officer who worked with many of the so called Monuments Men as a liaison between the Roberts Commission and the MFAA, wrote presciently of the problematic nature of war and cultural

²¹ Lawrence Rothfield, *The Rape of Mesopotamia: Behind the Looting of the Iraq Museum*, University of Chicago Press, 2009.

property, articulating the framework for questions about the *Heritage of Humanity* concept that preoccupies us to this day. Hall noted of the essays by the Belgian jurist Charles de Visscher that they

*[...] are based upon the well-established thesis that the protection and preservation of artistic and historic resources arises not only from national interest but from a superior international responsibility: a continuing responsibility that each generation bears in turn as it assumes its trusteeship from the past [...] The whole problem of the preservation of historic cities and famous buildings must be reassessed, and new solutions sought in the light of the inadequacy of the measures provided under the Hague Conventions and the failure during World War I and World War II to prevent tragic and irreparable losses.*²²

In this study the general definition of ‘cultural property’ most applicable is the one provided by Article 1 of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, namely:

(a) movable or immovable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of every people, such as monuments of architecture, art or history, whether religious or secular; archaeological sites; groups of buildings which, as a whole, are of historical or artistic interest; works of art; manuscripts, books and other objects of artistic, historical or archaeological interest; as well as scientific collections and important collections of books or archives or of reproductions of the property defined above;

(b) buildings whose main and effective purpose is to preserve or exhibit the movable cultural property defined in sub-paragraph (a) such as museums, large libraries and depositories of archives, and refuges intended to shelter, in the event of armed conflict, the movable cultural property defined in sub-paragraph (a);

*(c) centers containing a large amount of cultural property as defined in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b), to be known as ‘centers containing monuments’.*²³

²² *International Protection of Works of Art and historic Monuments*, The State Department, Publication 3590 of June 1949, Foreword by Ardelia R. Hall, p. 821. SCAP Archives, National Diet Library, stack 775017, accessed January 11, 2014.

²³ The *Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict* was signed on May 14, 1954 in the Hague, the Second Protocol on March 26, 1999 (prompted notably by the cultural destructions of the Balkan Wars), also in the Hague. To mark cultural property, the Convention uses the emblem called the ‘Blue Shield’. Though the United States had been a significant part of debates in the creation of the Convention, Cold War politics had intervened and it ratified it only in 2009 (after a 10-year process started under President Bill Clinton, in 1999). See UNESCO portal for text of the Convention http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13637&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html And more generally, on the history and background of the Convention <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/armed-conflict-and-heritage/the-hague-convention/>

A note as to current management of cultural property protection in Japan: In general this is overseen by the *Bunkacho* (Agency for Cultural Affairs), a special body created in 1968 from the merger of the cultural bureau at the Ministry of Education, with the original Cultural Properties Protection Committee, and located within the Ministry for Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT).²⁴ Under its aegis and guidance the safeguard of tangible, intangible (includes the performing arts) and folk cultural properties, as well as monuments and cultural landscapes at national, prefectural and municipal levels is conducted:

*Cultural properties include (i) structures such as shrines, temples and private houses, (ii) Buddhist statues, (iii) paintings, (iv) calligraphy, (v) other skills called waza such as performing arts and craft techniques, and (vi) traditional events and festivals. Natural landscapes unchanged beyond time, historic villages and townscapes are also regarded as our cultural properties.*²⁵

It is worth noting that the Imperial Collections, including the magnificent works at the Shōsō-in Treasury, are somewhat in a league of their own, and are currently managed by the Imperial Household Agency.²⁶ The Shōsō-in, probably the oldest private collection in the world, consists of some 9000 objects mostly from Japan but also from China, Korea, India and Persia, starting from the 8th century. The treasures were opened up for public viewing for the first time in 1947, under the Occupation. We shall read more about this later, when discussing the work of the Arts and Monuments team at SCAP.

Ravages of on-going and current regional and civil wars, as well as greater speed in the illegal exports and sales of cultural treasures notwithstanding, in normative terms at least international

²⁴ http://www.bunka.go.jp/english/about_us/policy_of_cultural_affairs/pdf/2015_policy.pdf p. 1.

In March 2016 in line with discussions for decentralization of government entities and revitalization of Japan's regions, it was decided that the Cultural Agency would be moved 'within a few years' to Kyoto. See related articles in the Japan Times, and the Asia Nikkei

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/03/22/national/politics-diplomacy/official-cultural-affairs-agency-moving-kyoto/#.V0zTYVw0jwI>

<http://asia.nikkei.com/Politics-Economy/Policy-Politics/Cultural-agency-to-move-to-Kyoto-as-Abe-aims-to-revitalize-local-areas>

²⁵ http://www.bunka.go.jp/tokei_hakusho_shuppan/shuppanbutsu/bunkazai_pamphlet/pdf/pamphlet_en_03_ver04.pdf

The National Living Treasures of Japan (thus far 104 have been designated) created the *Nihon Dento Kogei Ten*, an annual exhibition of traditional arts and crafts supported by the government since 1954. The annual event has become a means of protecting craftsmanship in core areas and displays the works of craftsmen and artists in pottery, metalwork, textile, woodwork, bamboo, dolls and lacquerware. It tours all the prefectures for a few months—in Hiroshima the Prefectural Museum hosts the exhibit every winter around January or February.

²⁶ Sometimes referred to as Shoso-in, or even Shosoin. I have retained throughout Shōsō-in, the usage by the Nara National Museum, which organizes the exhibit of the treasures every year for two weeks about October/November (the 67th annual exhibition took place from October 24 to November 9, 2015), during the time when inspections are undertaken at the treasury buildings.

legislation for the protection of cultural property has much improved in the decades since WWII, when the international community rallied to impose stricter guidelines, especially with the adoption of the 1954 Hague Convention. The International Criminal Court (ICC), too, has stipulated that the destruction of cultural property is a war crime and in a recent case in Mali, where mausoleums, mosques and other world heritage sites in Timbuktu were destroyed, it is proceeding to bring perpetrators to justice.²⁷ Yet the problem of protecting cultural heritage in particular sites and monuments has hardly diminished, despite these expanded legal protections. To the contrary, as the tools of war and destruction have become ever more sophisticated and widely accessible, the problem has only grown exponentially: now it is not just nation-states but terrorist groups and even individuals that have the means to bomb treasures of millennia. The challenges ahead remain immense.

In their 2014 work, Kila and Herndon detail this evolution and raise questions about the adequacy of the current definition of ‘cultural property’, arguing that the terms culture and cultural heritage or property cover such a vast area that the broader term ‘cultural resources’ maybe a more apt definition. They write

To begin, terms such as culture, cultural heritage, cultural affairs, cultural awareness, cultural property, cultural identity, and cultural diplomacy are vague and do not suggest any relationship between culture and the natural environment as has been established in newer concepts such as cultural landscapes. The terms heritage and property present both legal and material aspects. In the legal sense, cultural heritage is often referred to as cultural property, in which case cultural heritage should be seen as a special case under the general term cultural property. Cultural properties in danger of damage or destruction during modern asymmetrical conflicts are often owned and maintained by states, so using terms such as property and heritage can unnecessarily imply or emphasize a disputed or claimed ownership. However, at least one undisputed common denominator persists: cultural property is a resource, or what sociologist Pierre Bourdieu identifies as cultural capital. Therefore, the term cultural resources may be the best option.²⁸

Mindful of previous research and consistent with the nomenclature used by past authors referred to in the present study, the original wording and intent of *cultural property or heritage*, as it was understood and applied in the late 1930s and early 1940s among wartime policy planners and

²⁷ The full text of the speech by the ICC president at The Hague on June 13, 2016 can be seen at: <https://www.icc-cpi.int/itemsDocuments/160613-Remarks-of-ICC-President-at-Europe-Lecture-2016.pdf>
On the specific case of the destruction of cultural property in Mali, see case review by the International Committee of the Red Cross <https://www.icrc.org/casebook/doc/case-study/mali-destruction-of-world-cultural-heritage.htm>

²⁸ Joris D. Kila and Christopher V. Herndon in *Military Involvement in Cultural Property Protection, An Overview*, In National Defense University Press, <http://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/NewsArticleView/tabid/7849/Article/577538/jfq-74-military-involvement-in-cultural-property-protection-an-overview.aspx> Retrieved August 13, 2015.

SCAP staff, has been retained. Kila and Herndon's point, however, remains valid and deserves to be studied further, fully considered in future debates as the understanding of culture and war are further expanded and mainstreamed.

Finally, though perhaps obvious and rhetorical, I must briefly assert here that the assumption throughout the present study is the conviction that even from a most utilitarian perspective, culture and cultural property are indeed worth preserving. As noted by Fukui Haruhiro this is part of a larger debate about the degree to which cultural property protection laws (and by extension therefore the US Occupation's cultural policies and programs) have brought not merely spiritual and psychological benefits but also socio-economic ones to the Japanese people as a whole, to their sense of identity and contentment, and ultimately to their postwar prosperity. As Fukui suggests:

...From time immemorial, or at least since the Australian rock artists' or Abu Simbel shrine builders' days, "cultural property" has been considered a community's "treasure," visited, enjoyed, and admired by hundreds of thousands, often many millions, of people from local and faraway places. The visitors and admirers--today's "tourists"--not only enjoyed viewing the treasure, but were elucidated, inspired, and spiritually enriched. The visits by these admirers, i.e., tourists, in turn generated substantial, often huge, economic benefits to the local community, as they continue to do today, in fact, far more so than in the past. This economic benefit is arguably better, or at least less harmful, than "benefits" of most other kinds of economic activities, especially industrial activities, from the point of view of the protection of the natural environment.²⁹

²⁹ Fukui Haruhiro, November 2014 (correspondence by email).

1.4 Research Steps

Conducting research in 2011 and 2012 for a book on the equal rights article of the Japanese constitution, I had had the opportunity to work with SCAP-related archival material and to familiarize myself with some of the Occupation's history, staff and bureaucratic structures. From 2013 onward I again started researching SCAP documents, this time through the cultural lens. These I could access at the National Diet Library in Tokyo, mainly between 2013 and 2014. Keywords searched were SCAP's Civil Information and Education (CIE), the Arts & Monuments (A&M) Division, and all references to cultural property protection in general and the 1950 Law in particular. I then extended the archival research of SCAP documents at the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (henceforth NARA) in Maryland and especially the SCAP boxes, in particular the Langdon Warner papers, in August 2014.

I also accessed primary sources at Harvard's Houghton Library (for the Joseph C. Grew Papers), at the Prange Collection at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA), and through a proxy researcher at the Smithsonian Institute's Archives of American Art in Washington D.C. (for the George L. Stout Papers and the Sherman E. Lee Papers).

Regarding secondary sources, the Library of the International House of Japan in Tokyo, which I consulted repeatedly between early 2013 and mid-2016 has been my most important source for reference books and journals on the Occupation years (the library has the country's largest collection of specialized books on Japan in English, and some of its most patient and helpful librarians).

For other, more general books on Japan, the library of the Hiroshima International Conference Center, and for books on culture and the arts in general and Japanese culture in particular, the library of the Hiroshima Prefectural Art Museum were havens.

Visits to the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. (August 2014) constituted the starting point of deepening my understanding of the work of The Roberts Commission. David Finley, its vice-chairman, was a pivotal figure in the establishment and the work of the Commission throughout the war (while Justice Owens was presiding, in reality the day to day affairs of the Commission were conducted by Finley and the National Gallery was its *de facto* headquarters).

Among the Japanese politicians who cared and campaigned for the passage of the 1950 Law, few were more eloquent than the writer, linguist and critic—turned politician and member of the Diet after the war—Yamamoto Yuzo. As the chair of the Diet committee in charge of the bill for cultural protection laws, Yamamoto was a forceful advocate for the place of culture in the nation's life, and for the need of appropriate laws and structures to protect heritage. I also visited the *Yuzo Yamamoto Memorial Museum* in Mitaka City and met with its helpful curator Watanabe Michiyo.

Midway through my research a study grant allowed me to spend a week at the East Asian Library, University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), to consult the Prange Collection. The Collection is unique as a means to provide insights into the intellectual and cultural effervescence (and confusions) of the Occupation era and machinery. It also exposes both the credible attempts at re-engineering Japanese society undertaken by the Occupation, as well as some of its misguided ideas about censorship.³⁰ But going through the Prange Collection microfiches was also an opportunity to discover the extraordinary vigor, enthusiasm and interests of the Japanese themselves in dealing with the new world around them and their openness to learning about the new, this in spite of post-defeat despair and the ever-present shadow of the Occupation.

As to interviews conducted between late 2012 and 2016, a list is provided in the References section at the end.³¹

³⁰ For example in one case they even banned Kabuki, which some SCAP staff felt was too ‘feudal’.

³¹ In addition to the formal interviews, the opinions and suggestions of the following individuals, some as part of on-going conversations, appeared in this text or have influenced my thinking (in alphabetical order): On Japan, its culture and Pacific War and Occupation history: Roger Buckley, Haru Fukui, Shigeru Miyagawa, Akio Nishikiori, Masako Bannai Otsuka, Geoffrey Scott, Akira Tashiro, Masako Unezaki; On Afghanistan: Nagaoka Masanori, David Eaton, Michael Fors, Humaira Kamal, Sara Noshadi, Tawab Seljuki, Sabahaddin Sokout; On Iraq (and general): Marcel A. Boisard, Frederiek de Vlaming. Unfortunately too late in the course of my research, a personal contact with John Limbert was nonetheless helpful, in particular his opinions about the unraveling of the ‘cultural’ plans in the early stages of the Iraq Occupation.

Chapter II CULTURE AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS OF JAPAN PRE ASIA-PACIFIC WAR, BRIDGES WITH THE UNITED STATES

Introduction

A common myth or question which is often raised and must be addressed at the outset is whether Japan was or is fundamentally different from most other countries, in terms of the ability to protect its cultural heritage?

Throughout its recorded history, more specifically from the time of the emergence of a unified state in the Asuka/Nara periods, Japan has indeed demonstrated a predisposition for creating, collecting and safeguarding a rich and diverse body of works and monuments in almost every sector of the human arts and crafts. This was done despite continuous wars (except for the roughly two and a half centuries of the peaceful Edo period) and frequent natural catastrophes.

The inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago also seem to possess a broadly-shared sensitivity and an appreciation of beauty, despite their long-warring history. It is difficult to settle on any single reason or argument for these particular characteristics. It was perhaps due to the permanent threats of natural calamity that strengthened rather than weakened the desire to create beauty when and where possible, given the precariousness of the present existence. Maybe it was the result of the land's physical attributes—its geography, diversity and stunning beauty, its abundance of forests and woods and rivers, its distinct four seasons.³² The island-nation mentality and the country's relative isolation (including from too direct foreign influences and attacks), yet physical proximity to the two great ancient cultures of China and Korea, were surely influencing factors as was the symbiosis of the Shinto religion with its adoration of Nature and a certain dexterity for creating things, alongside the refining influences of Buddhism, and the cohabitation of these two belief systems, in close proximity, over many centuries.³³ Very possibly it was the confluence of all of the above, that distilled to this degree so much artistic ability as well as the shared capacity for its appreciation, among even ordinary Japanese.³⁴

There is also the particular ability of the Japanese nation, to find so many means to remember and record the past, to keep past narratives alive. The Scottish missionary and scholar of China and Japan, Scott Morton, has written that even though the Japanese may adopt, eagerly and with

³² H. Paul Varley, *Japanese Culture*, University of Hawaii Press, 3rd edition 1984 (1973), p. 276.

³³ Takie Sugiyama Lebra, *Japanese Patterns of Behavior*, University of Hawaii Press, 1976. Sugiyama Lebra includes another dimension for a certain aesthetic sensibility, noting the work of Ishida Eiichiro about 'wet-rice agriculture' of Japan as a distinct influence on its culture, versus the Western culture influenced historically by its nomadic pastoralism (pp. 16-17).

³⁴ Fosco Maraini and Eric Mosbacher *Meeting With Japan: A Personal Introduction To Its People, Their Culture And Their History* The Viking Press, New York, 1960 (1959), p. 71.

open arms, new ideas, styles and fashions, they remain profoundly attached to their past, in every possible arena. The uniqueness of Japan's arts, according to Morton, lies in

*the thrilling effect of traditional forms upon modern art and design [...] not susceptible of easy explanation, but [...] felt and experienced through a study of Japan's cultural past.*³⁵

In a letter sent to his father during the first year of his stay in Japan, Langdon Warner, the inimitable observer of the arts of Japan, distilled, perceptively for someone so young (he was 25 at the time), the intricacies of the tea ceremony. Critical of the West's tendency to take too seriously and ponderously the writings of his 'sensei' Okakura in *The Book of Tea*, Warner nonetheless put his finger on a unique aspect in the relationship of the Japanese with art and culture in general. Working with an outside import, for example (tea, which came from China during the Tang era), Warner reflected, the Japanese capacity to accumulate and integrate various cultural influences had created something new, both specific and universal. Of that universality and the simplicity of the tea ceremony he wrote:

*It is significant of the Japanese race that a comparatively small company of poets and philosophers should have been able to find a way to the Delectable Land [n.b. Tea Ceremony] which should appeal to so large a number of their countrymen.*³⁶

It should be recalled that throughout most of its history, the fruits of culture were exclusive to the ruling classes. It was only as education started becoming accessible to commoners, from the Edo and especially Meiji periods onward, that a consistent and widespread aspiration among ordinary Japanese for the finer aesthetic pleasures of life, and a greater appreciation for objects of beauty, also arise.³⁷ A certain Japanese ability and indeed affinity for learning the new has been the background of the openness to new art and culture as well.³⁸

³⁵ W. Scott Morton, *Japan—Its History and Culture*, McGraw-Hill Paperbacks, 1984, p. 234.

³⁶ Theodore Bowie, Editor, *Langdon Warner through his letters*, Indiana University Press, 1966, p. 22.

³⁷ Donald Keene and Shiba Ryotaro in *Conversations, The People and Culture of Japan*, JPIC, 2016 (Japanese original in 1972), p. 128. Shiba contends that historically the Japanese have always been far more forgiving of rulers whose sense of cultural aesthetics are advanced, even if they are worthless statesmen '...we tend to value aesthetic heroes over political justice. We don't look to them for salvation, we just think they're classy because they were very refined and could build great tea rooms'.

³⁸ In Klaus Antoni, *Kokutai—Political Shintô from Early-Modern to Contemporary Japan*, Eberhard Karls University Tübingen: Tobias-lib, 2016. This ability for learning the new has also been seen as a negative tendency, to reproduce only the outward form of ideas, be they political, religious or cultural. Thus according to Antoni, there was continuity and not any drastic break between Edo, Meiji or modern times in Japanese political history for example.

Cultural heritage protection not a given

Still, regarding the question whether the Japanese were uniquely talented in collectively protecting their cultural heritage, the answer should probably be no. The country has hardly been immune to waves of self-inflicted destruction of its cultural heritage, be it in the name of progress and modernity, by sheer economic calculation or simply by indifference.

Since the Meiji era, whenever there have not been enough social, traditional or legal protections in place, many components of the country's cultural heritage, important and exquisite, were lost. This was particularly widespread in the late 19th and 20th centuries. In the relentless drive towards industrialization, Westernization or reconstruction of the Meiji and Showa periods, the scale of destruction of cultural heritage was huge, in some cases irreversible. A vast number of Japanese castles for example, symbols of feudal power perhaps but also gems of architecture and design, were dismantled in the drive to abolish the fiefdoms and establish the Meiji government's authority and ambition to unify the country.³⁹

Equally, while great devastation of the built and architectural heritage took place during the last months of the Pacific War when hundreds of cities were subjected to carpet-bombing by the American forces, much of what was left was dismantled after surrender, to be replaced by hastily built constructions. Initially, desperate post-war conditions, extreme poverty and a pressing need for shelter in draconian housing circumstances made the 'build-however-whenever' approach unavoidable. Yet the *laissez-faire* habits of misconstruction somehow persevered, carrying over into more prosperous times. In many cities it even accelerated in the high economic development 'bubble' years of the 1970s and 1980s. The damage to the country's architectural heritage during these years has been inestimable. Some of these mindless building practices even continue to this day.⁴⁰

Not even Kyoto, the nation's capital for almost 1000 years and the crown-jewel of its cultural traditions (which was *not* bombed during the war), could evade the urban destruction carried out in the name of development during the bubble economy: well into the 1980s tens of thousands of traditional wooden houses were being dismantled in Kyoto with impunity, replaced by constructions in cement, tin, plastic and mass-produced prefabricated tiles.⁴¹ The massive, box-

³⁹ Today only 12 castles, out of hundreds intact till the Meiji era, are assumed as 'original'. Indeed the Meiji government destroyed, to the everlasting chagrin of lovers of architecture like this author, some 200 castles. On a positive note, however, the grounds were used for the benefit of the general public—as well as for educational, cultural and military purposes. In some prefectures—many of them the former samurais domains—the prefectural or municipal offices were built on or close to castle sites. And today there is a movement across Japan to revive and rebuild many of the old castles back in the original style ('*Castle ruins symbolize modern Japan*' by Hitoshi Nakai, *The Japan News*, April 7, 2015). One lesson I retain from this, maybe also valid for other countries, is that if foundations are strong, and the historical and social narrative not forgotten, cultural heritage can be revived.

⁴⁰ The demolition of Frank Lloyd Wright's Imperial Hotel in 1967, or the iconic lobby of the Hotel Okura as recently as 2015, are quoted by the architectural conservation community as signs of the general indifference to protecting heritage, including contemporary architecture.

⁴¹ Alex Kerr, *Dogs and Demons—Tales from the Dark Side*, Hill and Wang, New York, 2001,

like Kyoto Station, which practically cuts the city in two, could hardly have passed the test of any landscape planning commission today. Entire sections of *shita-machi*, or traditional downtowns originally built in wood, were bulldozed across the country after WWII, to make way for cheap housing or out-of-scale complexes. This kind of haphazard destruction and construction has become a blight on numerous urban agglomerations across Japan (and indeed on many rural ones) and the loss of much of the urban fabric and architectural heritage of small and medium cities has been, but for isolated patches, endemic and irreversible.

Gunter Nitschke, a German architect who has been involved in the renewal of Kyoto's old town, has pointed out that:

*Kyo-machiya (typical Kyoto town houses), which are disappearing at an alarming rate, have so far received little attention in the movement to protect historically valuable buildings. It is estimated that in the 18th century 400,000 citizens of Kyoto lived in these beautiful structures. Within the confines of Kyoto only three such townhouses have been selected for preservation, one each by the national, prefectural and city governments.*⁴²

To present it differently, therefore, what Japan has achieved for its cultural heritage protection mechanisms has been the result of not just unique habits, education, taste or tradition, but also the application of effective legal mechanisms and practices.⁴³

Additionally, to understand the roots of its artistic treasures it is necessary to look not just into Japan's own past, but also at influences from its two giant neighbors, including the role of artists from Korea and China. The impact of Buddhism on Japanese art and sensitivities was far-reaching. Tang Dynasty China was the model for much of the original concept of 'state' in Japan and the destination of choice for numerous large Japanese delegations and embassies throughout the 8th to 10th centuries. The wealth of arts imported via the Silk Road from further afield in Asia, thanks to collections such as the Shōsō-in, in Nara, show the manner in which the Japanese adopted and adapted, not just artistic techniques and know-how, but at a very early stage also mechanisms to care for treasures. Many studies have been conducted on these origins, but more

⁴² Gunter Nitschke in <http://www.kyotojournal.org/kyoto-notebook/urban-renewal-in-kyoto/> No 4., Fall 1987, Retrieved December 29, 2014. Nitschke points out that in Kyoto only 384 buildings are currently protected as cultural property (and therefore can receive government or local financial subsidies).

⁴³ Kambayashi Tsunemichi, 'How was Japanese Art History Constructed?', *Bijutsu Forum 21* Vol.28, p. 149, UCLA East Asia Library, retrieved January 6, 2015.

could be done in a comparative context, alongside the trajectory of other Asian nations for example.⁴⁴

For the purposes of the present study I have started the cultural heritage story of Japan only with the start of the Edo period (1600-1868). As we shall see, Edo was to be a time of isolation but also of great transformations and relative prosperity, gradually bringing profound changes to the practices of a feudal and till then bitterly divided land. During those unique two and a half centuries of continuous peace, the very concept of culture as a source of leisure and education for the masses took shape. Subsequently, a more systematic approach to cultural heritage designation and preservation emerged as well.

With the opening of the Meiji Era, as we will note, fascination with things Western became a national obsession. Early on, however, intellectuals, artists and art connoisseurs, Japanese and American, were concerned, rallying to caution the government and the public about the need for the protection of Japan's traditional cultural heritage. A few key individuals in this circle, connected to one another, and to one particular institution—the Boston Museum of Fine Arts—will be presented. Individuals such as Edward S. Morse, Ernest Fenollosa and especially Okakura Tenshin, to name but the more prominent, became leading figures in early efforts to caution about the need for protecting cultural heritage in the face of a wholesale adoption of things Western. It is thanks to their foresight and efforts that the groundwork for the precursors of cultural heritage laws started taking shape by the early 1870s.⁴⁵ These individuals also introduced to the West, and sometimes to Japan itself, the richness of the country's traditional culture. Later championed by other American scholars of the caliber of the Harvard University archeologist Landon Wagner, their shared passion for Japanese culture, along with their friendships and professional affinities created a legacy that survived the Pacific War and, as we shall see later, bore influence on circles of decision-making in the United States preparing Japan's Occupation.

⁴⁴ As would any significant discussion of the influence of not just Shinto and Buddhist faiths but also Confucian philosophy on the aesthetics of the Japanese people. For a more detailed reflection see superb chapters on Kukai (Ch. VII) and the influence of Confucian scholars Hayashi Razan and his descendants during the early and middle Tokugawa period as well as the later movements for the amalgamation of Confucianism and Shintoism (Ch.XVI), in *Sources of Japanese Tradition, Vol. I*, Tsunoda Ryūsaku, William Theodore De Bary and Donald Keene, Columbia University Press, 1958.

⁴⁵ The 19th century awakening of preservationists to the possible threats to Japan's traditional arts and crafts almost ran in parallel with a government's feverish attempts to promote State Shinto by downgrading Buddhism, in the process destroying thousands of Buddhist temples and artifacts across the land (known as the *haibutsu kishaku* campaign). Ironically, this was also the context and background to the passage of a first law for the protection of cultural heritage, in 1871. The law was further extended in 1919 to include monuments as well as historic and scenic sites, in 1929 to include national treasures, and in 1933 to include artworks and also to lay the foundations for the expanded 1950 Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. In short, one can say that the spirit of the more recent cultural preservation laws was influenced by work done in previous centuries, during the Edo era—putting Japan among countries to have embarked earliest on a path for a systematic approach to cataloguing and protecting cultural heritage.

2.1 Encounters with the West

Commodore Mathew Perry's ships appeared in the waters near Edo (present-day Tokyo), on a first four-day surprise appearance in July 1853, and then for a longer period in February 1854. Perry and many of his retinue believed that in 'opening' Japan to Western—or rather American—presence and trade, they were cracking open a system entirely sealed off from the rest of the world, one in the dark about modern scientific and technological advances.⁴⁶ This was of course misguided, discounting the prior presence of and influences in Japan of the Chinese, Korean and Russian traders, Portuguese missionaries, as well as Dutch and other sea-faring country envoys.

One of the positive outcomes of the almost 250 years of the peaceful Edo (or Tokugawa) reign, from 1600 to 1867, was that ordinary Japanese in general and the merchant classes in particular had been able to urbanize, gain access to literacy and gradually develop the means and the taste to enjoy or acquire various forms of cultural products. Since the advent of the Tokugawa there had developed a top-down spread of literacy and culture—most of it sparked by broader access to education among the population. Marius Jansen, the preeminent historian of the Meiji era, notes:

*...(T)he average samurai, poorly schooled and barely literate at the time of Sekigahara, was enjoined by early shoguns and lords to follow the path of letters as well as that of arms; urban life gave point to this, and by the end of the century most samurai had acquired at least some literacy.*⁴⁷

Further, despite the formal *Sakoku* (closed country) policy, from the early 17th century knowledge of the outside world flowed into Japan, slowly but consistently, via the Chinese, Koreans, Russians and later and more enduringly, the Dutch.⁴⁸ Through the port of Nagasaki and the small island of Deshima, the Dutch established trade relations and also became instructors of Japanese scholars in Western science and technology, leading to the emergence of a *Rangaku*

⁴⁶ The famed Commodore's confusion about Japan was not limited only to its history of foreign relations but extended to the political power structure and divided roles between Edo and Kyoto. Perry and his men were quite unaware of Japanese power structures and believed, throughout both missions, that they were/should be dealing with the Emperor, only, as the supreme leader of Japan. The fact that it was the Shogun in Edo who held the reigns of power was not clear to them (*Visualizing Japan*, MIT/Harvard MOOC with John W. Dower, Andrew Gordon and Shigeru Miyagawa, September 3, 2014).

⁴⁷ Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, Harvard University Press, 2000 p. 159.

⁴⁸ After Spanish missionaries and Portuguese traders a few decades earlier, the Dutch were to become the only Westerners allowed to trade with Japan throughout the Edo period.

class.⁴⁹ This opening to Western learning that Dutch traders almost inadvertently brought to Japan during the Edo period in turn lay the foundations for the country's transformative developments in the realm of education and scientific knowledge.

It is worth noting that at the time of the imposition of the *Sakoku* policy there were, from the Tokugawa Shogunate's point of view, compelling reasons to select the path of closure vis-à-vis the West. Foremost among these was the legitimate concern that many of the Christian envoys coming from Europe were in reality forerunners (if not outright spies) of colonialism, aiming to prepare the terrain for full-scale colonization, as had been their practice and track-record in other parts of Asia. Also, the Tokugawa Shogunate, originally the ruling *daimyos* of the Eastern provinces, had taken good note of (and not forgiven) the machinations and support of Christian/European powers for its enemies, the *daimyos* of the Western provinces, who had lost the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600 but who still resisted, or at least resented, the overarching powers of the new Shogunate.⁵⁰

Consequently, draconian controls on open exchanges with the outside world—or more specifically with the Western world—were set in place, mainly to protect the Shogunate's own power base. As a result, however, and from the perspective of what today we may call 'nation-building', the closed-door policy brought with it a number of advantages, one of which was the flourishing of indigenous culture and cultural institutions. Furthermore, because this period of peace and relative isolation continued for so long, it allowed for a real-time deepening, expansion and overall flowering of an original, widespread and profoundly Japanese artistic and cultural sensitivity (the Meiji or post-WWII periods were just as dramatically transformative, but the pace of change then was so rapid, and the social upheavals induced so drastic, that the effects may have been less profound and long-lasting).

A second policy worth noting, because it is central to any discussion about the development of Japanese cultural traditions and institutions, was the *sankin-koutai* system. The Tokugawa Shogunate had instigated from 1635, as part of its efforts to control the *daimyo* or feudal lords, an elaborate mechanism to force them to spend alternate years away from their fiefdoms in residence in Edo (where their families would remain permanently, as 'hostage guests'). This arrangement imposed the expenditure of vast amounts of money for the back and forth travels between the capital and the fiefdoms—money the *daimyo* would therefore not be able to use for raising armies against the Shogunate, were that to be their intention.⁵¹ Among its many indirect ramifications, the system speeded and expanded Japan's road-building and travel, leisure and

⁴⁹ *Ran* from *Oranda*—the Japanese pronunciation of Holland, referring to 'Dutch learning'.

See Ian Buruma, *Inventing Japan, 1853-1964*, Modern Library/Chronicles Book, 2003, pp. 14-17. Of course this narrative is largely Western-centric, for throughout the Edo period there were continued exchanges with China and Korea.

⁵⁰ Varley (1984), pp. 146-147.

⁵¹ Jansen (2000), pp. 128-134.

culture industries, to a degree unparalleled in Asia at the time. The elaborate biannual expeditions of *daimyo* and their retainers to and from Edo greatly helped to develop the post-station towns and infrastructure, inns, commerce, entertainment, craft and distinctive regional products. What today is rightly the pride of Japan, namely its ‘service industry’, also has its precursor in the *sankin-koutai* system.

Almost inadvertently, opportunities for travel among ordinary people—mainly for purposes of pilgrimage, but increasingly for leisure and culture as well—also rose, becoming another of the distinctive features of the Tokugawa period. Previously, the only kind of travel ordinary people were allowed to undertake was strictly limited to pilgrimages to sacred shrines, like the Ise Jingu or the Izumo Taisha.⁵² With the *sankin-koutai* system, however, the situation changed. In the words of Marius B. Jansen, it brought with it “*momentous consequences for Japan’s future*” and was instrumental, for example, in accentuating centralization and further enhancing cultural life in the big cities:

...It fixed the attention of the ruling class on life at the capital; after the first generation of feudal lords, daimyo were born in Edo and did not visit their domains until they attained their majority. The system also drained the economies of provinces in all parts of Japan. It required the development of a system of national communications that did more to unify the country than Ieyasu’s victory at Sekigahara. As commodities of every sort were funneled to the center, regional economies grew to cross domain political boundaries. The provision of materials needed for life at the capital and transporting them there provided economic opportunities for commoners, and as the merchant and artisan classes grew in size and importance a new popular culture emerged. Gradually a national culture grew out of what had been provincial variants.⁵³

As early as 1643 the concept of identifying *nihon sankei* (three places of scenic beauty) had been established by the scholar Hayashi Gaho (Shunsai).⁵⁴ That tradition, an early and informal precursor for the various cultural property laws, came to include over time other categories, such as rivers, lakes, mountains, gardens, castles, night views and even hot springs. This too became hugely popular with ordinary people, initiating the birth of a nation-wide ‘tourism industry’.⁵⁵

⁵² NHK BS premium, *shin nihon fudoki* on Matsuo Basho travels <http://www.nhk.or.jp/fudoki/141003broadcast1.html>

⁵³ Jansen (2000), p. 128.

⁵⁴ <http://nihonsankei.jp/eng/index.html> At least three generations of the fascinating Hayashi family of Confucian scholars and their descendants would hold influence over the Tokugawa.

⁵⁵http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Special_Places_of_Scenic_Beauty,_Special_Historic_Sites_and_Special_Natural_Monuments

The real engines of the growth of cultural and artistic activities in Edo itself and in the outlying areas and major urban centers of the time such as Osaka and Kyoto, however, were the newly prosperous merchant classes (even though these merchants were relegated to the bottom rank of the four-class social system, i.e. samurai, farmer, artisan and merchant, in reality they exercised great influence on changing the social norms of the time). Accordingly

The sustained peace of the Edo period (1600-1868) fostered the growth of a money economy in which urban merchants prospered. Empowered by wealth, they sidestepped the official class system to become the heroes and consumers of a vigorous, new form of popular culture that celebrated worldly pleasures and rejected the austere warrior code. Although the Samurai dismissed them as dandies and upstarts, the merchants were often refined in their pursuit of sensuality and at their best achieved a balance between earthiness and delicacy that makes the popular art created by and for them seem fresh even today.⁵⁶

To entertain these new urbanites, the Edo period saw the spread of popular performing arts—*kabuki*, *kyogen*, *kagura* and even *noh*—which became widely accessible to the merchant classes in large cities. Within the Edo period, the Genroku years (1688-1704) gave the greatest impetus to the flourishing of almost every sector of the decorative and performing arts, with a constant demand for its fruits within the households of feudal lords, as well as among the wealthy merchants. The latter in particular had not only acquired the appetite but also the resources to consume, patronize or collect art in every possible form—print-making, painting, sculpture, calligraphy, architecture, theater, music and poetry. The appearance of this new, culturally avid bourgeoisie in turn prompted yet broader popular interest in culture and travel, spurring the development of a domestic infrastructure that facilitated long-distance movements of ordinary people, in groups or even individually.⁵⁷ It is worth noting that all these changes were occurring in parallel, and growing exponentially. A virtuous cycle was established. The Edo period thus saw the emergence of the foundations of cultural heritage laws, museums, categories and rankings—and the stirrings of the concept of a culture conceived for and accessible to the masses.

⁵⁶ *Japan, An Illustrated Encyclopedia*, 1993, Kodansha, p. 321.

⁵⁷ As a sign of the times, the publication of maps—in every imaginable scale and detail—turned into a boom during early Edo already, and ordinary people had access to an unprecedented level of information compared to many of their counterparts in other countries (Jansen 2000, p. 168).

2.2 Cultural Fruits and Frictions of the Meiji Restoration: The Iwakura Embassy

Much of Japan's attempts at organizing its cultural property, in the sense applied to this today, has its origins in the Meiji era, when intense efforts to emulate and promote Western systems and norms thoroughly changed a feudal society. With its advent Japan had made a steep and comprehensive U-turn in its national priorities—adopting, absorbing and adjusting a vast amount of new knowledge and information, technology, fashion, culture, laws, architecture, education and governance from the West. The speed with which these changes were unfolding was extraordinary, a movement led by a number of talented young men (and a few young women), many from former impoverished samurai families.⁵⁸

Thus after almost two and a half centuries of relative isolation, Japan was suddenly being opened in every sector to foreign or, more precisely, Western influences and advisors: Germans were called in to help reform the military, French to work on the constitution, Americans to set up universities and improve agricultural practices, and the British, in large numbers especially in the Nagasaki and Kobe areas, to start trading companies and help with commerce and industry.⁵⁹

In the years prior to and immediately after the advent of the Meiji Restoration, a number of these 'learning missions' (in the style of the learning and information-gathering embassies to China during the Nara and Heian periods) were sent to Europe and America. This was done, reluctantly, by the Shogunate in its sunset years and, with increasing enthusiasm, frequency and ambition under the new Meiji leaders. The most prominent of these missions, which set as its task a systematic gathering of information about the scope and depth of the institutions of the West through its studies and observations, was the Iwakura Embassy (1871-1873). The 18-month mission to the United States and Europe, named after the head of the delegation Iwakura Tomomi, included some of the most high ranking officers and leaders of the Meiji Restoration, men of the calibre of Ito Hirobumi, Okubo Toshimichi and Kido Takayoshi. There were also diplomats, historians and many students, including five young girls—in all some 50 people, a majority of whom were setting foot outside Japan for the first time—who also partook in the historic mission.

The formal purpose of the Iwakura Embassy was “to pay goodwill visits on behalf of the Emperor to the monarchs and heads of state of the 15 Western countries with which Japan had

⁵⁸ Conversations with Nishikiori Akio, on Meiji breakthroughs in architecture and engineering, October 6/7, 2015. Nishikiori believes that many of the *daimyo* families and former samurai, no longer preoccupied with war and generally finding commerce distasteful, had turned their attention to learning and education, encouraged also by the Tokugawa Shogunate. Almost 250 years of peace allowed for many, especially those from smaller domains, to be educated and consequently ready to swiftly take leadership roles at the outset of the Meiji era.

⁵⁹ Nassrine Azimi & Michel Wasserman, *Last Boat to Yokohama*, Three Room Press, New York, 2015.

concluded treaties”.⁶⁰ Its real and more significant objective, however, was to examine Western society at close range, and the manner in which the mission proceeded was a prime example of how diligent and single-minded Japanese leaders of the early Meiji era were about acquiring Western norms. According to Jansen,

*Nothing distinguishes the Meiji period more than its disciplined search for models that would be applicable for a Japan in the process of rebuilding its institutions. The Tokugawa bakufu had, to be sure, begun this process. Members of missions abroad spent increasing amounts of time in observation while carrying precedents in world history for Japan’s decision to send its government -- fifty high officials -- accompanied by as many students and high-born tourists, to the Western world on a journey that kept them away from their jobs for a year and ten months from 1871 to 1973. That Japan did so was remarkable, and that the travelers returned to find their jobs waiting for them is more remarkable still.*⁶¹

It is not possible here to do justice to the full scope and reach of missions such as the Iwakura. Their influence has been deep, and lasting, in almost every sphere of ‘modern’ Japanese life. In the realm of culture *per se*, the leap towards the West brought with it staggering new developments, which included the creation of national institutions and preservation laws. Though Western concepts of collections and museums had actually started taking root in Japan during the late Tokugawa period, thanks in part to interactions with the Dutch, these efforts too accelerated after the Meiji Restoration, as part of the educational aspirations of its young leaders. Throughout its travels the Iwakura Embassy was to often note, with admiration, how Americans and Europeans had a chance to educate themselves through their museums and libraries.⁶² In the transcripts of Kume Kunitake, scribe of the delegation, visits to museums held a special place. When visiting the British Museum in September 1872, for example, Kume’s entry reflected some of the early connections Meiji intellectuals were making in terms of museums as a kind of repository of the identity of a nation:

*When one looks at the objects displayed in its museums, the sequence of stages of civilization through which a country has passed are immediately apparent to the eye and are apprehended directly by the mind.*⁶³

⁶⁰ ‘Japan—An Illustrated Encyclopedia’, pp. 640-641.

⁶¹ Jansen (2000), p. 355.

⁶² Varley (1984), p. 207.

⁶³ The Kume Diaries, *Tokumei Zenken Taishi O-Bei Kairan Jikki* (True account of a journey of observation through the United States and Europe) henceforth called *jikki*—in Takii Kazuhiro, *The Meiji Constitution*, International House of Japan Press, 2007, pp. 27-35. And also in London Review of Books, <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v33/n08/matthew-fraleigh/glittering-cities> of *Japan Rising: The Iwakura Embassy to the USA and Europe* by Kume Kunitake, edited by Chuschichi Tsuzuki and R. Jules Young, Cambridge, 2009.

Another member of the Embassy, the politician and reformer Kido Takayoshi, also visited as many museums as he possibly could. He inspected schools and universities, attended the theater and the opera, even went to circuses and horse shows. This drive to understand and learn was astounding: Kido was after all one of the handful of top Restoration leaders, yet he visibly had few qualms about putting himself in the position of a mere student (this attitude could be found in many of the early leaders of the Restoration). Kido was particularly impressed with memorials, historical archives and collections, and in his diary often expressed admiration for the capacity of the West to educate itself, and to invest time and capital to mark events and individuals of importance.⁶⁴ Henceforth the Embassy would visit museums at every stop, and in 1873 its members would tour the Vienna International Exposition, the first such event where the Meiji government officially participated.⁶⁵ It is stunning to think that barely five years after the tumults of the Restoration, the young government could set up such an impressive display of uniquely Japanese cultural and traditional items at a high-profile international gathering.⁶⁶

Thanks to the Iwakura and other similar missions, Japan was therefore also able to closely observe, and later replicate, models of Western cultural institutions. In the early Meiji years already, numerous cultural institutions, for the most part modeled after Western counterparts, were built. The building of large museums in particular imposed enormous challenges and expenditures upon the young government, but it also excited the genius and drive of many Japanese artists, scholars, bureaucrats, engineers and, especially, architects (including foreign ones, like the British Josiah Conder, immensely active in Japan). The scale of some national and public institutions of culture, most notably the three great museums at Ueno Park (1882), Nara (1889) and Kyoto (1897), and the speed of their construction—all completed before the end of the century—were simply breathtaking:

The masterminds behind museum construction are, of course, the architects. Besides Josiah Conder [...] his pupil Katayama Tōkuma (1854-1917) who oversaw the major buildings of the Imperial Museums project as state architect for the Imperial Household. Fellow architect Mamizu Hideo (1866-1938) who also enjoyed a prolific career as an architecture critic conveys the vitality of the field in Meiji Japan. Influential voices in the Meiji period, Okakura Kakuzō (1862-1913) and Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908) need no introduction, except to

⁶⁴ Kido Takayoshi, *The Diary of Kido Takayoshi, Vol II*, pp. xxx-xxxii translated by Sidney Devere Brown and Akiko Hirota, University of Tokyo Press 1985 (HIC library archives, accessed October 2015).

⁶⁵ There had been Japanese art and items displayed at other international expositions during the Tokugawa, but these were mostly from collections of foreigners, or relatively small initiatives.

⁶⁶ Including, based on the recommendation of the government's advisors, a classical Japanese garden and even a Shinto shrine. <http://www.ndl.go.jp/exposition/e/s1/1873-2.html>

*elucidate the lesser-known ways in which they participated in the development of the Imperial Museums.*⁶⁷

As noted the building of the national museums in particular had involved a new breed of architects, but also an extraordinary number of carpenters, stone masons, bricklayers, roof layers, plasterers, metal smiths and practitioners of other crafts. These artisans and engineers were obliged to learn fast, to deal with issues of scale and design, with new technologies for cooling and heating and for protecting the works of art, even with new methods of earthquake resistance for large-scale stone buildings.⁶⁸ The establishment of these national institutions of culture and learning also greatly affected the public, which visited the till then alien spaces for art and culture, and adopted them wholeheartedly.⁶⁹

In spite of or maybe due to such rapid strides, some Japanese scholars and artists were becoming alarmed, early on, by what they perceived as excessive focus on Western culture at the expense of Japan's own traditional arts and crafts. Gradually, as the next section will demonstrate, a compromise was reached between the promoters of radical Westernization and the traditionalists (both these groups had their foreign supporters). In 1889 a learned committee—with Okakura Tenshin, of whom we more will be said later, named chairman of its board of directors—was formed, to carry out *a large-scale survey of the historical and artistic merits of over two-hundred-thousand works of art from shrines and temples across Japan [...] in the public interest of preservation and exhibition.*⁷⁰ The Committee was also tasked with deciding which of these treasures should be added to and exhibited in the imperial museums in Nara and Kyoto. Throughout the early efforts to safeguard Japan's cultural heritage, as it will be noted therefore, already a number of dedicated foreigners were becoming deeply engaged.

⁶⁷ Claire Cuccio in the *Museum Anthology Review*, of *The Imperial Museums of Meiji Japan: Architecture and the Art of the Nation* by Alice Y. Tseng, University of Washington Press, Seattle, 2008.
<http://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/mar/article/view/452/551>

⁶⁸ Tseng (2008) as reviewed by Cuccio
<http://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/mar/article/view/452/551>

⁶⁹ See for more information the website of Kyoto National Museum
<http://www.kyohaku.go.jp/eng/dictio/kenchiku/kyohaku.html>

⁷⁰ <http://www.kyohaku.go.jp/eng/dictio/kenchiku/kyohaku.html>

2.3 Indispensable Friendships Around the Boston Museum of Fine Arts

Meiji era policies did not just promote the dispatch of delegations like the Iwakura Embassy to learn from Western institutions of education and culture, but also actively invited many Western experts and educators to Japan. Considering how short Japan's recent history of cooperation in the realm of cultural heritage, in particular, had been beyond its own frontiers, the exchanges with the West progressed with remarkable speed. They were not just institutional. The Meiji era would also foster the development of deep and ultimately indispensable personal friendships between many Western (specially American) and Japanese scholars of art. As we shall see later, these friendships and influences in the realm of culture continued to reverberate all the way to WWII and beyond, well into the Occupation and post-Occupation years.

Among the foreigners who early on engaged in cultural exchanges between Japan and the United States, one surprising advocate was Edward Sylvester Morse (1838-1925)—surprising because Morse was not a culture expert at all, but a zoologist by profession. He had first come to Japan in 1877, one of many Western travelers prone to undertake the journey in those early days of enthusiasm for 'Japan tourism'. Morse's primary objective in visiting Japan however was not mere tourism but the conduct of research on obscure marine invertebrates called *Brachiopoda*. He was soon busy with this work at a small laboratory in Enoshima (near Kamakura), during which time he was invited to give a lecture—and was subsequently and almost promptly invited to teach zoology at the newly established Tokyo Imperial University, where he continued his teaching and research till 1880.⁷¹

Considering how little contact Morse had had with Japan before this first visit, his accomplishments, and particularly his lasting and eclectic love for Japanese art and influence on other scholars and institutions in New England with connections to Japan, are remarkable. Not only did he become fully engaged in research with Japanese collaborators from his own field of zoology, but he also travelled extensively with friends and colleagues across Japan, studying its pottery, tea ceremony and *noh* theatre, writing a reference book on Japanese homes and architecture, and even assisting with the establishment of the collections at the Imperial Museum.⁷² About his discovery trips around Japan and his companions therein it has been noted:

Morse went on four trips through Japan, to Nikkō in 1877 [...] to Hokkaidō in 1878 [...], to the Inland Sea and Kyūshū in 1879, and to Kyōto and the Inland Sea in 1882 (with W.S. Bigelow and E. Fenollosa). Besides collecting specimens for

⁷¹ L.O. Howard, *Biographical Memoir of Edward Sylvester Morse, 1838-1925*, U.S. National Academy of Sciences, pp.10-12, <http://www.nasonline.org/publications/biographical-memoirs/memoir-pdfs/morse-edward.pdf>

⁷² 'Japan—An Illustrated Encyclopedia', p. 1008.

*his zoological and anthropological research, the research in the prehistory of Japan was always one of his main concerns during these journeys.*⁷³

Morse's contributions to America's understanding of Japanese art and culture were many. A prolific writer and lecturer, upon returning to Boston he gave numerous public lectures, sharing his passion for and knowledge of Japanese art and artifacts with fellow Bostonians. Later, he became the director of the Peabody Academy—today the Peabody Essex Museum—and assisted greatly in the creation of the Asian collections at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.⁷⁴

Throughout this multifaceted and productive career, Morse had many students, colleagues and protégés. One, Ernest Fenollosa, with whom he would later do field work in Japan, was to become a prominent figure in the preservation of Japanese traditional arts. Though Morse's invitation for a lecturer on behalf of the Tokyo Imperial University was a general call for applications and not directed at Fenollosa specifically, Fenollosa was accepted and went on to become instrumental in the legacy he left to influential figures in Japanese cultural circles, including Okakura Tenshin and Langdon Warner.⁷⁵

2.3.1 Ernest Fenollosa—the Boston-Japan Bridge

The writer, curator, teacher and collector Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908) deserves recognition in any narrative of Japan's early cultural property preservation movements. Even though his role is to some extent forgotten in the West today, he was certainly—alongside Morse, Okakura and Warner—among key figures associated with the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and with Japanese art preservation efforts in the America of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Fenollosa's passion for Japanese art was deep, and his influence in raising American popular awareness of and interest in it, significant. His lasting friendships with towering figures such as Okakura and his mentorship of students like Warner were to ensure that his legacy could be continued, including during the Occupation itself.⁷⁶

In response to the invitation by the then Tokyo Imperial University and the recommendation of Morse, Fenollosa arrived in Japan in 1878, to teach philosophy and political economy. Soon he

⁷³ Introduction to Morse's essays in the *Bulletin of the Society for East Asian Archeology*, in <http://www.seaa-web.org/bul-rep-00a.htm>
Retrieved November 29, 2014.

⁷⁴ <https://peabody.harvard.edu/node/171> Retrieved November 29, 2014.

⁷⁵ Lecture to the US-Japan Friendship Association of Hiroshima, October 8, 2013. In the talk I referred to the connections that transcended generations *from Edward Morse to Fenollosa; From Fenollosa to Okakura; From Okakura to Langdon; From Langdon totoday to Joe Price, whose magnificent collection of Japanese Art just finished a tour of the Tohoku region, closing at the Fukushima Prefectural Museum.*

⁷⁶ Kuniko Yamada McVey, Japanese Collection, Harvard-Yenching Library, November 27, 2015 workshop of Japan Art Librarians, Current Status of and Challenges faced by Libraries for Japanese Study in North America: Approach to Audiovisual Materials, p. 6. http://www.momat.go.jp/am/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/04/J2015_560.pdf
Retrieved May 18, 2016.

had become an ardent admirer and vocal defender of the Japanese traditional arts, at a time when Japan's own focus and attention were almost entirely directed towards the acquisition of Western art and culture. Feeling that the artistic and traditional treasures of the country were being squandered, Fenollosa joined those voices calling for more government efforts, to protect and preserve Japanese traditional arts and to introduce and exhibit these to the general public.⁷⁷ Astonishingly for one rather new to Japan, Fenollosa was frequently invited to give lectures on the subject and even called to participate alongside his friend and colleague Okakura Tenshin in the conduct of the first inventory of Japanese national treasures.⁷⁸

Despite his many contributions (he was also involved with the founding of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts), however, Fenollosa's legacy is somewhat contradictory: he was undeniably ahead of his times, a respected foreign voice in Japanese preservation circles whose calls for greater awareness by the government to safeguarding national and traditional treasures were listened to. On the other hand, he himself amassed a superb collection of Japanese art to send them back to Boston (these were later donated to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts). There are those who challenge Fenollosa's legacy, considering his statements and his actions somewhat contradictory.

Yet undeniably Fenollosa's work in Japan contributed to a correction in the zeal for Western culture, and consequently to the emergence of the cultural preservation movement that was to flourish fully under Okakura. In spite of the justified criticisms of his own collecting practices, like Morse, Fenollosa's greatest contribution was to prompt a deeper and broader understanding of and appreciation for Japanese arts in 19th century America, thanks to the objects he brought back. Upon returning to Boston he became curator of the Department of Oriental Art at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (where he would be later replaced by Tenshin) and was asked to organize the Japanese pavilion for the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Thanks to his erudition and passion during this event *Millions of visitors became aware of the treasures to be found across the Pacific Ocean.*⁷⁹

In 1897 Fenollosa came to Japan once more, this time to teach English literature at the Imperial Normal School in Tokyo. He had sold his precious art collection to the Boston physician Charles Goddard Weld in the meantime, on the condition that it be one day donated to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (MFA). In this manner his collection was to help establish at the MFA one

⁷⁷ Donald Keene and Shiba Ryotaro (1972/2016), p. 121. Keene recounts the incident of a foreign missionary visiting Kyoto and being approached by a monk from Chion-in Temple with a proposal to sell its bell. Whether the story is fact or fiction, Keene's point is that: *There wasn't much appreciation for Japanese antiquities back then. In that era everyone was in love with new things from the West. Fenollosa wanted to teach the Japanese the value of their artwork.*

⁷⁸ <http://artdaily.com/news/54286/Japanese-Masterpieces-From-The-Museum-of-Fine-Arts-in-Boston-travel-to-Tokyo> Retrieved October 24, 2014. It was said that this work also led to the discovery of ancient Chinese scrolls brought to Japan by traveling Zen monks centuries earlier.

⁷⁹ See Yale Library <http://brbl-archive.library.yale.edu/exhibitions/orient/fenell.htm> Retrieved May 9, 2016.

of the best collections of Japanese art in the world outside of Japan, and thus provide a prime training place for future SCAP Arts and Monuments staff.⁸⁰

In balance, it is fair to say that Fenollosa's work for heritage preservation in Japan had been prescient. He rightly cautioned against the negative effects of the wholesale adoption of Western culture at the expense of the 'East's' own traditions. He was among the first to articulate the possibility that such a trend, unchecked, could bring about grave social and political consequences. His contributions to the debate about the place of art and culture in war and occupation, and in enhancing or alienating feelings of belonging and a sense of identity, remain valuable and fully pertinent to our own times and context.

2.3.2 Okakura Tenshin—Teacher and Protector of Japanese Culture⁸¹

In Japan's cultural heritage protection movement, Okakura Tenshin (1862-1913) is a larger-than-life presence and influence. A public intellectual, art critic, philosopher, teacher, painter, essayist and author of classics such as *The Ideals of the East* and *The Book of Tea*, Okakura was supremely multi-talented. His *The Book of Tea* introduced the realm of the tea-ceremony and some of its underpinning philosophy, in a relatively easy to understand manner, to the English-speaking world (he was however not, nor did he ever consider himself, a tea master). Okakura was also a friend and mentor to many young scholars, Japanese and non-Japanese alike, who became devoted to him for life (one such devotee was Langdon Warner, who always referred to Okakura as his 'sensei') and later became a sort of cultural advisor to many patrons of the art, through whom he helped build a bridge to the community of collectors in America.⁸²

As early as the 1870s, in the feverish rush to adopt Westernization on all fronts, Okakura was a leading figure among those intellectuals and artists increasingly alarmed by the loss of Japan's traditional arts. This group, while welcoming new ideas and techniques from the West, advocated in the words of Okakura "a strong re-nationalizing of Japanese art in opposition to that pseudo-Europeanising tendency now so fashionable throughout the East."⁸³ They were also among the first to articulate the need for some form of legal protection of Japan's cultural heritage—this advocacy work makes Okakura something of a spiritual father of the cultural property laws of

⁸⁰ For all his contributions Fenollosa was decorated by the Emperor of Japan in 1909 with the Third Order of the Rising Sun. After his death his wife compiled the two-volume *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art* from his notes (1912). The poet Ezra Pound, with the help of the translator Arthur Waley and the poet William Butler Yeats, also published from Fenollosa's manuscripts and his own notes the *Certain Noble Plays of Japan* (1916).

⁸¹ Okakura Tenshin went by a number of names, including *Kakuzo*. In this study he is referred either in full (Okakura Tenshin) or Okakura: like many Japanese artists he was frequently called by his given name, Tenshin, but in this case his long-lasting influences are probably more due to his visionary ideas about art and culture, rather than any particular artistic talents.

⁸² Okakura Kakuzo, *The Book of Tea*, Dover Publications, 1964 (originally 1906).

⁸³ Okakura Kakuzo, From Introduction to *The Ideals of the East*, Tuttle publishers, Tokyo, 1970 (originally 1904), p. xii.

Japan.⁸⁴ His vision of course was not limited to his own country, or even to culture and the arts, exclusively. As Westernized as Okakura was himself, and as open to new ideas, he was part of a 19th century movement of intellectuals across Asia, seeking an identity that would be neither a rejection of their own past, nor a slavish adoption of all things Western. Okakura's *Asia is One* statement, used and abused by Japanese militarists in the 1930s, was actually an expression of the longings by many intellectuals across the continent for an Asia able to resist the cultural dominance and colonial appetites of the West. This movement, seeking to find elements that would unite rather than divide Asia—an 'Asia bound by culture' as noted by the Indian scholar Brij Tankha—was part of a larger national, intellectual and spiritual quest, and would include such giant figures of the likes of Gandhi, Tagore and Sun Yat-sen.⁸⁵

Okakura was born and raised in Yokohama, and attended a Christian school where the curriculum was in English (his English was said to be better than his Japanese). He met Ernest Fenollosa, while the latter was teaching at Tokyo University. Their encounter and subsequent collaboration became a significant milestone for efforts in and a rethinking of cultural heritage protection in Japan. Together the two like-minded scholars visited many temples and shrines across the country, in particular in the Kyoto and Nara areas and, in 1886, travelled to Europe and America to research the preservation movement in European Art and seek some of its lessons for similar efforts in Japan.⁸⁶

In 1905 Okakura was named advisor, and later assistant curator, for the Chinese and Japanese Art Department, at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts. The move to Boston—he had been assigned to the post previously held by Fenollosa—and the connections he would eventually make there, including with enlightened and wealthy collectors such as the millionaire Isabella Stewart Gardner, proved portentous.⁸⁷ Thanks to Okakura's advice and expertise, Gardner had become interested in Japanese art and could purchase magnificent Japanese and other works of art for her collection. At the same time Gardner was able to bring more public attention to the cultural preservation causes then being championed by Fenollosa and Okakura.⁸⁸ Such highly visible patrons would indirectly influence the movement to protect traditional art and culture in Japan itself and, just as importantly, enhance the appreciation and positive perceptions of Japanese art in America, a perception that survived WWII and endured well into the Occupation period, including within the ranks of the SCAP staff. Boston was also where Okakura first met Langdon

⁸⁴ Scott (2003), pp. 338-346.

⁸⁵ *Sources of Japanese Tradition, Vol. II*, Tsunoda Ryūsaku, William Theodore De Bary and Donald Keene, Columbia University Press, 1958, pp. 396-398. Most of these public intellectuals were born in the latter half of the 19th century and their pan-Asianism was not just cultural but ran in parallel with national constitutional movements across the continent—for example in Iran, from 1905, and in Turkey, from 1908.

⁸⁶ Tenshin Memorial Museum of Art, Ibaraki http://www.tenshin.museum.ibk.ed.jp/07_english/03_tenshin.html

⁸⁷ Japan Encyclopedia pp. 1136-1137.

⁸⁸ Visit to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, August 30, 2014.

Warner, whom he would take under his wing upon that young scholar's first arrival in Japan, in 1906.

On the occasion of the exhibition of the Museum of Fine Art's collections in Tokyo, in 2012, the Art Daily summarized the long and fruitful history of intellectual and artistic partnership between Fenollosa and Okakura:

...The Japanese art collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, first took shape through the contributions of two Bostonians, Ernest Francisco Fenollosa (1853–1908) and William Sturgis Bigelow (1850–1926), who came to Japan in quick succession in the late 1870s and 1880s. During their time in Japan, they conducted surveys of Japanese antiquities and acquired art with intense energy. [...] After returning to the United States, Fenollosa became the curator of Japanese art and Bigelow a trustee of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and their expansive collections were gifted to the museum. In 1904, Okakura Kakuzo (Tenshin), who had trained under Fenollosa, took a position at the museum, where he worked tirelessly to expand the Asian art collections as head of the Chinese and Japanese Art department. Through the efforts of these three figures—Fenollosa, Bigelow, and Okakura—a foundation was built for the Museum of Fine Arts collection, upon which it would rise to become what is now considered the premier collection of Japanese art in the world.⁸⁹

It is an indication of Okakura's continued influence that some 33 years after his death, in one of the first press conferences he gave upon arriving in occupied Japan as advisor to SCAP's Arts and Monuments Division, Langdon Warner, by then one of America's most respected scholars of Asian art, presented his debt to Okakura in these terms:

One more word as to my own background which may interest you as it does me very much is that I first came over here with the help of the great philosopher and art critic, Okakura Yoshisaburo [...] who was at that time curator of the Oriental Department in our museum in Boston. He is very much beloved by us in America and very much respected as the author of many books on Oriental art including one masterpiece called 'The Book of Tea'.⁹⁰

The Japanese press, as we shall see later, was quick to make explicit the connections among Japanese and American art scholars, interpreting this for the war-weary public as reassurance and proof of the Occupation's good intentions and 'wisdom' regarding the arts of Japan. Referring to

⁸⁹ <http://artdaily.com/news/54286/Japanese-Masterpieces-From-The-Museum-of-Fine-Arts-in-Boston-travel-to-Tokyo> Retrieved October 24, 2014.

⁹⁰ Langdon Warner papers, SCAP boxes, National Archives Administration, College Park, Maryland, Declassified text number 775017 accessed August, 2014. In this interview Warner mistakenly used the first name of Tenshin's younger brother, but corrected this in the follow-up interview.

the Warner interview in an editorial on May 1, 1946, Jiji Press had this information and advice to share with its readers.⁹¹

It is reported that Langdon [P.] Warner, who is in Japan as advisor to the Arts and Monuments Division of the Civil Information and Education Section of the G.H.Q., had dissuaded the United States War Department from bombing these two cities [Kyoto and Nara] during the war. What made him interested in Japanese fine arts was, he said, a book written by the late Okakura, Tenshin. Warner was living in Itsuura [present day Izura] in Ibaragi Prefecture, where Okakura was living and where he first met him. Needless to say Okakura was a prominent student of Meiji culture, especially of the fine arts, inspiring many artists during and after his time. We may also say that it was his influence upon Mr. Warner that kept Nara and Kyoto safe from bombing. In this regard, we should esteem him highly, while at the same time, appreciating the culture-loving spirit of the United States, War Department, which followed the advice of a lover of arts, such as Warner[...] Japan has been known as a country of fine arts. The new Japan that is to be created must continue to be so; this is one of her highest missions. Japanese artists should appreciate the kindness of Mr. Warner and the ever-lasting inspiration of Okakura Tenshin, and make a new start in life.⁹²

Conclusions

As we saw, during most of the Edo period and despite its closed door policies, the Shogunate did in fact allow some outside influences to penetrate Japan. These influences came notably through trade with the Chinese and later with the Dutch in Nagasaki, who brought with them information and know-how about the latest developments in Western science and technology, a knowledge many Japanese *Rangaku* were eager, and motivated, to acquire. The stability, relative prosperity and openness to education and learning for common people during the Edo era extended to cultural endeavors as well. Infrastructure for travel and leisure developed extensively, in great part prompted by the *sankin-koutai* system, which in turn helped greatly develop regional centers of commerce, and of learning, leisure and entertainment, well beyond the major cities and urban areas. It was during the Edo period that culture first became more widely accessible to common people.

In *The Sources of Japanese Tradition*, we are rightly reminded that contrary to long-held perceptions the peaceful Edo period was a time of diversity and of the appearance of a number of

⁹¹ It should be noted that this editorial contains quite a number of errors and inconsistencies on dates and locations, etc, and also frequently uses capital letters—to avoid confusion some have been amended or made more consistent. It also repeatedly refers to the story suggesting that Langdon Warner was the savior of Kyoto and Nara. We shall examine this more closely in future sections on SCAP and Warner.

⁹²Jiji Shimpō, May 1, 1946, Translated for General Headquarters, SCAP by T. Samukawa of the translation pool on May 4, 1946. From the Langdon Warner papers, SCAP boxes, National Archives Administration, College Park, Maryland, Declassified text number 775017, p. 2-3 photocopied on August, 2014.

original thinkers and innovators in Japanese society. That intellectual fervor has often been ignored OR neglected under the shadow of the more intense and familiar Meiji period. The Japan expert Donald Keene, writing of the influence of one of the many great scholars of the 18th century—the mathematician, economist and philosopher Honda Toshiaki—notes the diligence and relentless pursuit of the West’s knowledge among many Edo period scholars, and concludes that it was the *amazing energy and enthusiasm of men like Honda Toshiaki [that] made possible the spectacular changes in Japan, which are all too often credited to the arrival of Commodore Perry.*⁹³

It was during the Meiji era that basic concepts of Western-style cultural institutions and protection laws, the remnants of which American occupiers would come to know and deal with in 1945, were gradually put in place. Throughout the long reign of Emperor Meiji (1868-1912) systemic and comprehensive exchanges with the West were established in various disciplines, acquiring depth and institutional shape thanks to a number of Japanese study missions and delegations. The most important of these was the Iwakura Embassy, which travelled for almost two years across the United States and Europe, to learn about the workings of a modern state. Though the Iwakura was the most well-known in terms of scope, size and ambition, it was by no means the only one. Methodical missions like the Iwakura, in their ambition not dissimilar to the the embassies sent to Tang Dynasty China between the seventh and ninth centuries, were to greatly impact Japanese society in every way, including its educational and cultural laws and institutions.

On a personal level, throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries, lasting and ultimately essential connections between Japanese and American cultural scholars (the former most significantly from within the greater Boston area) were established. The influence of scholars such as Fenollosa and Okakura, as well as the role of institutions such as the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, can hardly be overestimated. Okakura’s stature and influence, both in Japan and in the West, remained strong and continued throughout WWII and the post-war years. We may thus conclude that the intellectual lineage and professional connections of the mid-20th century Asian art experts active in post-WWII Japan can be traced back to some of their 19th century predecessors like Morse, Fenollosa and Okakura. The bonds among such like-minded scholars and cultural icons helped in turn nurture and train a cadre of younger American experts, knowledgeable and passionate about Asia’s cultural heritage, some of whom were to come to Japan after the war under the SCAP banner.

⁹³ Donald Keene, *The Japanese Discovery of Europe, 1720-1830*, Stanford University Press, revised edition 1969 (originally 1952) p. Vi, and interview in *The Japan Times*, December 27, 2005: the first ‘Black Ship’ to enter the Japanese waters was not Perry’s but a Russian frigate under the command of Adam Laxman, arriving in the waters of what is now Hokkaido, in 1792.

Chapter III

CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AS A PREREQUISITE FOR OCCUPATION—PLANNING THE U.S. POST-WAR POLICIES FOR JAPAN

Introduction

In this chapter I focus on US perspectives and analyze some institutions, programs and individuals from various disciplines who directly or indirectly influenced American planning and preparations for the Occupation of Japan. The context of the New Deal, though not directly relevant to the thematics of this study, is considered in passing. I present in particular how, despite an on-going war, foundations for a small albeit significant part of the Occupation machinery, namely the Arts & Monuments Division within SCAP, were set during this period.

To this end I look at the history and context of the movement for the preservation of cultural property in times of war, started in the United States as early as the Fall of France in 1940. I also describe the emergence of the Robert's Commission, and explain why it was such a significant player. Established at the instigation of President Roosevelt, the Commission was actually a continuation of the work of two other entities, namely the Harvard Group-American Defense and the American Council of Learned Societies. As of 1943, the Roberts Commission would build momentum on and rally around the work of these predecessors, setting the tone for the US military's post-war efforts for the protection of cultural heritage initially at the European theatre and, later, in the Far East.

I then look more closely at one of the many exceptional preparatory measures devised for the military, to teach it more comprehensively about its Japanese enemy—unique for the quality and level of its instructors and the prestige of the academic institutions involved: this was the Civil Affairs Training Schools (CATS) program, which consisted of a series of extensive training sessions lasting for the most part almost six months, designed and conducted by renowned experts and scholars of Japan at a number of America's top universities. The CATS program, at both the junior and senior levels, had as its stated goal the preparation of US military officers for the post-war occupations of Germany and Japan. It represented an extraordinary endeavor in the midst of an on-going war, ultimately providing training on Japan to some 1700 US officers, on a wide range of topics, from the economy, history and politics to the language, society and culture.

As to some of the individuals who influenced America's perceptions of Japan during the war, I have chosen three to study more closely: Joseph C. Grew, George B. Sansom and Ruth Benedict.

Surely there are many other worthy individuals worth mentioning whose influence on American civilian and military leadership circles or on the popular attitudes vis-a-vis the Japanese enemy deserves a full study. The three I have selected however seem more than representative—for the scope of their networks criss-crossing the worlds of policy, diplomacy and culture (Grew); for the depth of their knowledge about the history and culture of Japan and the respect they enjoyed among American policy circles (Sansom); and for the insight, timeliness and maybe a certain timelessness of their understanding of the ‘Enemy Japan’ and representative of an academe engaged in the war effort (Benedict).⁹⁴

⁹⁴ I also looked into the overall atmosphere in Japan through newspaper and other media coverage, American translations and censorships largely based on information culled from the Prange Collection and also SCAP documents at the National Diet Library in Tokyo and the National Archives in College Park, Maryland. The differing primary sources helped put together a more layered and inclusive understanding of what could motivate the thinking of both the occupied and the occupier.

3.1 Building Towards the Arts and Monuments Division⁹⁵

The second Roberts Commission, officially ‘The American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in Europe’ (‘Europe’ would later be replaced by ‘War Areas’) and referred to as the ‘Roberts Commission’ after its chairman, Supreme Court Justice Owen J. Roberts, was approved by President Roosevelt on June 23, 1943. It was active until June 1946, when its functions were absorbed by the State Department.^{96/97} The Commission’s membership was a real ‘who’s who’ of prominent individuals from America’s museums and cultural institutions. During the three years of the Commission’s existence, they played a central role in mobilizing attention and resources for the protection of cultural property in times of war, and in promoting the work of Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives (MFAA) teams within the US Army, and subsequently the A&M Division in Tokyo. Nothing like it had ever existed in war machinery till then, and nothing like it has been done, since.

Unique as it was, however, the Commission was hardly a sudden, stand-alone operation or entity. Its creation had come as a result of a particular political and social context in America (the New Deal) and the policy priorities set by the Roosevelt Administration. On a more practical level its agenda was facilitated thanks to prior efforts by a number of American scholarly entities, two of which in particular—the American Defense-Harvard Group and the American Council of Learned Societies—can be credited directly for having laid the foundations and contributed to the quality and effectiveness of the Roberts Commission.⁹⁸ Before studying them, however, I offer a few words about America in the context of the New Deal.

3.1.1 Franklin D. Roosevelt’s America and the New Dealers—Influence on Occupation Policies

By the time the United States had declared war on Japan and entered the Pacific War on December 7, 1941, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (hereafter FDR) had been Governor of New York

⁹⁵ Arts and Monuments was called, intermittently, unit, division, section, branch....In a memo dated December 4, 1945, George L. Stout, acting head, refers to ‘sub-section’ though by January 25, 1946 and again in a memo of March 6, 1946, he is calling it ‘Division’, (NARA batch 775017, on file with me). Charles F. Gallagher, who joined the team in 1946 refers to himself only as ‘Advisor of Fine Arts’ for SCAP-CIE, and sometimes the unit is simply referred to as ‘Arts & Monuments’. I have retained the term *Division* except when quoting directly a different nomenclature.

⁹⁶ There were two presidentially appointed commissions chaired by Justice Roberts during the war years, the first being the commission assigned to the task of investigating the attack on Pearl Harbor. Throughout my study, reference is made only to the *second* Roberts Commission.

⁹⁷ The federal commission would be officially established on August 20, 1943 <http://www.archives.gov/research/microfilm/m1944.pdf> Retrieved June 10, 2015.

⁹⁸ <http://blogs.archives.gov/TextMessage/2014/10/09/committee-of-the-american-council-of-learned-societies-on-the-protection-of-cultural-treasures-in-war-areas/>
There is an excellent summary on the blog of October 2014, by Greg Bradsher, senior archivist at the National Archives in College Park, in a post about the work and contributions of the Roberts Commission. Retrieved frequently between June 23 and July 22, 2015.

for five years and President of the United States for more than eight. As one of the last to hold the status of what may be called an imperial US presidency, it is hard to ignore the context of FDR's presidency and its influence on American politics and politics at the time and, despite his death in April 1945, on later Occupation policies for Japan.⁹⁹

Son of a wealthy industrialist, FDR was a scion of one of America's most famed families. He was, curiously, also quite liberal, frequently promoting measures that worked directly against the interests of the wealthy and the powerful, of which his own family was one. His presidency had started in the midst of the Great Depression in the United States and his leadership during those difficult early years would set the tone and in a way remain the hallmark of his presidency. So terrible was the economic situation by the time of FDR's inauguration that for a period complete collapse of the financial system and a run on the banks became distinct possibilities:

Banks have failed and savings accounts have been wiped out, so to explain the banking system and how it works, Franklin Roosevelt gives his first "fireside chat" to the American people. In fourteen and a half minutes he calms the public, and by the next Monday people begin to redeposit their money, thereby averting a crisis. This begins his first one hundred days in office, the most productive in presidential history. Fifteen major bills are passed, social programs are instituted, and the federal government—which up to this point has been a mostly passive observer of the people's problems—becomes an active force in trying to solve them.¹⁰⁰

FDR's political acumen, to contain the financial crisis within days of his ascension to the White House, made for one of his most laudable achievements. The series of longer-term measures he then took to address the economic situation during the Great Depression came to be known as the New Deal. It is not the purpose of this study to analyze the New Deal; suffice it to say that its underlying philosophy—about the role and responsibility of government towards its weakest citizens—were to mark a generation of idealistic young public servants in America, including a number of the officers and civilian staff who joined MacArthur's SCAP in Japan, especially during the first two years of the Occupation.¹⁰¹ As John W. Dower has noted, the Occupation was a consequence of a certain context, both in America and in Japan:

The Americans may not have been self-critical, but they had definite ideas about what needed to be done to make Japan democratic. Much of this thinking came

⁹⁹ Interview, Professor Fukui Haruhiro, I-House, Tokyo, September 27, 2014.

¹⁰⁰ Episode Five, 'The Roosevelts', Public Broadcasting System (PBS) 14 hour documentary by Ken Burns, viewed September 14-20, 2014 <http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/the-roosevelts/>

¹⁰¹ From 1947 onward, fear of the Soviet Union and Communism sparked what is known as the 'Reverse Course' for the Occupation when the influence of the conservative elements and the Japan Crowd in Tokyo and Washington started to rise anew. Within SCAP itself a number of reform policies either backslided or were put on hold, and the China Crowd gradually eased out. Nonetheless, some of the reforms had already taken root, and could not be so easily discarded.

*from liberals and leftists who had been associated with Franklin D. Roosevelt's progressive New Deal policies—policies that were already falling out of favor in Washington before the war ended. One might say that the last great exercise of New Deal idealism was carried out by Americans in defeated Japan.*¹⁰²

During his presidency FDR was to pass a large amount of legislation to create jobs, and his accompanying social engineering efforts were to profoundly impact the living conditions of Americans, the poor in particular. One example was the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), amongst the most important of the youth job-creation efforts under the New Deal, and which influenced preparations for WWII.¹⁰³ Of the relationship between the CCC training and the availability of combat-ready troops in the US Army in 1942, Charles Heller writes:

*Prior to World War II, the U.S. Army numbered 187,000 soldiers. Its growth to more than 8 million was a significant accomplishment. Little known to most, the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration's youth program, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), provided the pre-trained manpower to fill the U.S. Army's ranks upon mobilization with men who readily assumed the role of Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs). It also gave Organized Reserve Corps officers the opportunity to occupy leadership positions, an experience that would have been unavailable otherwise.*¹⁰⁴

Charismatic and popular as he may have been as a politician and a leader in times of crisis, personally FDR seemed to have had little patience for or interest in administrative matters. In the words of Janssens, even though *[FDR] had said in 1942 to Sumner Welles that he wanted the State Department to have policies ready for postwar problems, he was not overtly interested in them.*¹⁰⁵ While forming plans for post-war Japan, he frequently bypassed or ignored his own advisors, experts and the bureaucracy. He was also known to have a rather dim view of Japan itself, a country he had never visited (he was more lenient toward Germany, which he *had* visited in his youth, and had liked).¹⁰⁶ Roosevelt's anti-Japanese feelings (or rhetoric) would remain unchanged till the end of his life, as a campaign speech in late summer of 1944 made clear:

¹⁰² John W. Dower, 'A Warning from History: Don't expect democracy in Iraq' in the *Boston Review* <http://www.bostonreview.net/world/john-w-dower-warning-history> Retrieved January 24, 2015.

¹⁰³It was one of the earliest New Deal programs, which lasted almost 10 years, from 1933 to 1942. Its job-creating projects included tree-planting, building flood barriers, fighting forest fires and maintaining forest roads. <http://global.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/119455/Civilian-Conservation-Corps-CCC>

¹⁰⁴ Charles E. Heller, 'The U.S. Army, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and Leadership for World War II, 1933—1942', *Armed Forces and Society*, April 2010 vol.36 no.3, pp. 439-453.

¹⁰⁵ Janssens (1995), p. 45.

¹⁰⁶ Barnes (2013), p. 40, suggests that though race may have been an issue in Roosevelt's thinking about Japan, his racism was not deeply ingrained and could be overcome as a matter of political convenience.

*Roosevelt specifically linked the acts of the Japanese government to the people. The Japanese cannot be trusted, he informed a crowd of reporters, because “whether or not the people of Japan itself know and approve of what their warlords have done for nearly a century, the fact remains that they seem to have been giving hearty approval to the Japanese policy of acquisition of their neighbors and their neighbors’ lands and military and economic control of as many other nations as they can get their hands on.”*¹⁰⁷

In the words of Janssens however *Roosevelt was a flexible politician*.¹⁰⁸ Not too long after his ‘Day of Infamy’ speech in the wake of the attack on Pearl Harbor, the FDR Administration did in fact start studying the Japanese enemy and drawing plans for a post-war Japan.¹⁰⁹ As early as 1942, the Administration was mobilizing teams of experts and scholars, to help its officials better understand who the Japanese were, what drove them, how to defeat them, and how to influence them beyond the battle ground and in the future, as a potential ally. Most of this work was initiated at the State Department, and some of it was done without the explicit blessings of the White House. Nonetheless, considering that the war was still raging and, especially in the early stages, its outcome was far from clear, it is impressive to say the least that there were those in the Administration already thinking about how an American Occupation could become a transformative force not just in disarming and dominating Japan, but also in helping it back on its feet as a peaceful and prosperous nation, friendly to the United States.

In the realm of cultural heritage this work was particularly methodical, through the establishment of innumerable study groups, associations, commissions and committees, all set up during the war years. We shall see later how diligently and thoroughly this comprehensive attitude towards protecting cultural property was embraced by the influential Roberts Commission.

3.1.2 The American Defense-Harvard Group

The American Defense-Harvard Group (henceforth ‘the Harvard Group’) was the creation initially of a small group of faculty at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Shortly after the fall of Paris in June 1940, scholars and academics, supported by local residents, came together with the explicit objective of raising public awareness about the threats posed in Europe by the Axis. In the aftermath of the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the group became more actively involved in the overall war effort.

Initially launched to aid America's allies in Europe and Asia and prepare America for eventual participation in the conflict, the Group helped mobilize support for

¹⁰⁷ Barnes (2013), p. 41.

¹⁰⁸ Janssens (1995), p. 45.

¹⁰⁹ See link to text and other commentary on FDR’s speech, US National Archives, at <http://www.archives.gov/historical-docs/document.html?doc=15>

America's war effort after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. [...] Eventually, its membership reached more than 1700 names, with an active roster of 240 volunteers. Moreover, the Group was in constant communication with colleges and universities. In the fall of 1941, Letters to the Faculties and Staffs of American Colleges and Universities, outlining the Group's activities at Harvard University, was circulated to other institutions, and encouraged the creation of similar defense groups. So successful was this appeal that by the end of the war 350 defense groups had been established at colleges and universities around the country.¹¹⁰

The Harvard Group gradually conceived of specific activities to sensitize a reluctant public about the gravity of the war. It organized open lectures, radio broadcasts and other live media events. It wrote letters to the editor, op-ed pieces and scholarly articles for various newspapers and magazines.¹¹¹ It also started working closely with the US government, including the War Department. Educational material it prepared for the military started to be used as references throughout the war (and indeed later, during the Occupation). These included manuals on cultural and historical heritage protection, as the excerpt from Harvard Library's introduction to its archive collection indicates:

In the course of its activities, American Defense-Harvard Group collaborated with several government agencies including the War Department, for which the Group prepared a manual on Totalitarianism; for the Office of Facts and Figures, a handbook on Nazism; and for the Navy Department, a manual on American history and government. In addition, a special committee prepared extensive lists and manuals on art monuments for the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas. Likewise, another committee assisted the Office of Strategic Services, by compiling a list of educated personnel in enemy and enemy-controlled territories.

[...]

The Group maintained a continuing interest in foreign affairs and post-war programs and policies. Reports and articles pertaining to the problems of peace, future international organization, international trade, and the reestablishment of international boundaries were regularly published.¹¹²

Amongst the Harvard faculty engaged with the group or associated with it as advisors, there were a number of prominent art specialists. The archeologist and Japan specialist Langdon Warner was one, as were George L. Stout, Laurence Sickman and some other future staff of SCAP. Warner

¹¹⁰ Harvard University Archives (HUD 3129) <http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/~hua12007> Retrieved frequently between June 10 and July 20, 2015.

¹¹¹ Harvard University Archives (HUD 3129).

¹¹² <http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/~hua12007> Retrieved June 10 and again July 20, 2015.

was made a special consultant on China, Japan, Korea, and Siam—he later prepared for the Roberts Commission a list of monuments to be protected in case of warfare in Korea.¹¹³ Like many of those associated with the Harvard Group, he also worked with the American Council of Learned Societies as a volunteer assistant, *which undertook to prepare even more highly specialized and detailed guides*.¹¹⁴ Once the Roberts Commission had been established in 1943, as we shall see further below, the Harvard Group channeled its efforts to the military through it.¹¹⁵ It disbanded in June of 1945.

3.1.3 The American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS)

The American Council of Learned Societies (henceforth the ‘ACLS’) had been established in 1919, to represent the United States in that year’s meeting of the Union Académique Internationale (International Union of Academies). Composed at the time of 13 learned societies, the ACLS had not only academic aspirations; rather, its founding members believed that an open, public-spirited federation of the best scholars and scientists was not a luxury but a necessity for a thriving democracy such as the United States.¹¹⁶ The ACLS constitution stated that its mission was for “the advancement of humanistic studies in all fields of the humanities and social sciences and the maintenance and strengthening of national societies dedicated to those studies”.¹¹⁷

Shortly before the outbreak of WWII, Waldo G. Leland (1879-1966), a noted historian and archival theorist, became the ACLS’s director. Leland’s particular style of leadership and vision would significantly expand the Council’s sphere of influence. He was to remain at the helm of the ACLS throughout WWII (and was later an active founding member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO). Leland is quite representative, not only of the quality of academics and scholars engaged in the war effort through the ACLS, but also of their humanistic and internationalist worldview and mindset.¹¹⁸

¹¹³ Reference is found in Hyung Il Pai, *Heritage Management in Korea and Japan: The Politics of Antiquity and Identity*, University of Washington Press, 2013, and in <http://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2014/07/15/ardelia-hall-part-i/> <https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2014/07/17/ardelia-hall-part-ii/> Footnote #17 in Bradsher [...*Report of The American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1946)*...Langdon Warner, *Harvard professor of art and archeology and Curator of Oriental Art at Harvard’s Fogg Museum, prepared lists for China, Japan, Korea, and Thailand.*]

¹¹⁴ Bowie (1966), p.167.

¹¹⁵ Memo of October 14, 1943 from (unknown) at Harvard University, Fogg Museum of Art <https://www.fold3.com/image/270240523>

¹¹⁶ Today there are 74 such learned societies <http://www.acls.org/societies/work/>

¹¹⁷ See ACLS’s website <https://www.acls.org/about/history/>

¹¹⁸ https://www.acls.org/about/monuments_men/ Retrieved June 17, 2015.

Meanwhile, throughout 1940 and 1941, due in part to the prior outreach efforts of the Harvard Group, debates were intensifying among American educators, curators and museum directors concerned about the risks of destruction of cultural heritage in Europe. As the war situation continued to deteriorate and its ravages spread across Europe, North Africa and Asia, the Harvard Group and the ACLS further intensified efforts to convince the Roosevelt Administration of the necessity to establish a federal commission to address the question of cultural property in wartime. While this high-level letter-writing campaign was on-going, ACLS members took the lead themselves, and in January 1943 created the Committee on the Protection of Cultural Treasures in War Areas.¹¹⁹ The objective of the Committee was, succinctly, to bring together “the scholarly expertise of ACLS’s membership to guide the Allied Forces in the protection and recovery of art, monuments, and other treasured cultural heritage threatened by the ongoing war.”¹²⁰ The scholar and specialist of ancient Greek architecture William B. Dinsmoor, at the time president of the Archeological Institute of America, became chairman and throughout the rest of the war would remain engaged with cultural preservation work, including and especially through the Roberts’ Commission:

[...] at the ACLS annual meeting on January 29, 1943, the Committee of the American Council of Learned Societies on the Protection of Cultural Treasures in War Areas was created under the chairmanship of William B. Dinsmoor, and was aided initially by financial grants from the Rockefeller Foundation. The Committee’s headquarters were established in July at the Frick Art Reference Library in New York which made space and staff available. Because of the great amount of space needed for the work, the Library closed its doors to the public until January 4, 1944, when the Committee was able to restrict its working space. Here and at the Blumenthal House, a branch of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the greatest part of its work was done between July 1, 1943, and April 1, 1945.¹²¹

Alongside the American Defense-Harvard Group, with which it shared similar goals and objectives, the ACLS Committee on the Protection of Cultural Treasures in War Areas thus provided the blueprint and the foundations for the Roberts Commission. Some of its members later joined the new federal body as well. Its activities were focused initially on producing maps and handbooks, identifying cultural materials in war areas, and compiling lists of monuments and artworks in areas likely to be occupied by the US armed forces. This material was channeled to the War Department’s Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives through the Roberts Commission (the ACLS Committee would in essence transform itself into one of the working committees of

¹¹⁹ http://www.dfs.ny.gov/consumer/holocaust/history_art_looting_restitution/allies_roberts_mfa_a.htm Department of Financial Services, State of New York, description of history of Monuments Men through Harvard Group and ACLS. Retrieved July 20, 2015.

¹²⁰ https://www.acls.org/about/monuments_men/ Retrieved June 17, 2015.

¹²¹ Bradsher, (October 2014) <http://blogs.archives.gov/TextMessage/2014/10/09/committee-of-the-american-council-of-learned-societies-on-the-protection-of-cultural-treasures-in-war-areas/> Retrieved July 22, 2015.

the Roberts Commission). In any event, close and complementary cooperation between the two bodies continued throughout the war years.

At the level of networks and individual contacts, and in its outreach to the military, the role of the Committee was particularly important. As mentioned, some of the institutions and experts who later served with SCAP's Arts and Monuments Division were already associated with it, most singularly George L. Stout of Harvard, who would not only lead the work of the MFAA officers in Europe but also become the first head of the Arts and Monuments Division at SCAP, in Tokyo.

Considering the context of war, the foresight it had and the comprehensive and concrete measures it formulated make the ACLS group unique as a scholarly body. And clearly its members saw art and culture beyond national boundaries, as truly the heritage of humanity. They were in this sense ahead of their times. The petition the group addressed to the government, for the creation of an independent commission for *the protection and restitution of cultural objects affected or threatened by the war* amply demonstrates their vision:

*To safeguard these things will show respect for the beliefs and customs of all men and will bear witness that these things belong not only to particular peoples but also to the heritage of mankind.*¹²²

On a more practical level, by early 1943 the ACLS Committee chair had contacted the director of the School of Military Government in Virginia, informing him of the following: 1) the availability of a roster of culture specialists, able to serve as Civil Affairs Officers with military detachments; 2) the availability of a series of city and town maps, marking important monuments and sites; and, pending funding, 3) plans to (a) create a card catalogue for all cultural monuments, museums and private collections that would require security and protection in the case of occupation; (b) prepare lists of museum personnel of said occupied countries; (c) gather information for the military on matters pertaining to confiscation, forced sales, auctions or destruction of (European) cultural property, etc; and (d) prepare guidelines for the salvage and temporary protection of works of art. In addition to reaching out to the military and political decision-makers with immediate and practical proposals, the ACLS also actively sought to explain its objectives to the wider scholarly community and engage its support.

In April Dinsmoor wrote the Director of the School of Military Government in Charlottesville, Virginia [...]. The committee sent out to interested scholars a

¹²² Bradsher (October 2014).

*statement of its aims, and a questionnaire enlisting their assistance, which were forwarded to the Secretary of War on May 11, 1943.*¹²³

Thus, thanks to all this prior work, by the time FDR formally approved the creation of the Roberts Commission in June 1943, the United States Military had started its culture-specific training programs—and specialist officers at the School of Military Government were being “trained to locate and protect works of artistic and historic significance in war zones”.¹²⁴

3.1.4 The American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas (The Roberts Commission)

As noted earlier, the decision to establish the Roberts Commission was taken at the presidential level and implemented at the highest echelons of the US government. As to its objectives, these were articulated in the letter addressed by Chief Justice Stone to Franklin D. Roosevelt in December 1942, calling for the establishment of “*a government body that would protect and conserve artworks, historic monuments, and important papers in Europe, as well as making restitution of such works to their lawful owners*”.¹²⁵

The response to the request was swift: President Roosevelt acknowledged, already in a first letter dated December 28, 1942, that the suggestion about the establishment of such an entity was being studied by the appropriate agencies. In a follow-up letter of April 23, 1943, he confirmed that the Chiefs of Staff were favorable and also that British and Soviet governments were being approached with a similar suggestion. Two months after this presidential green light, in June 1943, the State Department officially announced the establishment of a federal commission to assist the U.S. Army in protecting cultural property in Allied-occupied areas, and to help it formulate cultural property restitution principles and procedures. Supreme Court Justice Owen J. Roberts, who had overseen the inquiry commission for the Pearl Harbor attack, was named chairman. Its members, appointed for three-year terms, served *pro-bono*, and FDR’s emergency fund provided a meager initial budget of \$25,000 for the first year, for clerical and operational costs. Thereafter, Congress made appropriations for the Commission as an independent executive agency (emphasis added).¹²⁶

¹²³ Bradsher (October 2014). In June 1943 Secretary of State Cordell Hull, too, wrote to president Roosevelt, informing him of the creation of a special section within the school of Military Government, and giving him an indication of its objective:

‘to train certain officer-specialist who could be assigned to army staffs to advise commanding officers regarding cultural monuments and historic artworks in war zones. Hull also suggested the appointment of ‘The American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in Europe’ to advise and work with the School of Military Government, and included a list of prospective members.’

¹²⁴ Bradsher (October 2014).

¹²⁵ <http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/finding-aid/civilian/rg-239.html> Retrieved July 22, 2015.

¹²⁶ <http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/finding-aid/civilian/rg-239.html> Retrieved July 22, 2015.

Initially the purpose of the Commission was to promote the preservation of cultural property in war-ravaged areas of Europe. In April 1944, however, upon the request of military commanders in the Far East the reference to 'Europe' was changed to 'War Areas'.¹²⁷

The Commission's mandate was broad, and the authority given to it significant. The main and maybe only serious constraint imposed upon its work (other than limited resources, which its well-connected members tried to overcome with their own efforts) was the stipulation that its mission and activities not interfere at any time with military operations. In every other way the Commission seemed to have had a relatively free hand. To facilitate frequent contacts with the Departments of War and State, the Commission's headquarters was located at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, and, in a little less than a year, an office was also set up in the American Embassy in London. Bradsher of the National Archives has described the wide-ranging and extensive tasks of the Commission:

*Commission members worked with the U.S. military, museum officials, art historians, and international commissions to protect European (later Asian) art, monuments, institutions, and records of cultural value from war-related damage or theft. In addition, the Commission would aide in the restitution of public and private property appropriated by the Nazis and their collaborators.*¹²⁸

Considering the work already done and the expertise and connections of its own members and advisors, the Commission had no need to reinvent the wheel, quickly basing its work on the foundations already set by the ACLS. It only requested that henceforth all the findings of ACLS as well as the Harvard Group be channeled through it, as the main conduit to relevant government agencies and especially to the military.¹²⁹ This streamlining of information proved highly effective in the war's general confusions.

At the level of its members, too, there was close coordination—not too difficult as many Commission members had already interacted in some capacity with the Harvard Group or the ACLS, or had known each other from other cultural, scholarly or academic circles and institutions. Indeed a brief survey of their professional affiliations and personal qualifications is indicative of the Commission's clout:

[...] the State Department announced the establishment of the Commission, with Owen J. Roberts, a Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, as chairman; David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art and a member of the Commission

¹²⁷ As a result of Navy Department requests that the Commission prepare maps and lists of areas in the Far East containing cultural and historic monuments, the Commission officially changed its name to "The American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas". <http://www.archives.gov/research/microfilm/m1944.pdf> Retrieved June 25, 2015.

¹²⁸ Bradsher (October 2014).

¹²⁹ Harvard University, Fogg Museum of Art, internal memo dated October 14, 1943 (author not clear).

*of Fine Arts, as vice-chairman; and Huntington Cairns, Secretary-Treasurer of the National Gallery, as secretary-treasurer. The other original members of the Commission were Herbert H. Lehman, Director of the Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations, which became the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA); Archibald MacLeish, Librarian of Congress [he would resign when appointed Assistant Secretary of State in January 1945]; William Bell Dinsmoor, President of the Archaeological Institute of America; Dr. Francis Henry Taylor, Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and President of the Association of Art Museum Directors; Dr. Paul J. Sachs, Associate Director of Harvard University's Fogg Museum of Fine Arts; and the Honorable Alfred E. Smith of New York. Smith was succeeded upon his death by Archbishop (later Cardinal) Francis J. Spellman of New York.*¹³⁰

Many Commission members served in overlapping posts: William Bell Dinsmoor was not only president of the Archeological Institute of America but also chairman of ACLS Committee for the protection of cultural treasures in war areas; Archibald MacLeish, Librarian of Congress, was a close confidant of Roosevelt, and involved with both the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and Office of War Information (OWI); Paul J. Sachs, the businessman, scholar and visionary museum expert was a friend of Langdon Warner and an early supporter of his expeditions and study trips to China and Japan. Horace H.F. Jayne, an archeologist, at the time curator of oriental art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, who was also a Harvard graduate and one of Warner's close friends and his fellow traveler in the first and the second Fogg Expeditions to China, in 1923 and 1924 respectively, became special advisor on matters related to Asia (he would later focus on China for the Commission).¹³¹

The geographical proximity of the Commission to the locus of power and decision-making within American legislative and executive branches proved effective, facilitating connections among leaders of the art world with those in political, policy or military circles. Other than the strategic convenience of the Commission's secretariat being located at the National Gallery in Washington D.C., the Gallery's energetic and well-connected director David Finley's leadership as vice-chairman proved helpful to the Commission's work and visibility.¹³² A government insider (he had been an assistant to his congressman father, and understood fully the bureaucratic workings of Washington D.C.) and passionate art lover, Finley was instrumental in raising the

¹³⁰ Paul Sachs had pioneered at Harvard the original Museum Studies Program, students of which were later to become some of the first officers serving with the MFAA. <http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/finding-aid/civilian/rg-239.html> Retrieved June 16, 2015. And <http://www.archives.gov/research/microfilm/m1944.pdf> Retrieved June 25, 2015.

¹³¹ <http://www.archives.gov/research/microfilm/m1944.pdf> Retrieved June 25, 2015.

¹³² I only learned of the exceptional role played by David Finley after visiting an exhibition dedicated to the work of 'The Monuments Men' in the European war theater at the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., August 2014. http://www.nga.gov/content/dam/ngaweb/research/gallery-archives/pdf/WWII_4_TheRobertsCommission.pdf Retrieved November 13, 2014.

Commission's political clout and attracting qualified experts to work with it.¹³³ The most significant of these was George L. Stout, the conservator at the Fogg Museum, already familiar with the work of the Harvard Group and ACLS, and by then a colonel in the army.

But the Commission did not just provide leadership and a policy-framework; the Commission effectively became a sort of clearing house for the scholarly and cultural community, as well as for the military. It was able to share information amongst these different constituences, notably about the nature and location of cultural treasures, and the availability of experts. As such it connected a wide variety of different professionals and sectors around the cause of cultural preservation. Aware of the need to involve the public, it also became active in promoting outreach and information about the fate of cultural treasures.¹³⁴

Early on, based on the groundwork by the Harvard Group and the ACLS, Commission members quickly endorsed the establishment of a Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) program within the U.S. Military, to assist in protecting and restituting cultural property. Many MFAA officers came with extensive museum experience, or were themselves scholars of art. With the backing of the Commission, these individuals were able to carry out a variety of rescue missions in Europe, from shoring up walls and protecting frescoes in cathedrals, to retrieving art confiscated by the Nazis.¹³⁵ During the post-war military occupation of Germany, monuments officers worked at collection points, where art and other objects were inventoried and protected before restitution to their nations of origin.¹³⁶ And of course, as we shall later see, some of the MFAA officers, most notably George Stout and Laurence Sickman, continued to Japan, to undertake similar work for the protection of its cultural heritage, albeit on a smaller scale.

¹³³ Though Finley was nominally only vice-chairman of the Commission, he was in reality its chief executive, "using all of his considerable charm and excellent contacts to promote its work in Washington and to support the monuments men in the field. Finley had been a close associate of Andrew Mellon, founder of the National Gallery of Art, and served as director of the museum from 1938 to 1956." I have actually found little trace that Justice Roberts himself was substantively involved in the day-to-day work of the Commission. Quote from <http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/features/monuments-men/behind-the-monuments-men.html>

¹³⁴ After the war, it would assist the U.S. Army in its mission to restore to their rightful owners works of art that had been confiscated by the Nazis. <http://www.archives.gov/research/microfilm/m1944.pdf> Retrieved June 25, 2015.

¹³⁵ The work of the MFAA in Europe was extensive, and is now widely acknowledged. Many consider the role of MFAA officers as going far beyond just the recuperation of art objects stolen by the Nazis. By showing that they cared for these artistic treasures, they impressed and galvanized for example the occupied Italians, and rallied people at home. As in Japan, these efforts became a successful operation for the 'hearts and minds' of former enemies. As explained in the following excerpt from a book review by Susannah Rutherglen in *The American Scholar*, September 1, 2009:

In cooperation with other Allied powers, the Roberts Commission established the Monuments Officers—or "Venus Fixers," as they became affectionately known—and quickly recruited uniformed art historians, artists, architects, and archaeologists to the cause of preservation. Among the initiative's earliest accomplishments was the creation of hundreds of maps and lists identifying cultural sites to be avoided during hostilities. Often eccentric, they contained artistic and historical details of arguable relevance to pilots or combat troops. Yet they facilitated, for example, the targeted bombing of Florence in March of 1944, a campaign that successfully destroyed the Campo di Marte marshalling yards while sparing the city's cathedral and numerous other monuments. <https://theamericanscholar.org/art-in-the-time-of-war/#.V0bAE1w0jwI>,

¹³⁶ See <http://www.archives.gov/research/microfilm/m1944.pdf>

The Roberts Commission met for its first formal meeting in August 1943. It also established seven working committees, which were to meet frequently over the following years. Though most of its decisions were made in plenary, each of the specific committees did also respond to specific queries received from other federal agencies.

The seven committees were:

- 1) *Committee on Definition of Works of Cultural Value and Property* (this was the main committee which defined the *raison d'être* and workings of the Roberts Commission);
- 2) *Committee on Administration*;
- 3) *Committee on Books, Manuscripts, and Other Printed and Written Material of Cultural Value*;
- 4) *Committee on Collection of Maps, Information, and Description of Art Objects*. It merged its work with that undertaken by the American Defense-Harvard Group and the ACLS. As mentioned earlier, during the months preceding the Commission's establishment, the Harvard Group had worked with a wide circle of scholars to compile lists of monuments needing protection. In July 1943, the ACLS Committee had used these lists and additional information to create maps that identified cultural treasures Allied armies were likely to encounter. Throughout the remainder of the war the Roberts Commission channeled the lists and maps to the War Department.
- 5) *Committee on Personnel*. It submitted to the War Department names of armed forces personnel qualified to serve in the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) Section of the Civil Affairs Division (CAD). The Commission was instrumental in the establishment of the MFAA during the fall and winter of 1943. After the war, this committee identified civilians to oversee the restitution of identifiable objects to their countries of origin and to develop plans for restoring monuments and reactivating art institutions and libraries.
- 6) *Committee on Art Instruction in Military Government Schools*. This committee conferred with the Provost Marshal General's office and, when requested, supplied the names of volunteers to instruct Army personnel on the protection and restitution of art objects and artifacts.
- 7) *Committee on Axis-Appropriated Property*.¹³⁷

One of the Commission's most important tasks, as noted earlier, was to support the War Department's Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives (MFAA) unit, which became operational by December 1943, staffed with officers who were curators, museum directors, archivists and librarians. In this manner the Commission could create and streamline lists of experts in different cultural fields:

The Commission used a list, compiled by the American Defense-Harvard Group, of several hundred experts in the fields of fine arts, architecture, and libraries to identify potential MFAA officers. The War Department required that these men

¹³⁷See National Archives <http://www.archives.gov/research/microfilm/m1944.pdf> Retrieved July 10, 2015, pp. 1-5.

already would be members of the armed forces and that their work not interfere with military operations. Between July 1943 and April 1945, the ACLS Committee [had] created over 700 maps of important European and Asian cultural centers in Allied- and enemy-occupied countries. The Commission supplied MFAA field officers with these maps, and accompanying lists of artistic and historic monuments, to aid them in preparing official lists of sites to be protected. Officers were also provided with a manual, developed by the Harvard Group, on the care and preservation of art objects, monuments, and records. Roberts Commission representatives frequently traveled abroad to observe MFAA officers in the field and to help address problems related to personnel and supplies. Military officials with backgrounds in art history, architecture, or archives and libraries generally facilitated communication between the Roberts Commission and the MFAA.¹³⁸

The scale, depth and impact of the work of the Roberts Commission, both during and in the immediate aftermath of WWII, and the role it played in providing a hub or platform for the United States government, the cultural heritage community, and especially the military, was unique. It is surprising that such a critically important entity has been so little publicized or debated. Furthermore, while the work of individual ‘Monuments Men’ is now increasingly highlighted through popular books, documentaries and even Hollywood movies (a fictional account was produced in 2014, with Stout in the lead role played by George Clooney), this has focused almost entirely on Europe. Neither the work of the MFAA and other scholars at the Arts and Monuments Division A&M in Japan, nor, for that matter, the significance of the Roberts Commission itself have received the attention and study they certainly deserve.

Because the Commission had been decreed and established at such a high level (presidential) and staffed not just by political operatives but also by diverse and influential professionals from the worlds of academia, the arts, finance and policy, it represented a combination of idealism and pragmatism that would mark most of the wartime planning for Japan. The Commission may have been a remarkable enterprise, but enormous work went into its making, as some of its internal documents make clear.

A few general comments may be helpful, to summarize the Commission’s genesis and reach:

First, it is true that the Commission was initially created for the purpose of protecting Europe’s art—the Pacific theatre and Japan had come much later. The bulk of the internal documents of the Commission are about the European theatre. However, despite the late inclusion of the cultural property situation in the Far East to its mandate, SCAP benefited greatly from the groundwork done and experiences gained by the MFAA and its political and military masters in Europe. Probably one reason the Arts and Monuments Division could be set up so early on and become operational so swiftly in Tokyo was due to the fact that most of the ideas, policies and

¹³⁸ <http://www.archives.gov/research/microfilm/m1944.pdf> Retrieved July 10, 2015, p. 3.

practices it promoted had been under consideration for at least two years and applied, already and with some success, in the European front.

Second, for policy observers the Commission's existence may explain why the US military continues to receive high marks in WWII regarding its role in cultural preservation, as much in Europe as in the Japanese theater—in spite of its massive, devastating and often arbitrary air-bombings of civilian targets in German and Japanese cities, including the two nuclear bombs that incinerated Hiroshima and Nagasaki (the US Air Force did have maps prepared at the behest of the Commission, to avoid bombing cultural treasures when and where this was possible, though considering the large-scale destruction the bombings inflicted on civilian targets, it is hard to believe these maps were actually used).

Third, behind the Commission were other institutions, such as the American Defense-Harvard Group and the American Council of Learned Societies, both of which played an important role by rallying their experts and knowledge for the cause of cultural heritage protection, and later ensuring that some of these experts were actually embedded in the US military. Recognizing the groundwork done by these institutions/entities is essential, if we are to understand the reach and success of the Commission itself.

In summary, the Roberts Commission did not—and in fact could not—appear suddenly, on a mere political whim, opportunistic policy or administrative directive. Neither was it conceived to produce quick fixes or shortcuts. Its presence reflected the thinking about cultural heritage protection at the highest levels of the US decision-making machinery. The Commission could make a difference because it helped mobilize some of America's most influential institutional leaders, scholars, curators and artists, and established mechanisms for them to work together, as well as with and through the military—this latter partnership speaking volumes of the capacity of said political and military leaders to understand, accept and act upon the advice of the scholarly community. We shall see in detail in the last chapter to what degree all these elements were lacking and absent from future American political, policy and war machinery at the time of the Afghan and Iraq wars.

In summary, the Roberts Commission was the central pillar in US planning, with regard to wartime cultural heritage protection. On the one hand, it provided a concrete platform for different experts and actors to work out policies and information-sharing mechanisms that were to guide and advise the military. On the other hand its blend of vision, ability to unite and motivate different constituencies around a common cause, and success in raising the profile of cultural heritage protection in wartime was, as we shall see later, a rarity in American military history—not achieved or even considered in prior wars, and still an exception, since.

The Roberts Commission started winding down its operations as of December 1945. Again, it was to do so in a forward-looking manner, by ensuring that the follow-up work itself would continue, notably through the offices for Germany-Austria and for Japan-Korea of the Occupied

Areas Division (ADO), as well as the Office of International and Cultural Affairs (OIC) of the State Department.¹³⁹ All of its records were moved to the National Archives.

In December 1945, the Commission was responsible for the appointment of Ardelia Hall as a consultant within the State Department's Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs (OIC). Hall served as a liaison between the State Department and MFAA officers stationed in the Far East, and when the Commission's activities ended in June 1946, became responsible for receiving and filing the reports that continued to be received from that region. Later, as the State Department's fine arts officer, Hall oversaw the transfer of records from the OMGUS central collecting points to Washington, DC.¹⁴⁰

The Commission's final meeting took place on June 20, 1946, in Philadelphia, but despite its closure, the objectives and networks it had established continued to exercise influence on cultural preservation efforts throughout the immediate post-war years. In the case of Japan, this was made possible thanks to the work of the Arts and Monuments Division at SCAP.¹⁴¹

The work of individual members involved with the Commission also continued beyond its dissolution. We will read of Stout and Warner later, but it may be apt to finish with David Finley, who had done so much to make the Commission's work matter. In 1952 Finley was to head a small delegation, which included Langdon Warner, to Tokyo. There they successfully negotiated and started preparations for an exhibition dedicated to Japanese painting and sculpture at major museums in the United States.

The exhibition, made possible by an extraordinary rallying of private and institutional goodwill and effort on both sides of the Pacific (it would be the first time in the post-war period that many Japanese museums and private collections were to lend their collections—many considered this to be the influence of Langdon Warner), started in January 1953 and lasted an entire year. It toured five of America's prestigious cultural institutions—the National Gallery of Art in Washington, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and the Seattle Art Museum. Figures such as Joseph Grew and Yashiro Yukio joined as its patrons and sponsors. In his eloquent Foreword to the exhibition catalogue, Finley, this irreplaceable former vice chairman of the Roberts Commission, barely a year after the

¹³⁹ One such offshoot was an Inter-Allied Commission for the Protection and Restitution of Cultural Material (Vaucher Commission), established in April 1944 under the chairmanship of Professor Paul Vaucher as a sub-commission of the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education. See National Archives link in previous note.

¹⁴⁰ Ardelia Hall, a famed and colorful archivist and former colleague from Foggs Art Museum, was one of the individuals George L. Stout was consulting throughout autumn 1945 from Tokyo, as he tried to establish lists of looted art in East Asia <http://www.archives.gov/research/microfilm/m1944.pdf>, p. 6.

¹⁴¹ Records of the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas (The Roberts Commission), 1943–1946 (RG 239) <http://www.archives.gov/research/microfilm/m1944.pdf> Retrieved July 21, 2014.

end of the Occupation and only seven years after the end of a bloody, catastrophic and hate-filled war, encapsulated the significance of the event:

*The collection has come to this country at an opportune time, when there is widespread and increasing interest in the history and culture of Japan. These works of art will contribute to a better understanding of Japan on the part of the American people. For art transcends the barriers of language; and it is by means of great artistic achievements, such as those in the present exhibition, that we are able to understand the inner meaning and significance of Japanese art and to realize the contribution which it has made to the culture of the civilized world.*¹⁴²

¹⁴²Foreword by David Finley, *Exhibition of Japanese Painting and Sculpture*, Sponsored by the Government of Japan https://archive.org/stream/exhibition00japa/exhibition00japa_djvu.txt Retrieved May 13, 2016.

3.2 *The Civil Affairs Training Schools (CATS)*

In a 2003 paper, Koseki Shoichi of Dokkyo University made an overarching commentary about what he considers one of the key underlying reasons for the success of the Occupation of Japan:

Occupation by the Allied Powers was successful compared to that of other occupations. There were many different factors for that but I would like to point to one I think is important. Before the occupation began, those who were to be top officials in GHQ/SCAP were trained in the United States for the occupation.

The U.S.'s Civil Affairs Divisions set up Civil Affairs Training Schools (CATS) at Harvard, Yale, Chicago, Stanford, Michigan and Northwestern universities in the summer of 1944, one year before Japan was defeated. Under teachers who had studied in Japanese universities before the war, the students took intensive courses in the Japanese language, in Japanese economy, local government and educational system. Fifteen hundred civil administrators were believed [to be] necessary in the occupation of Japan. The training was very rigorous and the classes in Japanese lasted five hours a day.¹⁴³

The road leading to the establishment of the CATS had been long. Despite the fact that most occupations in United States history were conducted through military government—including when it took over the Philippines (1898-1901) or Rhineland (1919-1923)—until WWII, the successive administrations' records in training officers for governance at peacetime remained either non-existent or dismal. As explained by Koseki [...] *American officers were not trained for military government in peace time, nor was there much pre-World War II theory about the concept of Military Government or Civil Affairs.*¹⁴⁴

In the case of Japan however, one lesson the Americans *did* remember was that where possible, it was preferable to work with existing local governments, rather than try to govern directly. Experience had shown that without local expertise or mastery of the languages, the idea of governance or administration of a territory was simply unrealistic. Planners had also observed that the American military was more effective and committed fewer mistakes when governance was led by national authorities. George C.S. Bension and Mark DeWolfe Howe, two officers from the military's Civil Affairs Division, wrote in 1948 that the historical experience had brought home to the military the effectiveness of keeping local authorities in charge of the

¹⁴³ Koseki Shoichi 'An Historical Perspective of Japan', in *Post-Conflict Reconstruction—in Japan, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, East Timor and Afghanistan* (pp. 51-60), Edited by Nassrine Azimi, Matt Fuller, Hiroko Nakayama, United Nations Press, 2003.

¹⁴⁴ Janssens (1995), with regard to the CATS programs and the cultural attitudes pp. 151-166.

conduct of their own nation's affairs. The two officers also reiterated the need for the military to educate itself about the art of governance (in words that sound terribly prescient after the misadventures in Afghanistan and Iraq):

*The issues which military government raises must therefore be faced and faced now. They confront the American people, and they confront all those who either inside or outside the military establishment are charged with carrying forward the American policies in this field. These issues must be the special concern of those who are called upon to prepare men for participation in occupation duties in Europe and Asia. Military government and civil affairs are becoming a part of the regular training of officers of the United States armed forces, as indeed they should be—and should have been.*¹⁴⁵

Another reason for a relatively more disciplined approach during WWII to properly prepare the military for governance tasks may be explained by the fact that quite a few of the members of the American top military leadership were familiar with foreign occupations. Douglas MacArthur had acquired experience with occupied territories, and with Asia, long before SCAP. Secretary of War Henry Stimson had been Governor-General of the Philippines, and when younger had visited Kyoto a number of times. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff George C. Marshall, maybe the most influential American military leader of the 20th century, had experienced first hand, in 1902, the military government of the Philippines and subsequently commented on how poorly prepared he had been for the task. Marshall was early on raising concerns that the US military was hardly equipped to govern any country, considering that *preparation for governing civilians by the military had not improved [since WWI]. To avoid this shortcoming he decided, in 1942, to found a School of Military Government at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville.*¹⁴⁶

Thus, already by 1942 the task of preparing the military for governance of Germany and Japan had started. FDR's initial intent had been to have civilians lead the Occupation, and he attached great importance to this, writing that *The governing of occupied territories may be of many kinds but in most instances it is a civilian task (my emphasis added) and requires absolutely first-class men and not second-string men.*¹⁴⁷ Adamant as FDR may well have been, however, he was forced to have a change of heart: the army insisted that only well trained officers could shoulder such a responsibility. As a compromise it was finally agreed with the high command that training for the military would be organized by some of the best civilian and academic institutions in America. Decisions regarding the parameters of such training military also received the full endorsement of Stimson and of Marshall, and their personal involvement in turn led, early on, to

¹⁴⁵ 'Military Government Organizational Relationships', in Carl J. Friedrich and Associates, *American Experiences in Military Government in World War II*, NY, Rinehart and Company, 1948. Retrieved in Questia, November 5, 2015. George C.S. Benson and Mark DeWolfe Howe (I found the references to Benson and DeWolfe initially in Janssens 1995, pp, 151-152).

¹⁴⁶ Janssens (1995), pp. 153-154, Marshall's experience of an occupied territory was in 1902, in the Philippines.

¹⁴⁷ Janssens (1995), Memo Roosevelt to Stimson Oct 29, 1942, p. 155.

the high visibility of the Civil Affairs Division (CAD) within the War Department, tasked with preparing the training.

To prepare as thoroughly as possible for the governance of occupied territories, Stimson and Marshall, both with experience in the Philippines, decided to set up a Civil Affairs Division within the War Department. The task of this division was to advise the Secretary of War on 'all matters within the purview of the War Department, other than those of a strictly military nature, in areas occupied as a result of military operations'.¹⁴⁸

Plans soon got underway to involve a number of top American universities for training the military. According to an initial estimate released in 1942, at least 1700 military government officers would be needed for the Occupation of Japan (at the end of the war, about 1750 officers had completed or were about to complete the CATS program).¹⁴⁹ After their CATS training, most of the officers would be sent to the Civil Affairs Staging Area (CASA) in Monterey, California, to await their deployment.¹⁵⁰

Initially the main activity for students at the school was examining the Field Manual on Military Occupation and Military Organization. This changed after the first actual experiences with military government. After the conquest of North Africa in 1943, the curriculum at the School of Military Government stressed more practical questions, like for instance 'having sufficient sanitary facilities.' The students also got lectures about the enemy. Senior Officers (mostly Colonels and Lt. Colonels) followed a twelve-week general course about running a military government. For more junior officers a specialist education was offered at the Civil Affairs Training Schools (CATS). These officers 'got their basic training at Fort Custer, Michigan, after which they were sent to a university to complete the CATS program through more specialized language and area studies.'¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ Janssens (1995), p. 147.

¹⁴⁹ Preliminary estimates of Civil Affairs Officers equipped for The Military Government of Japan. The School of Military Government, December 23, 1942 Box 698, RG 389, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

¹⁵⁰ The CATS was the senior program. There was also a junior, and much broader, program for younger officers and soldiers—the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP). A massive undertaking, the ASTP in practice was sending young men to college during war. It offered nine-month education programs in language and area studies (but not any military government training) to tens of thousands of recruits or already enlisted soldiers, at more than 127 universities across the country, some of which used the intensive language program developed by the American Council of Learned Societies (34 foreign languages were taught under the ASTP programs, alongside the many technical topics). Despite its early closure due to the pressing need for combat troops, the ASTP had a significant influence on American society.

¹⁵¹ Janssens (1995), p. 156 and footnote 29.

It should be recalled that from the start of hostilities there had been a great emphasis on Japanese language training. At the outbreak of the Pacific War, the US government realized that by excluding the *Nisei* (second-generation Japanese-Americans), it had no more than a handful of Japanese language experts (farsighted scholars such as Langdon Warner had warned of the need to involve and prepare Japanese-Americans for the task of Occupation, but they were not heeded).¹⁵² The language training curriculum, devised by the Army and the Navy, proved nonetheless an excellent teaching program (obviously many of the lecturers came from among *Nisei*). These intensive and competitive language schools in Michigan, California or Colorado trained both officers and civilians, in one or two-year programs. There are famous cases of Navy officers having completed their training within a year (the scholar Donald Keene, one of the schools' most renowned graduates, who started at the Navy language school in Berkeley, California and completed it in Boulder, Colorado, has often spoken publicly of the feat of him and his classmates, who successfully mastered Japanese in precisely 11 months).

Indeed, the quality of the teaching in these schools was such that quite a few of the best future scholars of Japan are from among its graduates—other than Keene, one can mention Robert Seidensticker, Marius Jansen, Otis Cary or Howard Hibbet.¹⁵³ Some of the centers that had served for the language training survived the war and eventually built upon the expertise and networks gained to expand and grow into dedicated centers of Asian studies after the war.

Some of the universities assigned offered CATS exclusively for the Far East.¹⁵⁴ As to the curriculum, different universities adapted it to their own interests or expertise. At the University of Chicago, for example, the main focus was on anthropology and sociology. One key faculty member was John F. Embree, an anthropologist who had done fieldwork in Japan for his study of the village of *Suye Mura*.¹⁵⁵ In total, four of the eight instructors in Chicago were anthropologists (including Embree). The curriculum included Japanese language, geography, history, economy and colonial government.

At the Harvard CATS, history was the main focus, though the faculty included a professor of government, a geographer, a former missionary/anthropologist, a sociologist, a journalist, and a historian. Harvard, at the time maybe the top American university in terms of its research on and in East Asia, included some of the country's most eminent experts of Japan on its faculty: in addition to the notable Langdon Warner, there was Serge Elisséeff, an old-school Japan scholar originally from Russia who taught language and culture (future ambassador to Japan Edwin Reischauer, another faculty member, was at the time recruited by the State Department and the

¹⁵² Bowie (1966), p. 161.

¹⁵³ Otis Cary Obituary, *Los Angeles Times* <http://articles.latimes.com/2006/apr/23/local/me-cary23>

¹⁵⁴ *The American Political Science Review*, April 1944, p. 343.

¹⁵⁵ Embree had lived in Kyushu's Suye Mura with his wife, also a researcher and a fluent Japanese speaker. He is surely among the more original members of the various CATS faculties and I believe his voice would have been an influential one in the post-war years, had his life not ended too soon and tragically, in a car accident in 1950.

Army to serve as research analyst, organizer of Japanese language programs for the military, and translator of intercepted military intelligence¹⁵⁶). As in the Chicago courses, at Harvard, too, actual planners of the Occupation and diplomats, like former Ambassador to Japan Joseph C. Grew, would step in frequently as guest lecturers.¹⁵⁷

At the Columbia CATS, Hugh Borton, the historian of Japan who would become director of the East Asian Institute after WWII, was one of the instructors. Borton was young and brilliant; keen to give the officer/students “a feel for the psychology of the people that they were going to be with”, he gave lectures about political philosophy and nationalism in Japan, though he often complained that the program’s military organizers did not allow him to delve deeply enough into ancient Japanese history, claiming it to be of little practical use to a military occupation. Of course not all of the training was theoretical:

Education, transportation, communication, things like that, [were] sort of thrown in together; and recent political developments. In addition there were classes about specific problems. Borton remembered one example in which the officers had to pretend to be the sanitation officer of Yokohama and had to “dig up all they could find about the size of the city and what they had in the way of sanitation.”¹⁵⁸

All in all, the quality of many CATS instructors was impressive, considering how difficult it was to find Japan specialists in the America of the 1940s. Not all of the officers trained by the CATS programs ultimately ended having a direct influence on SCAP operations themselves—but even with limited influence, the inclusion of CATS-trained officers was a positive factor. Though much more could have been done to prepare the military forces, it is fair to say that compared to almost any other case of US occupation, much *was* done. Langdon Warner, who during his time with A&M in Tokyo made a trip to Korea, was appalled by the lack of knowledge and preparation of the American military there, writing to his wife about the ignorance of the Occupation Forces: ‘Korea is worse than Japan because the Mil. Gov’t. (n.b. Military Government) Forces were never trained or briefed for that place--most of them expected to be sent to Formosa and had [had] a few weeks’ study on that particular problem--at least the officers did’.¹⁵⁹

One significance of the CATS program was, as Janssen writes:

¹⁵⁶ Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies, Harvard University <http://rijs.fas.harvard.edu/about/reischauer.php> Retrieved February 2016.

¹⁵⁷ Janssens (1995), p. 159.

¹⁵⁸ Janssens (1995), p. 154.

¹⁵⁹ Bowie (1966), p. 179. The Australian troops, who were stationed in Western Japan, had the worst reputation of all.

[...] an indication of the seriousness of the United States Army in preparing for the Occupation. If local or national authorities in Japan would not cooperate during a military government, the CATS officers, with their knowledge of the Japanese language and the local situation, had to take command. (my emphasis added) ¹⁶⁰

Sadly, despite having established such a comprehensive and farsighted training, the experiences of the CATS program were never to be replicated for America's future wars or occupations. The consequences of this need to be deeply and broadly discussed. As Rebecca Patterson, a former active officer in the US military who served in Iraq, has written, to draw comparisons between the 'nation building' capacities of the US military in today's wars (Afghanistan and Iraq) versus its performance during WWII is sobering:

The history of the United States offers an uninterrupted series of wars which demanded as their aftermath the exercise by its officers of civil governmental functions. Despite the precedents of military government in Mexico, California, the Southern states, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Panama, China and the Philippines, and elsewhere, the lesson has seemingly not been learned. In none of the service schools devoted to the higher training of officers has a single course on the nature and scope of military government been established.¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ Janssens (1995), p. 158.

¹⁶¹ Rebecca Patterson, *Revisiting a School of Military Government: How Reanimating a World War II-Era Institution Could Professionalize Military Nation Building*, Kauffman Foundation Research Series, 2011. Though Patterson's focus has been mainly on post-war Germany, her reflections apply to the larger question of the role of schools of military government in general.

3.3 Some Japan Specialists: Scholarship Influencing Policy/Bureaucracy?

At the outset of hostilities with Japan, the number of Japan specialists, *strictu sensu*, in key positions across various echelons of the US government was limited. The Roosevelt Administration had lost a substantial pool from which it could draw expertise on Japan, by refusing to allow the involvement of Americans of Japanese descent in the war effort. Initially, the few available Japan experts were clustered around the State Department. Gradually other agencies, existing or new, rose to the task by mobilizing their own experts. One was the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) (it became the CIA after the war). Another was the Office of War Information (OWI), an agency set up by presidential order and which brought under one roof most of the information gathering, dissemination and propaganda activities (it too was dissolved at the end of the war and its tasks divided among the State Department and the OSS). The War and Navy departments also put together their own Japan programs and experts once hostilities broke out.

Though not all the ‘experts’ were strictly specialists on Japan or spoke the language, most came from academic and scholarly backgrounds, many were well-versed in different fields of the humanities and, in all cases, they were familiar with research.¹⁶² According to Janssens:

Five of the State Department group of specialists were diplomats, most of the others academics. These academics came from various universities and colleges, including Columbia, Chicago, and Clark. They also came from different fields, like history, political science, and anthropology. As a reflection of the novelty of Japanese Studies as a field in the United States, only the youngest of the academics, Borton, had mastered the Japanese language, while for instance the oldest, Blakeslee, taught about Asia and Japan without understanding any Asian language. Only the State Department group participated in the policy planning effort on a permanent basis.¹⁶³

¹⁶² This point is important. As noted earlier, scholars involved with the Roosevelt Administration’s planning process, even when not Japan experts *per se*, came from a research background and at the least, one can assume, possessed something of the researcher’s open and enquiring mind. One of the weaknesses of future American Occupations, most catastrophically in the Afghan and Iraqi misadventures, to paraphrase Ambassador John Limbert, was that dogma and certitudes marked the decision-making process. Doubt was not a sought-out attribute, when it should have been the default position. The attitude is not new, as three prominent veterans of the Vietnam War, John Kerry, John McCain and Bob Kerrey, admitted in a May 23, 2016 *New-York Times* op-ed entitled ‘Moving On in Vietnam, but Remembering Its Lessons’. Of the four lessons drawn from their Vietnam experience, the third is about the dangers of not knowing (my emphasis added):

The third is to exercise humility in assuming knowledge about foreign cultures. During the war in Southeast Asia, neither America’s allies nor our adversaries acted in accordance with our expectations.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/24/opinion/moving-on-in-vietnam-but-remembering-its-lessons.html>

¹⁶³ Janssens (1995), p. 77 and p. 60.

Janssens specifically refers to some of the existing bridges between the academic world and the foreign service, historically a strength of the American system, thus:

The core group of Japan experts in the State Department was small, consisting of no more than eight people. There were strong ties between the academic world and the foreign service. A professor like Blakeslee had experience in working for the government, while a career diplomat like Hornbeck had taught at university level. Of the eight members of this group, only four spoke or read Japanese: Ballantine, Borton, Dickover and Dooman. Yet five of them had been to Japan and five of them had diplomatic experience with Japan dating from the Washington Conference to the Lytton Committee.¹⁶⁴

There were also some new entities involved with the task of ‘understanding Japan’. During the war most lengthy studies about Japan were written by the Research and Analysis (R&A) branch of the OSS.¹⁶⁵ Created in 1942 by William S. Donovan (he was a lawyer, World War I veteran and friend of FDR) as an intelligence section directly reporting to the President, the OSS formed a Far Eastern Division, staffed by two prominent academics, Charles Burton Fahs and William W. Lockwood. Fahs had studied in Paris with Serge Elisséeff (a Japan scholar and Harvard faculty member, referred to earlier) and had published in 1940 a book titled *Government in Japan*. Lockwood had been a Japan expert and research coordinator at the Institute of Pacific Relations, and professor at Princeton University during the war. He was the author of *The economic development of Japan: Growth and structural change*.¹⁶⁶

Within the Far Eastern Division at OSS, a Japan Section was formed and headed, until November 1944, by another Japanologist, Leeds Gulick. Born in Osaka in 1894 and like many of the other Japan specialists of the time (Edwin Reischauer being the most renowned) the son of Christian missionaries to Japan, Gulick had already lectured and published extensively on that country.¹⁶⁷

Other than the research papers and briefs prepared by the State Department, most background studies on Japanese behavior were written by the OSS. The Office of War Information (OWI)

¹⁶⁴ Janssens (1995), p. 73. This trend of close partnership between the Administration and Academe in America, a strength of the system, however failed for multiple reasons in the Afghan and Iraqi occupation cases.

¹⁶⁵ The OSS was in fact the evolution of the Coordinator of Information (COI) office, which had been established in 1941.

¹⁶⁶ Janssens (1995), p. 75.

The Institute of Pacific Relations was, alongside the Council on Foreign Relations, among the most important of a number of ‘think-tanks’ that were stepping in during the war years, to help the administration with research and analysis as it was clear that the government bodies were not (yet) equipped to do this.

¹⁶⁷ <http://www.internationalbulletin.org/issues/2001-01/2001-01-028-putney.pdf> Retrieved November 10, 2015. [...] son of Sidney Gulick, Leeds (1894-1975) worked as an ABCFM missionary in Japan from 1921 until the eve of World War II (1938). During the war years, he served the U.S. Government as an expert on Japan, and after the war he returned to Japan, where he worked as a missionary from 1955 until his retirement in 1964.

too had set up its own Foreign Morale Analysis Division (FMAD), which assembled research about the Japanese and their cultural values, but this was mostly for purposes of propaganda, rather than for any deep understanding of that country or the reconstruction of postwar Japan. Finally, as the Pacific War advanced, the role of the army in foreign policy gradually expanded. High level US decision-making circles came to the conclusion that if the Army and Navy were to occupy Japan, then their representatives should start studying and discussing different policies for that country.¹⁶⁸

It is clear that the role of many ‘Japan hands’ is of interest during these sensitive years. For the purposes of the present study, however, choices had to be made. The exclusion of scholars such as Hugh Borton, then at Columbia University, an instructor with CATS, and an advisor to the State Department, or John Embree, at the University of Chicago, also on loan to the State Department during the war years and involved with the CATS, or George H. Blakeslee, a dean of Asian Studies and during the war a CATS lecturer and an advisor to chairman of the Far Eastern Commission, proved particularly difficult for me, as I believe their cumulative influences on the general awareness and knowledge of war planners for Japan deserves better understanding. On the other hand, the inclusion of some others may seem questionable, such as Ruth Benedict, whose relation to the Occupation machinery was rather marginal but whose book, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, a huge success when it was released in 1946, remains central to the many of the themes in this study, and to post-war reconstruction in general.

Of the various experts and advisors, I ultimately chose to focus on three—Joseph C. Grew, George B. Sansom, and Ruth F. Benedict.

Grew was a bridge between the specialists and the FDR Administration. He was the last US ambassador to Japan prior to Pearl Harbor, having spent 10 years in Tokyo in that post, and during that time had cultivated many friendships within the scholarly community. Considered by many New Dealers to be too politically conservative, and by conservatives to be too liberal, Grew was nonetheless generally respected on all sides. Most significantly, close to the end of the war and of Japan’s defeat and surrender, i.e. early months of 1945, Grew found himself in the most influential position within the State Department, as acting Secretary of State.

George B. Sansom, a legendary British diplomat and scholar, had spent decades in Japan prior to WWII, and had a deep and uniquely broad understanding of it (he had friends in many and very different circles). Sansom became a sought-after advisor and speaker, as much by American politicians and diplomats as by other scholars. His later writings, on Japanese history and culture, were to set the standards of scholarship and consolidate his reputation as an influential diplomat-scholar. His voice therefore was an important one during the war years for the Allies, including in Washington D.C., where he was posted at the British Embassy as a minister plenipotentiary.

¹⁶⁸ Janssens (1995), pp. 64-77.

Finally Ruth F. Benedict, an anthropologist, though not originally considered a Japan expert, produced one of the most seminal studies for the Office of War Information on the culture and history of Japan. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* was to become mandatory reading for American military officers in the early post-war years and remains to this day a reference, and still an astute, scholarly attempt, to understand from afar the characteristics of an enemy nation.

3.3.1 Joseph C. Grew—Dean of the ‘Japan Crowd’

Until the attack on Pearl Harbor, Joseph C. Grew (1880-1965) was the United States ambassador to Japan, where he had been posted since 1932. A diplomat of the old school, Grew had had a distinguished foreign service career prior to arriving in Tokyo, including postings to Germany and to Turkey, where he was US Ambassador from 1927 to 1932. Japan however was his career apex.¹⁶⁹ He had assumed his assignment toward the end of the Manchurian Incident, in a period of rising tensions between Japan and the United States, but from early on adopted a non-confrontational working style with his hosts, persisting instead in enhancing the two countries’ relationships (his critics considered this misguided, forgetting that he was after all a diplomat). Grew thought the best approach was to support and strengthen the more moderate elements in Japan’s power circles, namely the business community and the foreign affairs people. Around 1940, however, realizing that this policy was increasingly perceived in Japan and especially back home as a form of appeasement, and after Japan allied itself with Germany and accelerated its war in Asia, Grew, somewhat belatedly, started shifting positions.¹⁷⁰

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Grew and the American embassy staff were put under house surveillance in Tokyo, repatriated in June 1942 in exchange for Japanese diplomats in Washington D.C. Thereafter, until the end of the war, Grew was to remain in the capital and play a significant role at the State Department but also in academic, policy-making and general public circles, giving hundreds of speeches and publishing various articles and books. He was associated with and maybe even the lead member of what was then tagged as the ‘Japan specialists’ group (or ‘Japan Crowd’ or, sometimes derisively, ‘Japan gang’)—a rather conservative but experienced group within the State Department, which competed for influence and power with the more liberal ‘China Crowd’. The Japan Crowd was sometimes accused of being too conservative or too strongly advocating the continuation of the emperor system based on arguments that as a vestige of Japanese ‘traditions’ the system was essential to any post-war occupation scheme.¹⁷¹ Grew’s own open appeal, even during wartime, for reconciliation with

¹⁶⁹ He would also become a writer on Asia, including two books about Japan: *Report from Tokyo* and *Ten Years in Japan*. Some of his books went on the New York Times bestseller list, or were used for training at CATS programs.

¹⁷⁰ However, like the other long-term Japan observer Langdon Warner, Grew too was consistently lucid about the popular support for the war in Japan, insisting that it was more widespread than people in the US imagined. [...] *most Japanese did not think the aggression on the continent violated international law; those few who did deemed it necessary for Japan’s survival*. Quoted by Kosaka Masataka in Carol Gluck and Stephen R. Graubard (1992), (Editors), *Showa—The Japan of Hirohito*, W.W. Norton and Company, New York, 1992, pp. 37-41.

¹⁷¹ *Dilemma in Japan*, Andrew Roth, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1945, pp. 34-70. In *The Post-War Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952*, Series 1: Books, Vol. 2, *Surrender, 1945* edited by Roger Buckley.

Japan and his controversial calls for the preservation of a symbolic imperial household were criticized by and resented in many quarters, particularly among the New Dealers and the general public.

As a senior official in the State Department, Grew also could cultivate close connections with a large network of Japan scholars (Langdon Warner and George B. Sansom were among his friends) and in the last crucial months of the war, as acting Secretary of State, he directly interacted with key political and military actors about Japan, including Douglas MacArthur and President Truman himself. As such, he was also a bridge among policy circles and the academic community.¹⁷² Grew's insistence that the person of Hirohito (rather than the Emperor system more generically) be spared war responsibility was viewed with hostility, at best as ill-considered for Japan's budding democracy, and detrimental to its ability to fully face its wartime responsibility or the future. Nonetheless he would not shift ground. His stance may surprise in hindsight, but from his personal and official letters it is clear he sincerely believed his years in Japan and the networks he had cultivated there gave him enough understanding to know what would eventually be acceptable to the defeated Japanese. On the question of the Emperor, Grew was particularly adamant:

*Near the end of the war, as under-secretary of State, Grew advised President Truman to inform the Japanese that after defeat they would be permitted to retain the Emperor, recognizing that such an assurance would be critical in a decision to surrender. Although not stated explicitly, the final surrender terms gave the Japanese just enough hope on this crucial issue for them to submit.*¹⁷³

Grew's influence was not limited to debates about the Emperor system but also included sharing ideas about significant practical issues, such as the need for the Occupation to keep and work through the existing government for example. In short, generally, except for some propaganda films for the Office of War Information, he was to exercise a tempering influence on the cultural and personal perceptions of Americans about the Japanese.¹⁷⁴

In his writings and lectures about Japan, Grew was always clear on the need to get rid of the militarists, and he considered that it was the duty of the Americans to bring these enemies to their knees. On the other hand he openly challenged more excessive ideas, disagreeing for example with prevailing wartime commentary that the Shinto religion or the ancient martial traditions of Japan were the root cause of its wartime aggressive conduct. Neither did he agree that the

¹⁷² I reviewed Grew's papers, in particular those related to the 1941-1945 period, at the Houghton Library at Harvard University, Grew's alma mater and recipient of the entirety of his personal papers, from August 20 to 29, 2014. Joseph Clark Grew Papers (MS Am 1687-1687.9), Houghton Library, Harvard University.

¹⁷³ Japan An Illustrated Encyclopedia, p. 475.

¹⁷⁴ *Our Enemy: The Japanese*, Office of War Information, Bureau of Motion Pictures <https://archive.org/details/OurEnemy1943>

Japanese were intrinsically or irreversibly aggressive as a general rule. His more nuanced ideas, which ran counter to the general clamor and public utterances of most American officials of the time, often got Grew into trouble, particularly with the media (most of which, including the *New York Times*, were fiercely critical at the time of his suggestions that the Emperor—or even the emperor system—remain intact. For most American politicians the official posture was that Hirohito should be treated as a war criminal). It may sound easy to do now, but one must concede that in his own way Grew was quite brave to hold on to his opinions at a time when these were deeply unpopular and politically incorrect (his letters throughout 1942 and 1943 suggest, in fact, that he was worried about his reputation).

Grew frequently insisted that the American Occupation would face a very difficult situation were the Emperor to be removed, and would suggest that instead the institution of Emperor could and should be used for democratic purposes. Most of the more knowledgeable members of the pre-Occupation planning teams or those in the immediate post-war months were to some degree to echo Grew's position, even if they did it with reservation. Ruth Benedict in her seminal work certainly proposed the same notions as Grew. Otis Cary, who had grown up in Japan and was fluent in the language and quite well-connected, writing from Tokyo in December 1945, summed it up as follows: *To anyone here it is obvious that Japan would be chaos without the stabilizing forces of the emperor on the people, but he should use this power for the people's sake in many more ways.*¹⁷⁵

In the face of those who suggested that militarism could rise again in Japan if the Emperor system was left intact, Grew argued that the military, by losing the war, would have lost face entirely and therefore was left with little or no credibility among the public. He was to maintain this line of argument throughout a critical period and from an influential perch. In December 1944, Grew had become Under-Secretary of State. From January to August 6, 1945, when he resigned, he was acting Secretary of State. While his stances may have made him unpopular in many quarters before, in his official position he could more freely exercise direct influence on the planning for Japan (Grew became part of the trio that drafted the text of the Potsdam Declaration—the initial version of which had clearly spelled out the continuation of Japan's Emperor system, a section that was later removed by Truman).

In a letter to one of the other members of the trio, Secretary of War Stimson, Grew wrote:

...The Emperor needed all the support he could get, and in the light of available evidence I myself and others felt and still feel that if such a categorical statement about [retaining] the dynasty had been issued in May 1945, the surrender-minded elements in the Government might well have been afforded by such a statement a valid reason and the necessary strength to come to an early clearcut decision. [...] If surrender could have been brought about in May, 1945, or even in June or July,

¹⁷⁵ Otis Cary, Editor, *War-Wasted Asia—Letters, 1945-46*, Kodansha International, Tokyo, 1975, pp. 279-280.

*before the entrance of Soviet Russia into the war and the use of the atomic bomb, the world would have been the gainer.*¹⁷⁶

As the recognized ‘dean’ of the Japan Crowd in Washington, as a central figurehead for a community of foreign service officers with experience of Japan, as a friend of scholars such as George Sansom, Langdon Warner or Hugh Borton (all of whom were in favor of the ‘Soft Peace’ with Japan), Grew was a significant figure during a sensitive period of preparing for post-war Japan. Despite his resignation in August 1945, one can consider his a sustained and influential presence throughout the war years, in particular during the war’s crucial last months. Whatever the vagaries of power and influence, the three defining principles for a post-war regime that the Japan Crowd, led in Washington by Grew, had held dear—disarmament, a viable (free market) economy, and a humanized (i.e., symbolic) Throne—were, as aptly and succinctly suggested by Takemae, *very close to what Japan got.*¹⁷⁷

3.3.2 George B. Sansom—British diplomat-scholar, trusted advisor to American Policy-Makers

The role and influence of British diplomat and historian of Japan, George B. Sansom (1883-1965) within American policy-making circles during WWII is the more interesting in that he was not American. Sansom had joined the British delegation in Tokyo in 1904, at the age of 20. His initial plan was to stay long enough to learn the language, but he ultimately spent almost 40 years, practically his entire diplomatic career until the outbreak of WWII, in Japan. In Tokyo he developed a reputation as an expert not just on the Japanese economy, but also of its history, culture and society. His ability to move with ease among different disciplines and circles, from intellectuals to artists to the strictest officialdom, made him quite unique and an admired figure among his colleagues, foreign and Japanese alike.

But Sansom was happiest in the company of other scholars. One of his dearest friends was the archeologist and scholar of Japanese art Langdon Warner. A shared love for Japanese art and a deep intellectual affinity existed between the two men. Of one of their reunions, in Nara in 1928, Sansom’s wife describes three days when she and her husband followed Warner everywhere while he inspected statuary, admiring not just Warner’s erudition but noting also the esteem with which he was visibly held by the Japanese:

[Sansom] is utterly fascinated as he watches Langdon’s critical examination of each separate piece of sculpture [...] Nobody but Langdon could have gained permission to work in this way; but such is his prestige based on knowledge, together with his lovable personality, that the Abbot is happy in his company and

¹⁷⁶ Quote is by Barton Bernstein, ‘The Atomic Bomb: The Critical Issues’, in Joseph C. Grew *and Hiroshima*, <http://www.doug-long.com/grew.htm> Retrieved 10 February 2015.

¹⁷⁷ Takemae (2002), p. 20.

*has perfect confidence in him. What one feels is that here in Nara he expresses through his tactile knowledge and deep feeling his essential genius.*¹⁷⁸

Like his friend Warner, Sansom too was worried earlier than most about the direction Japan was taking, but also about the attitudes of the West in its regard. Already, in a speech in New York in November 1935, hosted by the president of Columbia University, Sansom had said of his friendships with many of East Asia's scholars and artists, that they provided him with the greatest company and freedom. He then went on to make a plea, that no effort be spared in cultivating outreach to Asia's scholarly community, speaking presciently and ominously, of the need for deeper understanding, in order to close the rising chasm between the West and East Asia. His words sound eerily relevant, even to the problems of our present age:

*Liberal-minded people often say with conviction that the basis of international relations should be mutual understanding, and that is true enough. But this understanding which we talk of so freely is the hardest thing to achieve. It's hard enough to know one's own self [...] What hope is there of understanding the motives and ambitions of people whose tradition is so remote from our own as, let us say, the Chinese and the Japanese? [...] We may not approve of their policies. But at least we ought to make an effort to understand the causes which lie beneath present movements in Eastern Asia...*¹⁷⁹

At the outbreak of hostilities with Japan, Sansom moved to Singapore, then fled to Australia barely ahead of the Japanese invasion. From 1942 he was in the United States as part of the British delegation, and for the remainder of WWII would be based in Washington, D.C. Alongside his diplomatic duties, Sansom gave numerous public lectures and private advice to his American counterparts. It has been suggested that he even indirectly influenced the wording of the Potsdam Declaration, as he was asked to send his comments on the United States Initial Post-Defeat Policy for Japan (SWNCC 150).¹⁸⁰ It is clear at any rate that he was highly respected and well-liked by his colleagues and fellow diplomats, not just British but also American. Hugh Borton, by then among a handful of Japan experts with the Administration, considered Sansom, whom he had met in Tokyo when sent there as a young Quaker missionary, one of the major

¹⁷⁸ Katharine Sansom, *Sir George Sansom and Japan: a Memoir*; Diplomatic Press, 1972, pp. 25-26.

The personal friendship that bonded the two scholars is lovingly described by Sansom's wife, writing of a reunion in New York with Warner after the war, when her husband was teaching at Columbia University: *I think he [Warner] was truly the man in the whole world George [Sansom] loved best: his ringing laugh, his knowledge dressed in extreme modesty, his passion for country things, this was a man everyone must love. But I think the link between these two was especially close* (p.169).

¹⁷⁹ Katharine Sansom, 1972, pp.85-89.

¹⁸⁰ Hosoya Chihiro, in *George Sansom: Diplomat and Historian*, presentation at the European Association for Japanese Studies, Zurich, September 1976 <https://hermes-ir.lib.hit-u.ac.jp/rs/bitstream/10086/8232/1/HJlaw0080000010.pdf> Retrieved May 17, 2016.

influences in his life and instrumental to his decision to devote himself to Japanese studies.¹⁸¹ Joseph C. Grew, the former American ambassador to Japan, was another staunch admirer and it was through his and other connections to State Department experts, forged during their time in Tokyo, that Sansom was able to reach out frequently to policy circles while posted in Washington.

One of the more important conferences during the war dealing with the topic of postwar Japan was held under the auspices of the Institute of Pacific Relations, in December 1942, at Mont Tremblant, in Canada. It was entitled 'War and Peace in the Pacific'. Sansom was the keynote speaker, and was presented as the most '*eminent Japan specialist of his day*', and a dean for many of the participants.¹⁸² Sansom's analysis seems to have impressed everyone, in particular the State Department team—Grew, Blakeslee, Borton, and Reischauer—most of whom considered that among all the papers on post-war relations with Japan presented at the conference, the one by Sansom was clearly the best.¹⁸³ In his lecture Sansom suggested, in essence, the need for combining at least three approaches:

1. Consider ways to end the 'aggressive power' of Japan. These could include disarming, bringing an end to military industries, and dismantling the colonial empire.
2. Recognize that Japan, too, needed the Four Freedoms (as articulated by FDR: freedom of speech and of worship, freedom from want and from fear) and consider ways to insure that the country would not be crippled economically. As he put it: "*we are obliged to face the probability that a nation of over 70 million desperate and frustrated people would ruin any plan designed to bring prosperity and peace to Asia*".
3. Heed warnings about Japan, the Japanese spirit and the general enthusiasm of the public for the war effort, and remember that the call of 'Drive the White Man out of Asia' was sweet to many vengeful ears. Unlike many other Japan specialists and policy makers, Sansom was convinced that there was strong popular support for the expansionist policies of Japanese leaders, and that after defeat, greater effort at convincing the Japanese of the merits of democracy had to be made.¹⁸⁴

After the Japanese defeat, Sansom was named British representative on the Far Eastern Commission (FEC), which, officially at least, was to oversee the Allied Occupation of Japan.¹⁸⁵ He sailed for Tokyo in December 1945, alongside other members of the Commission, but once there quite quickly came to the conclusion that his tasks were constrained by the circumstances

¹⁸¹ Kinuhata Hitomi, *Hugh Borton: His Role in American-Japanese Relations*, East Tennessee State University (2004), Electronic Theses and Dissertations, Paper 911. <http://dc.etsu.edu/etd/911>

¹⁸² Janssens (1995), pp. 80-82.

¹⁸³ Janssens (1995), pp. 80-82.

¹⁸⁴ Janssens (1995), pp. 80-82.

¹⁸⁵ Other members of FEC, previously the FEAC—Far Eastern Advisory Commission—were China, Great Britain and the Soviet Union. MacArthur in effect ensured that the FEC would remain without influence.

of Japan, and by the limited authority of the FEC. He wrote to his wife on January 1, 1946, that '*...most of our problems will be settled for us by the over-riding need of feeding Japan. This will dispose of most of the questions as to reparations, trade, etc.*'¹⁸⁶

But he was generally dissatisfied with his work, and critical of Occupation policies (never having been in robust health, he may also have become tired by then). He thought the zeal of some Americans in wanting to transform Japan well-intentioned but naive, lacking in any in-depth knowledge and understanding. He wrote that

*I do not think they realize how deeply rooted and how strong is the Japanese intellectual tradition; they seem to think that Japan can be supplied with a new system of education as a tailor might furnish a new suit'.*¹⁸⁷

MacArthur he seemed to admire however, and he was to write on January 29, 1946, after the General had addressed FEC members in his offices, that *he certainly gives the impression of being a great man, not only as a general, but also as a statesman. I would say that the Japanese are extremely lucky to have him as their ruler.*¹⁸⁸ At any rate, despite his own doubts, such was the reputation of Sansom that he was also frequently invited to meet with the key people in SCAP and also in the Japanese government—not just MacArthur but the Japanese prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs. Even the Imperial Household reserved an audience for him with the Emperor (which Sansom, to his regret, finally had to refuse, fearing that it would not be perceived as a private audience but rather as an official visit by a Commission member).¹⁸⁹

Sansom stayed in Japan till the end of January 1946, and after the FEC had completed its work, he left Washington for London. In 1947 he left the British Foreign Service for good and went to Columbia University, where he became a professor and the first director of the East Asian Institute. The last 10 years of his life, from 1955 till his death in 1965, he spent at Stanford University, in California. Altogether the years spent in American academe were, according to his wife, among his happiest, and also his most prolific. His renowned three-volume *A History of Japan*, today still a reference for most foreign students of Japanese history, was completed during these productive last years.¹⁹⁰ The world of intellectuals he so loved became his world, and it is not surprising that many of those he had known before continued to seek him out. They included his beloved guide and colleague Tsunoda Ryūsaku, and the famous scholars Yashiro Yukio, Langdon Warner, Ted De Bary, Donald Keene—all among his many visitors.

¹⁸⁶ Katharine Sansom, 1972, p. 145.

¹⁸⁷ Katharine Sansom (1972), p. 154.

¹⁸⁸ Katharine Sansom (1972), p. 155.

¹⁸⁹ Katharine Sansom, (1972), pp. 152-153.

¹⁹⁰ George B. Sansom, *A History of Japan* in three volumes, to 1334, 1334-1615 and 1615-1867, Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1963 (this humble author too wishes to pay tribute here to Professor Sansom, whose works on the culture and history of Japan have greatly influenced my own understanding of this country).

Though he was not involved in the Occupation *per se*, Sansom's influence proved subtle, broad and long-lasting—the presence of such an erudite scholar and lover of Japan, in and around Occupation planning circles in Washington during the war years, was certainly fortuitous. Maybe one of the greatest tributes to the work of this erudite and modest historian comes not from other scholars but from General MacArthur, who in a letter to Sansom in January 1964 wrote *I regard your historical works on Japan as by far the most accurate and brilliant of any ever compiled on that nation.*¹⁹¹

3.3.3 Ruth Benedict: Scholar Helping the Military Form a Human Image of the Enemy

It may surprise some that I conclude this chapter with Ruth Benedict (1887-1948).¹⁹² After all she did not deal with cultural property *per se*, nor was she a part of the (predominantly male) Boston or Washington cultural or policy networks. She never went to Japan and was not, *strictu sensu*, a Japan specialist. Yet almost 70 years after its publication her landmark book, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946), remains a reference and an astonishingly astute and farsighted study of a previous enemy. Her voice—about culture, identity, dignity and the enemy—continues to reverberate to this day, and not only for Japan: she could just as equally be speaking of many other, recent wars of occupation.

Benedict, a cultural anthropologist, received her doctorate under Franz Boas at Columbia University. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* was commissioned in 1944 by the Office of War Information and became, it is important to remember, mandatory reading for Occupation personnel.¹⁹³ The book, a huge success at the time and Benedict's last publication before an early death “*was the result of her application of anthropological methods to the study of Japanese culture and character. The work was done for the American Office of War Information (1943-1945) and did not involve fieldwork in Japan but was a study of ‘culture at a distance’*”.¹⁹⁴

Benedict's assignment from the OWI, similar to assignments given to other fellow anthropologists, was to write a 'national character' study about Japan. She was earlier part of a movement among a small group of anthropologists, which included Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, who had founded in 1939 the 'committee for national morale'. These anthropologists were attempting to study complex societies (rather than primitive ones, as they had tended to do until that time), so as to try to understand what were the 'basic themes' of a national character, a thematic which the Department of War actively promoted throughout WWII. Benedict based *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* on an earlier study she had completed, entitled *Patterns of*

¹⁹¹ Katharine Sansom (1972), p. vii.

¹⁹² Though she was born Ruth Fulton, she took her husband's name and thereafter was always referred to with the surname Benedict.

¹⁹³ Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1989 (1946).

¹⁹⁴ <http://anthropology.columbia.edu/ruth-fulton> Retrieved December 8, 2014.

*Culture, which represented a major intellectual advance in getting at underlying attitudes and systems of thinking and behavior in different cultures.*¹⁹⁵

Benedict had been interested in Japan since her student days but never had a chance to visit, nor did she speak, read or write the language. Her research handicaps, including a lack of topical expertise and field study, were therefore numerous.¹⁹⁶ It is perhaps not surprising that her anthropological work caused some controversy later—she was notably criticized for opinions that seemed to validate the image Japan’s own nationalists wanted to project.¹⁹⁷ This seems however neither fair nor accurate, for she had worked hard to shape her own independent opinions. Still, it is true that some of her arguments (such as her analysis of the place of the emperor in the Japanese psyche for example) played well into the hands of nationalist and conservative elements, on both sides of the Pacific.¹⁹⁸ She was also considered over-admiring of supposedly ‘traditional values’ of the Japanese, some of which her critics argue were invented wholesale during the Meiji era, to glue the disparate parts of a feudal country together. As the historian John W. Dower has written:

*‘...As suggested most famously by the cultural anthropologist Ruth Benedict, a member of the OWI intelligence team, the Japanese were said to behave in accordance with situational or particularistic ethics, as opposed to so-called universal values as in the Western tradition.... This was the social scientists’ more circumspect way of referring to an ‘obedient herd,’ and it would soon provide a good basis for rationalizing policies that promoted democracy under the Emperor’s aegis....’*¹⁹⁹

Still, Benedict’s analysis in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* is more often on the mark than not, and many of her explanations have stood the test of time. For some observers of Japan, few other studies have matched Benedict’s work in their timeliness and pertinence (and long term impact).²⁰⁰ It should not be forgotten that for the vast majority of American military forces

¹⁹⁵ Benedict (1989), p. ix, from the Foreword by Ezra F. Vogel to 1989 edition of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*.

¹⁹⁶ Most notably a lack of language skills, absence of any personal familiarity with Japan and her dependence on a very small group of *Nisei* to get first hand accounts of Japanese life.

¹⁹⁷ <http://www.svsu.edu/~boles/index/papers/benedict.pdf> In *Dialectical Anthropology*, 2006. The author reprises the Lummi critique of Benedict’s work. Retrieved October 26, 2015.

¹⁹⁸ <http://www.svsu.edu/~boles/index/papers/benedict.pdf> As mentioned earlier, this points to how Benedict’s work on Japan was used almost 60 years later as a rallying call by pro-war groups to scholars, to help in the occupation of Iraq. Retrieved October 26, 2015.

¹⁹⁹ John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat, Japan in the Wake of World War II*, W.W. Norton & Company, 1999, pp. 217-220.

²⁰⁰ Nicolas Bouvier, *Le Vide et le Plein—Carnets du Japon 1964-1970*, Hoebeke, Paris 2004, pp. 53-55. For Bouvier, one of Switzerland’s best loved travel-writers, Benedict, despite never having come to Japan, understood it in depth because she applied herself to its study with ‘circumspection’ and ‘scruples’.

around 1945—more than half a million of which were serving with the Occupation—still greatly ignorant of their former enemy country and perceiving it in brutally simplistic and negative colors, Benedict’s work introduced nuance and subtlety. She presented traits of Japan’s culture and its people that were different, and which must have brought color and depth, even if indirectly, to black-and-white perceptions of a hated former enemy. And in spite of the weaknesses in her research, Benedict’s analysis of how and why the Japanese were able to accept and could even side with the Occupation was basically correct. Furthermore, her approach has stood the test of time and could apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to contemporary conflicts and occupations (at a minimum it raises troubling questions about why, despite the far greater volume and myriad tools for gathering information at our disposal today, the real and applied experiences at understanding the enemy or an occupation have been lost in the decades since WWII). Benedict is a reminder of the ability of scholars, when given a chance, to help shape perceptions and policies for the US military during WWII. She proved both the relevance of the application of social anthropology methods to war and occupation, and also the need to present these in a manner useful for decision-makers and planners.²⁰¹

Though most of Benedict’s writings and ideas on Japanese behavior became public mainly after the war (*The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* was actually published in 1946 and was an immediate best-seller) the first draft for the OWI was in fact completed in the early summer of 1945, under the title ‘Japanese Behavior Patterns’.²⁰² A shorter, prepublication version of her main ideas also appeared in 1946 as an article in *Asia and the Americas* magazine, titled ‘The Japanese are so simple’.²⁰³ In all her writings, Benedict argued convincingly against a revengeful policy after Occupation. For this contribution alone, she deserves to be studied and her (and her bosses’) approaches understood, and maybe even emulated for their broader implications in other wars and occupations.

²⁰¹ See op-ed in *the New York Times* website, Nassrine Azimi, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/15/opinion/15iht-edazimi.html> Retrieved December 8, 2014.

²⁰² Janssens (1995), p. 207.

²⁰³ Janssens (1995), p. 212.

Conclusions

This chapter does not suggest that ‘hardcore’ American military decision-makers were always eager or willing to incorporate input from scholars and experts on Japan. Among some policy-makers, dislike of social scientists in particular was at times rather acute.²⁰⁴ Even when, towards the end of the war and based on input from its own researchers, an Office of War Information report said that Japanese home morale was low and surrender a distinct possibility, few policy-makers took it seriously and even Stimson himself expected the Japanese not to give up fighting “until the latter part of 1946, at the earliest”.²⁰⁵ Important intelligence offices were not particularly scholar-friendly either, and frequently scholars, especially those who like Ruth Benedict were not considered insiders, would be either denied high security clearances or not given the attention and credence their analytical work deserved.²⁰⁶

The absence of reliable data about Japan as well as the language obstacle, too, were constant headaches for the researchers themselves (hence the early influence of clearing houses, such as the Institute of Pacific Relations, referred to earlier). As in other wars, most military planners felt they needed only hard, factual, fast data, while the researchers were keen to do sound research—there was constant risk of a mismatch between the learned academic approach and the practical requirements of war and occupation.²⁰⁷ In their defense, one can understand why policy planners were at times reluctant to depend on specialist studies, as the researchers did not always fully appreciate the political or military pressures policy planners were under. Nonetheless, as we have seen, scholars and experts were very much present across the executive branch and the military machinery from the beginning of the war planning, and would remain so throughout the war years and into the Occupation.

Koseki Shoichi has noted yet another reason for the Occupation’s success—namely the legitimacy and credibility it enjoyed in the eyes of the Japanese themselves. After 15 years of war and deprivation, they had little patience with the militarist or nationalist agendas of their own former leaders and looked at the foreign reformers if not positively, then at least with a certain open mind. Koseki has argued that without such legitimacy, and without the endorsement of ordinary people, in addition to the intellectuals and politicians, the Occupation would not have had such a sustained influence:

An Occupation is a legal, unilateral implementation of authority, but it cannot succeed if the occupied do not cooperate. Obtaining that cooperation requires

²⁰⁴ One scholar commented that “*The administrator uses social science the way a drunk uses a lamppost, for support rather than for illumination!*” in Janssens, p. 221.

²⁰⁵ Janssens (1995), p. 222.

²⁰⁶ Janssens (1995), p. 222.

²⁰⁷ This actually further validates the exceptional importance of programs such as CATS, ASTP and other theoretical and practical training and research that took place even as the war was raging. In most cases once war starts there is generally not much time for in-depth or abstract thinking. During WWII the conduct of war on many fronts and almost across the globe did not seem to affect the ability to think about and study the enemy.

*that the occupier have advanced knowledge of the history, culture, economics and politics of the country to be occupied. GHQ/SCAP was the occupier of Japan, and a great part of its success is attributable to the studies and research it did on culture, history, economics and politics before it even came to Japan.*²⁰⁸

But such a legitimacy could only be upheld by some degree of knowledge and competence, the outcome of a long planning. Takemae Eiji corroborates this view and challenges the assumption that the people who staffed SCAP were uninformed or unqualified, noting the high academic and professional qualifications of many of those who arrived in Japan in 1945. Civilian specialists, he adds, were also dominant—at a ratio of civilian to military personnel of roughly four to one for most of the Occupation period. He writes:

*In Japan, the conventional wisdom is that GHQ programmes were executed by inexperienced junior officers with few real qualifications for their work. [...] This view is patently wrong. Many military officers had advanced academic degrees and had received up to a year's intensive training in civil administration and the Japanese language at leading American universities. Moreover, SCAP recruited talented civilian experts to help run the special sections and assist in policy implementation. [...] The competence and formal training of SCAP personnel varies, but by and large, the civilian Occupationaires were people of outstanding character and merit. They included former civil servants, financiers, labour consultants, lawyers and other professionals. PhDs abounded [...] Animated by a reformist zeal that was sometimes excessive, many travelled to Tokyo to put their New Deal philosophy into practice.*²⁰⁹

John W. Dower has suggested that once defeat became imminent and the Occupation started unfolding, many of the US military personnel who had been trained in Japanese studies during the war years were in fact not posted to sensitive enough postings within SCAP itself, or were at best underused.

*...Alternatively, these bright, eager, new speakers of Japanese might be assigned to the Eighth Army in Yokohama and deposited at the lowest level of occupation activity: grass-roots prefectural work. Whatever their ultimate assignment, they were excluded from serious policy-making positions.*²¹⁰

Nonetheless, even if not in the most sensitive positions, officers trained in Japanese language and culture were interacting with Japanese people across the land and in different sectors, with what one can imagine was a more adapted attitude towards the country just occupied than if they had

²⁰⁸ Koseki (2003), p. 58.

²⁰⁹ Takemae (2002), p. xxviii.

²¹⁰ Dower (1999), p. 224.

known nothing about it. At any rate as should be clear by what has preceded, the essential point here is, in the words of Janssens, that “*the war forced the Americans to think more seriously about the Japanese.*” Policy planners may not have had a desire to read anything too extensive or theoretical, so the influence of scholars and experts was perhaps more subtle than direct. And even if not *all* mid-level officers trained in Japanese studies were used at the policy-level, thanks to the preparatory work during the war years, quite a few were. As Koseki has written:

*I firmly believe that it was this extensive preparation that made the occupation of Japan such a success. Policy is the realization of an ideal and in order to realize that ideal the other side must know what it is.*²¹¹

Few may embody the kind of ‘scholar-policymakers’ I have in mind, who exercised influence both subtle and concrete—whether in military training rooms, with the general public or in confidential policy debates—more than Edwin O. Reischauer. This historian and pioneer of Japanese studies, a mentor and teacher for many future specialists, born of missionary parents in Tokyo and fluent in the language, was deeply involved during the war years, both in policy circles and with the US military training, including the CATS programs. In 1961 Reischauer was appointed United States ambassador to Japan, arriving with his Japanese wife at Haneda airport on April 19. There he addressed the nation that only 16 years earlier had been the devastated, beleaguered and profoundly hated enemy of the United States in these terms: *To be able to come back to Japan, once again, makes me very happy. As you may well know, both my wife and I were born in Tokyo, so this arrival only feels like we are today finally returning home.*²¹²

To conclude this chapter:

First, there was broad, multi-agency 'preparation' by the Americans throughout the war years, to consider the cultural dimensions of post-war Japan and to include in their reflections not just political or military experts but the best and brightest scholars of Japan that the US possessed. Marius Jansen wrote, of his own experiences of falling in love with Japan during WWII, about the influences of the superb instructors assigned to teach Japanese culture and language to members of the US military forces:

[...] at Princeton I had decided on a career in Reformation and Renaissance history, but World War II and the military duty changed that. An army language program, followed by service in Okinawa and Japan, brought experiences and interests that proved compelling. The army program was directed by a pioneer in

²¹¹ Koseki (2003), p. 57.

²¹² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wVMmDjGIZyU>
Gakusha Taishi, Mainichi News number 334, diffused 1961.4.26 (second news item, after that about the Cuba Crisis) Video retrieved December 11, 2014.

*the study of Japan, Serge Elisséeff, who was himself a chapter in the West's encounter with Japan.*²¹³

Second, of the major policy teams working on Japan from 1942 onward—maybe some 50 to 60 key individuals across the White House, State Department, War Department and various ad-hoc committees or commissions, as well as the highest interdepartmental policy-making body, the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC)—about 30 percent were academics or specialists on Japan.²¹⁴ Interestingly many of these experts were also associated with a non-American highly respected in policymaking circles, the British diplomat and historian George B. Sansom whose book, *Japan: A short cultural history* was on top of the list of the 16 most-read books by Japan 'specialists' in the US government.²¹⁵

Finally, one may conclude with the observation that even scholars with an 'outsider' status, like Ruth Benedict, could influence policy. In many ways Benedict has been proven prescient, and her findings pertinent even to our age, such as her comment below which should have rung cautionary bells from the very outset of the military occupations of Afghanistan or Iraq: "*If the Japanese felt that they got no respect at the end of the war, they were sure to start a new one*". Benedict was to repeat this message again and again, in all her closing statements.²¹⁶

As we have seen throughout the chapter, occupiers in Japan appear not only to have strived to acquire a better understanding of their enemy through its culture but also, following victory and occupation, to have genuinely valued the enemy's cultural heritage. This attitude influenced the pre-Occupation phase: the circle of American politicians, policy makers, diplomats, military leaders and scholars studied in this research appear to have acted on the assumptions that (1) it was essential to study the Japanese through their culture; (2) it was necessary and desirable to assist Japan in maintaining its cultural identity, heritage and institutions; and (3) assisting in this endeavor could be one of the conditions for success in ensuring the reemergence of a peaceful

²¹³ Jansen (2000), p. xiii. Elisséeff was also the instructor of other military-trained American scholars of Japan, like Donald Keene, who is still living and working as one of America's foremost translators of Japanese literature.

²¹⁴ They were, in academia, Reischauer, who was raised in Japan, and Hugh Borton of Columbia University. At the State Department, Eugene Dooman, a long-time confidant/deputy to Ambassador Grew, was also raised in Japan (his missionary parents were originally from Urumia, in Iran. He was later recommended by Grew to MacArthur for a post with SCAP but it did not come through) and Joseph W. Ballantine, born in India was a State Department Asia expert and had served both in Yokohama and Kobe. Ballantine became head of the Far Eastern Division at the State Department under Cordell Hull. Robert A. Fearey, Grew's private secretary in Tokyo, was another member at the State who would later serve with the Occupation. Gordon Bowles, another Japan-hand at State and an expert on Japan's educational system, was also a son of missionaries, born and raised in Japan. Many of the group were also in some way associated with the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee's Subcommittee for the Far East (SFE). For an in-depth description of the connections among this select group, see Takemae (2002), in particular Chapter 5, pages 203-204 and Janssens (1995), Chapter 4.

²¹⁵ Janssens (1995), p. 88.

²¹⁶ Janssens (1995), p. 212.

and prosperous Japan, and securing a nation friendly to the United States in the region. We shall next see now how they achieved this goal once in Tokyo.

Chapter IV

The Shape of the Occupation

Introduction

A picture showing Miyajima's *torii gate*, a pine tree, some stone lanterns and a shimmering Seto Inland Sea appeared on the cover of the first general circulation 'Guide to Japan' prepared for the American military forces and released on September 1, 1945. The guidebook's chapter headings included stern entries such as 'Stream-lined Tyranny' but also some with a softer tenure, such as 'The Land of the Cherry Blossoms'.²¹⁷

The British Commonwealth Occupation Forces, not to be outdone, produced their own guidebook with the title 'Know Japan'. On its cover page 'Know Japan' carried the picture of a woodblock print, a close reproduction of 'The 36 Views of Mount Fuji', with the iconic mountain towering over Suruga Bay, as pleasant sailing boats and pine-trees dot the sea and the coastlines. In the foreword of this guidebook, Lieutenant-General John Northcott, the Australian Commander of the British forces, wrote:

This occupation is necessary to ensure the demilitarization of Japan and the inculcation of democratic ideas and ideals in her people, to ensure that Japan never again menaces civilization.

*If we are to succeed in this arduous task, we must realize that we are the representatives of the democratic and free world, and that by our actions and conduct will the Japanese people judge the value of our democratic way of life. Although we may not like the Japanese people, we must learn something of their history and customs, so that we can help them to make themselves fit to take their place alongside the other peoples of the civilized world.*²¹⁸

Three general characteristics of the *modus operandi* of the American Occupation are worth remembering at the outset of this chapter. First, the Occupation was indirect: the GHQ conducted policy and reforms through the Japanese government. Japan had enjoyed a sophisticated bureaucracy from the Meiji era already, and the Occupation planners decided early on and based on advice from their experts and scholars, that they could not govern without its help, notwithstanding strong resentments of the bureaucrats' cooperation with the militarists during the war. Second, the United States was the sole occupying power, in practice if not

²¹⁷ Roger Buckley (Editor) 'Guide to Japan' CINPAC-CINCPOA, bulletin no. 209-45, September 1, 1945 in *The Post-War Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952*, Series 1: Books, Vol 3, *Policies 1945-1948*.

²¹⁸ Roger Buckley (Editor), 'Know Japan', Issued under the direction of the Commander-in-Chief, British Commonwealth Occupation Forces, in *The Post-War Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952*, Series 1: Books, Vol 5, *Allied Voices, 1946-1951*.

officially (it had to share the responsibility with the other victors). This facilitated decision-making. In fact, one reason MacArthur had speeded the constitution-drafting process in early 1946 was that he feared demands for influence and intervention by other members of the Allied Forces.²¹⁹ Third, as suggested above by Koseki, the Occupation enjoyed legitimacy, as much in the eyes of the occupied as in those of the occupiers themselves. This is not a facetious statement, for similar sentiments, at home and in the occupied territories, were resoundingly absent in most future American occupational ventures.²²⁰

The following chapter first looks briefly at the SCAP occupation machinery. MacArthur is too well known and studied, but by referring to him at some length in the beginning, I hope to underline the importance of SCAP's leadership in empowering the 'culture people', whether tacitly or explicitly. I then look more specifically at how the Arts and Monuments Division, within the Civil Information and Education (CIE) Section, conducted work in Tokyo, and present the profiles of some of its staff members—who they were, the nature of their work, and their relations with one another. The Japanese scholars who led the actual groundwork, investigating conditions of cultural property around the country on behalf of A&M and under the Occupation flag, are referred to only in passing. A deeper study of their profiles and work, by researchers more qualified than me in Japanese studies, is however absolutely necessary. They brought professionalism and credibility to the work of A&M, while on the other hand, thanks to the Occupation, they were able early on to channel their expertise and qualifications for cultural preservation (and to have jobs). It seems that a virtuous cycle of sorts was established among American and Japanese experts, united by a shared concern about the state of cultural heritage: the support of the Americans at SCAP for their Japanese counterparts in the field was essential to help resolve practical problems. They also helped mobilize financial resources for the repair, restoration and protection of cultural property and treasures from the ravages of war and harsh economic conditions, as well as damages inflicted by the Occupation forces themselves. Indirectly, the presence and engagement of the Americans lent support domestically and brought political attention to efforts for improving the situation of many cultural goods and sites, and for enacting cultural protection laws.

Finally, I have concluded this chapter with a brief reference to the passage of the 1950 Law in the Diet. The purpose is to recall how remarkable, even heady, this was at the time. Able and visionary politicians rallied around the cause of protecting Japan's cultural heritage—that this

²¹⁹ Ohno Kenichi, 'The Economic Development of Japan', *Graduate Research Institute of Policy Studies (GRIPS)*, Tokyo, 2006 pp 144-149. It is worth noting that in the case of post WWII Germany, for example, these first two conditions did not exist.

²²⁰ Iokibe Makoto has written that "*when Yoshida Shigeru became foreign minister on September 17 [1945], he exhorted the assembled Foreign Ministry staff to accept Japan's defeat and be good losers, to speak out when something had to be said but otherwise to cooperate with the occupier*" ('Japan Meets the United States for the Second Time', in Gluck and Graubard 1992, p. 100). The attitude applied to a majority of Japanese. Defeat had been so absolute (and the population so exhausted and spent) that there was hardly space to challenge the Occupation. But the Japanese character, too, played an important role. With Afghan colleagues and others from war-torn countries we have often discussed these particular, and enviable, outside circumstances and inner attitudes in the case of the Occupation of Japan.

happened so early on in the post-war period is quite remarkable. Among those who eloquently defended the necessity of cultural heritage protection measures, at a time when Japan was still in dire economic and social circumstances, was the towering figure of Yamamoto Yuzo, a renowned literary figure and, after the war, politician whose role in the cultural heritage protection debates deserves to be far better known.

In short, in the immediate aftermath of the war, catastrophic economic conditions should have marginalized culture as the least of the concerns of the Occupation. Lack of proper food, shelter, sanitation and the most basic of amenities tormented the country well into the late 1940s, with both occupier and occupied at times scrambling to keep wide-spread famine at bay. Worrying about cultural property, on the face of it, would seem at best frivolous. Notwithstanding such conditions, Japan would proceed to have in place, within five years after defeat, one of the most advanced cultural heritage protection laws in the world, and we shall see in this section why and how the US Occupation became a force in moving towards its realization.

4.1 SCAP, its Leadership and Structure

At the very moment the Emperor of Japan conceded unconditional defeat on August 15, 1945, Douglas MacArthur was being named Supreme Commander for the Allied Forces (SCAP), as per the requirements of the Potsdam Declaration of July 1945 and approved by the United States, the United Kingdom, China and the Soviet Union.

Within the US Administration machinery, most decisions regarding the initial post-surrender policies had been formulated by the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC), created in December 1944 to coordinate planning among civilian and military agencies. The SWNCC Subcommittee for the Far East (SFE) was responsible to coordinate policy for Japan and was chaired by a number of Japan specialists.²²¹

The basic policies for SCAP (which henceforth would refer to both the person of MacArthur and the institution of the Occupation) were articulated in the ‘United States Initial Post-Surrender Policy for Japan’ (SWNCC-150/4/A) of August 29, 1945. Other than some high level purges, the policy was to allow the Japanese government structures to remain practically intact, with SCAP working through the existing bureaucracy in its overall goal of disarming and disbanding the militarist-influenced institutions, and advancing the democratization of Japan.

After a number of revisions, the final version of SWNCC-150/4/A, alongside the Potsdam Declaration and the Army’s ‘Basic Directive for Post-Surrender Military Government in Japan Proper’ (JCS-1380/15), formed the legal framework as well as a sort of ‘How to’ manual for the Occupation. On October 2, 1945 various military and civilian components, many from AFPAC (the Army Forces in the Pacific), were brought together to form the SCAP organization. Such a governing entity, in particular the extensive sections dealing with civilian affairs, was unique in US military history, indeed without an exact counterpart in any post-war military occupation.²²²

In its early months, SCAP had only nine civil staff sections. These were the Diplomatic, Government, Civil Intelligence, Legal, Economic and Scientific, Civil Information and Education, Natural Resources, Public Health and Welfare, Civil Communications, and Statistics and Reports Sections.²²³ Gradually however the number of sections would increase, and by 1948 there would be 12 civil staff sections.

²²¹ Japan specialists such as Eugene Dooman, Hugh Borton, and Edwin Reischauer chaired or were members of the SFE. Many of the proposals the SFE advanced were those that had been considered and articulated over the years at the State Department, mostly by Grew and his team of like-minded experts (Takemae 2002, pp. 209-211).

²²² Takemae (2002), p. 227. The short-term US occupation of Japan is not compared with long-term British or French colonial administrations.

²²³ Takemae (2002), p. 141.

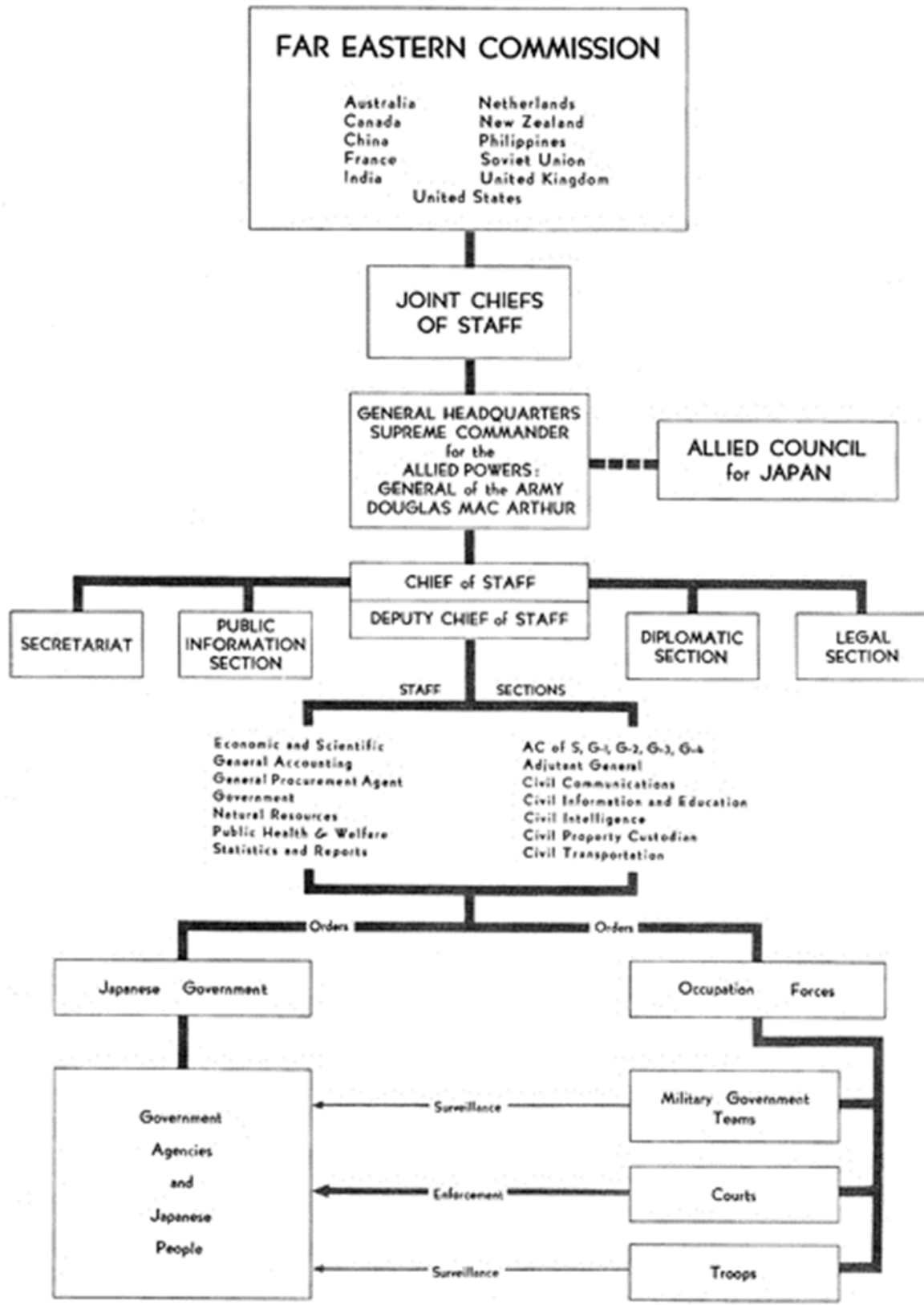
*....At its peak strength GHQ SCAP numbered about 5,000 persons. MacArthur also commanded the Eighth Army [...] and the Sixth Army. [...]The occupation staff was short of people who had more than a passing knowledge of the country. Only two of MacArthur's section chiefs, William Sebald of DS and Lieutenant Colonel Donald R. Nugent (USMCR), the second chief of CIE and a former high school teacher, had had extensive prewar experience in Japan. Japanese-Americans, a number of whom were professionally trained, were almost all engaged in language work. Nevertheless, the occupation could boast of many persons well qualified in specialized fields.*²²⁴

The following diagram shows the structure of SCAP's General Headquarters—then known to all, Japanese and non-Japanese alike, as GHQ—as it stood in its completed form in 1948.²²⁵ The Civil Information and Education (CIE) Section housed the Arts and Monuments unit (from 1946 onward it was called a Division and then kept changing names throughout the Occupation). The CIE was one of the staff sections reporting through the Chief of Staff directly to MacArthur.²²⁶

²²⁴ Finn, Richard B. *Winners in Peace: MacArthur, Yoshida, and Postwar Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992, <http://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft058002wk;chunk.id=0;doc.view=print> Retrieved December 14, 2014, pp. 34-37. Finn, who was a naval officer and had joined the Occupation in October 1945, neglects to include men such as Faubion Bowers, an aide de camp to MacArthur who had lived in Japan, spoke the language, and was passionate about Kabuki, which he is considered to have salvaged from American censors.

²²⁵ Takemae (2002), p. 104.

²²⁶ Scott (2003), p. 352. For a detailed view of the command structures of AFPAC, FEC and SCAP, also see <http://www.history.army.mil/books/wwii/macarthur%20reports/macarthur%20v1%20sup/ch3.htm>



What assessment can we make of the achievements and the shortcomings of the Occupation? Noting the substantive transformations they heralded, Iokibe Makoto has written succinctly that “*The seven Occupation years brought bitter change to some Japanese who lost their privileges but new opportunities to the majority.*”²²⁷ The sociologist Herbert Passin, frequently quite critical of the errors of the Occupation in which he served (Passin is particularly harsh about the Occupation’s failure to predict and prevent the massive hoarding of goods by former Japanese military leaders and their vicious role in black market manipulations) has nonetheless written that

*[...] in a large sense, the Occupation did accomplish its broad objectives. The Initial Post-Surrender Policy was to transform Japan from a militaristic, ultranationalist, fascist, imperial state into a peacefully inclined, democratic, and economically healthy nation [...] For all its failings the Occupation did make a difference, and a major one, in the transformation of Japanese society.*²²⁸

Takemae Eiji has summarized eloquently the end result, commenting that:

*In the absence of an Allied military presence, the constitutional order we enjoy today could not have evolved. Conservatives argue that this order was imposed at gunpoint. Perhaps, but we should remember that, as Christian Socialist Katayama Tetsu once commented in defence of the Constitution, it was imposed on reactionaries, not the people, and that most Japanese recognised that singular fact.*²²⁹

It is however not the purpose of the present study to focus on SCAP in general, or to put it on a pedestal. Errors were certainly committed—the Occupation was never perfect. But it is fair to say that because the Occupation’s planning had been such a long, sustained and multi-faceted process, and because GHQ/SCAP was led by an able administrator and staffed generally with competent, qualified people who for the most part believed in the Occupation’s mission, it was able to bring order to a chaotic post-war situation and provide a progressive canvas for reform, in the process empowering those democratic elements within Japanese society trying to transform a fissured, militaristic and defeated society. It is an understatement to claim that no foreign occupation can hope to achieve more.

²²⁷ Iokibe Makoto, ‘Japan Meets the United States for the Second Time’, in Gluck and Graubard (1992), p. 104.

²²⁸ Herbert Passin, ‘The Occupation—Some Reflections’, In Gluck and Graubard (1992), pp. 124-125.

²²⁹ Takemae (2002), p. xliii.

4.2 Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Enabler of SCAP Cultural Policies?

In the aftermath of defeat, the Japanese economy, which was in shambles, became the Occupation's immediate and top priority. In 1945 and 1946, Japan's economic output collapsed to only 20 percent of the wartime peak, and 30 percent of the prewar peak, with 1946 proving to be the most difficult year.²³⁰ Food was scarce and the threat of mass starvation real. With the millions of soldiers and other personnel returning from war fronts and former colonies, unemployment numbers rose alarmingly, affecting close to 10 million people. As described by Ohno:

[...] Everyone had to violate the law and go to the black market to survive. It is reported that Judge Yoshitada Yamaguchi of Tokyo District Court was so honest that he did not want to break the Food Control Law. He ate only rationed food and refused to take advantage of illegal food. In October 1947, he died of starvation.

To cope with output collapse and unemployment, the Japanese government printed money to finance subsidies while imposing price controls. Clearly, this strategy could not be sustained for long. Monetization of fiscal deficits created triple-digit inflation from 1946 to 1949. Black market inflation was even higher, especially in the early period. This was the highest inflation that Japan ever experienced, before or since.²³¹

How did the Americans manage to deal with the immediate material problems plaguing the country, while also implementing their broader reform agenda? The early months were absolutely crucial, hence the vital importance of having properly prepared for them in advance. Finn notes that the Occupation swiftly started with a 'barrage of orders' for the government—some 6000 SCAPINS (i.e. SCAP instructions) were issued within the first eight months of the Occupation alone. Some scholars consider that despite the extraordinarily difficult early months, this period was also the most influential and significant, in terms of effective changes the Occupation could bring to Japan. These early administrative and legislative changes owed much of their successful implementation to the steady leadership of Douglas MacArthur.²³²

²³⁰ Ohno (2006), p. 146.

²³¹ Ohno (2006), pp. 146-147. A former colleague and friend, the late Sergio Vieira de Melo of the United Nations, often spoke of how absolutely crucial the first few weeks and months of any occupation—including by United Nations forces—were. And to do well so early on required preparations....Once that window of opportunity passed, it was difficult to correct perceptions.

²³² Mathew R. Augustine, *A Guide to Researching the Allied Occupation of Japan*, Columbia University http://www.columbia.edu/~hds2/BIB95/02occupation_augustine.htm

MacArthur's shadow loomed large. In *American Shogun—MacArthur, Hirohito and the American Duel with Japan*, Robert Harvey describes the devastated country that MacArthur found upon arrival at Atsugi Airport on August 30, 1945. He believes that MacArthur showed great foresight by making clear from the start that the Occupation was in place to help Japan get back on its feet, rather than humiliate its former enemy further in revenge for the brutal war:

*MacArthur's immediate priority on arrival was alleviating the appalling conditions he found [...]. Nearly 3 million servicemen and civilians had died in the war—around 4 percent of the population—while 4.5 million had been disabled. Four-fifths of all ships and one-third of machine tools had been destroyed. A third of Japan's total wealth and up to half its income had been lost. Some 66 cities had been substantially destroyed by bombs, rendering around a third of the population homeless: two-thirds of Tokyo and Osaka lay in ruins, as did nine-tenths of Nagoya.*²³³

Success, in such circumstances, could hardly have been a given. Additionally, it should be recalled that at the time the sentiments of the American public vis-a-vis Japan were extremely harsh. As Harvey notes, according to polls a majority of Americans were in favor of executing Emperor Hirohito (without a trial). Politicians and even members of the Truman Administration had no qualms about using the most extreme terms, such as sterilizing the Japanese or calling for the very elimination of the Japanese race. Amidst the revenge-filled cacophony, MacArthur was to remain generally unflappable, the better side of the 'aloofness' that his critics so often disparaged.

Beyond foresight, however, the other area where MacArthur excelled was administrative. This should not have come as a surprise, considering the reputation he had had throughout his career as one of the abler administrators in the US military:

*MacArthur's second [...] success was administrative: within a matter of days he had established a working administration over a nation that was shocked, destroyed and helpless; and within weeks he was fighting a major emergency—the threat of mass starvation—successfully, while coping with one of the biggest movements of population the world has ever seen: the return of the 8 million or more Japanese stranded in their now collapsed empire.*²³⁴

It cannot be denied that MacArthur had an outsized personality. His outward arrogance and aloofness would offend, and his messianic sense of himself as the right man for the job, an impression shared by his immediate entourage, has been criticized. So dominant was

²³³ Robert Harvey, *American Shogun—MacArthur, Hirohito and the American Duel with Japan*, John Murray publishers, 2007 edition (original 2006), pp. 330-331.

²³⁴ Harvey (2007), p. 333.

MacArthur's position that both the head and the overall institution of the Occupation came to be known by the one and same acronym (Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers).

Nonetheless, MacArthur seemed also genuinely committed to ending the suffering of ordinary Japanese. In the words of the historian Roger Buckley, his approach to Japan was *magnanimous in the main*, at a time when this was not politically correct:

*It was hardly good domestic politics in late 1945 to insist on the retention of the Emperor, to obtain scarce food imports, to disown reparation recommendations and to consider an early resumption of foreign trade.*²³⁵

Some of his personal traits and professional habits proved providential for the task and the peculiar post-war circumstances. He seemed to have a clear idea—especially during the early phase of the Occupation—of what a demilitarized Japan would look like, and a good combination of political pragmatism and administrative competence, to see that vision into reality. He used—and in turn was well-used by—Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru and Emperor Hirohito: extraordinary circumstances of defeat and Occupation somehow allowed each of these men to work effectively with and through one another. And it may be said that the bright side of his arrogance was a certain independence of mind, including independence from Washington, not to mention independence from—even a degree of disregard for—America's other Allies.²³⁶ Disciplined and strict, he was fair and his personal conduct beyond reproach. Though he was later criticized for never mingling socially with the Japanese, it can be said in his defense that he hardly mingled socially with the American expatriates, either.²³⁷

The naval officer and Japan specialist Richard Finn wrote:

Along with organizing his staff, MacArthur felt it was essential to start disarming Japan's forces and forestall any threat of dissidence. On October 4, 1945, in a meeting with Karl T. Compton, president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MacArthur said that he wanted to establish his control in Japan within thirty days, before armed guerrilla bands started operating in the mountains. [He] also rebuffed an invitation from President Truman to return to Washington for a victory parade in his honor, citing the "extraordinarily dangerous...situation" in Japan.

[...] On October 16, 1945, MacArthur announced that Japan's armed forces "are now completely abolished....Approximately seven million armed men...have laid

²³⁵ Roger Buckley, *Japan Today*, Second Edition, Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 6.

²³⁶ Interview with SCAP staff member Beate Sirota Gordon (New York, March 2012), who told me that she and her colleagues were at times almost embarrassed by the dismissive manner Allies or even some Washington envoys were treated by the Supreme Commander.

²³⁷ Jansens (2000), see Yoshida Years chapter pp. 675-714.

down their weapons. In the accomplishment of the extremely difficult and dangerous surrender in Japan, unique in the annals of history, not a shot was necessary, not a drop of Allied blood was shed. "Without doubt, the demobilization of all Japanese forces within two months of the surrender was a remarkable feat and powerful evidence of Japan's desire to carry out the surrender terms. Any threat of armed resistance had dissipated."²³⁸

Some historians have argued that the Occupation and MacArthur's personal leadership style gave precisely the worst kind of lessons, in terms of democracy, democratic institutions and the necessity for the civilian control of the military. This seems easily said with the hindsight of decades and our more egalitarian sensibilities, and ignores the reality of the times and the context—Japan was a defeated country that had accepted the terms of the Potsdam Declaration. At the time and given the context and circumstances, few can claim a better outcome.

Scott Morton agrees. Of MacArthur he writes:

He was well suited by nature and by professional training to fill his role of supreme arbiter and effective ruler. Somewhat in the style of a shogun he was punctilious in the performance of his duties, but in his bearing rather dignified and aloof. He turned up at his office in the modern Dai-Ichi Insurance Building near the Emperor's palace promptly each morning in a black limousine and returned to his quarters after a hard day's work, without any attempt at fraternizing or even going about the country on inspection tours. This was precisely the conduct expected and appreciated by the Japanese. MacArthur's sense of history and of destiny seemed at times pompous and egotistical to the egalitarian sentiments of Americans; but these very qualities, combined with his essential fairness, impressed the Japanese and gave them a needed feeling of confidence."²³⁹

Finally, and maybe most importantly, it should be recalled that similar to a number of his fellow officers at the turn of the 20th century MacArthur had the *experiences* that were to be so woefully lacking in many senior positions in future American occupations, namely the prior knowledge of the area under his charge. He knew Asia. Having graduated from West Point in 1903, he had immediately joined his father, earlier a Military Governor of the Philippines, in Manila. In 1905 the two had conducted a military survey of Japan and the Far East that had lasted months. Thereafter MacArthur had continued other missions to Asia. All in all, from the

²³⁸ Finn (1992) <http://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft058002wk;chunk.id=0;doc.view=print> Retrieved December 14, 2014. Finn, who was never quite part of MacArthur's inner circle, is on record in an interview on April 8, 1991 (for the The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, Foreign Affairs Oral History Project, p. 6) that *MacArthur was an excellent supreme commander. He was not an excellent representative of the United States because he thought he was on his own.* <http://www.adst.org/OH%20TOCs/Finn,%20Richard%20B.toc.pdf>

²³⁹ Scott Morton (1984), pp. 205-206.

time of his arrival in Manila in 1903 to the time he was named Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers on August 15, 1945, MacArthur was to spend some 16 years in Asia, in addition to overseeing the US occupation of the German Rhineland. As Takemae has noted, these direct experiences had prepared him uniquely well for the work of SCAP.²⁴⁰

The US Occupation of Japan was long, and it is therefore difficult to judge it in one block. It would be fair to summarize that popular Japanese attitudes towards it as an institution, particularly in the early stages, were broadly supportive. But even in Japan these feelings would become, naturally and in the long run, more ambivalent:

*[Occupation] was a compound of apprehension, admiration, disappointment, and boredom...The later stages of disappointment and boredom were partially due to the length of the Occupation. As homes were rebuilt and economic conditions improved, thanks to the Korean War, it was inevitable that the early enthusiasm for American ways should be succeeded by some reaction.*²⁴¹

Notwithstanding what the ruling elite may have thought, the affection of ordinary Japanese for ‘their’ Supreme Commander hardly waned, almost till the end. When MacArthur was finally dismissed by President Truman and instructed to return to the United States, lines traced his motorcade from his residence to the airport, with many people openly weeping.²⁴²

²⁴⁰ Takemae (2002), p. 4.

²⁴¹ Richard Storry, *A History of Modern Japan*, Penguin Books, 1960, p. 243.

²⁴² Unfortunately in a later speech in the US, MacArthur would somewhat tarnish these sentiments, and years of his own dedicated service, by a mere few words suggesting that the emotional maturity of the Japanese was inferior to that of Westerners. Though taken out of context, the Japanese and many others rightly resented his statement.

4.3 Culture under the Occupation

The context for an enlightened attitude by America towards the cultural heritage of its enemies was set quite early. In the case of Japan as we noted earlier, the Roosevelt Administration had started working almost immediately after Pearl Harbor with scholars and an ‘all-star’ group of bureaucrats and academic consultants to address the question of what had gone wrong in Japan as if, already, it was envisioning the day when Allied Forces would have to occupy that country and prepare it for a more peaceful role as a friend of the United States. The general approach of the occupying forces to cultural property protection, too, was to be benevolent, one of caution and care. Through the telegram addressed to the Secretary of War by Captain W.D. Popham, briefly chief of A&M, on behalf of The Roberts Commission, it is clearly stated that:

*...it is a fundamental policy of this army to protect and preserve in every way possible these monuments ...' 'our policy (is) to cooperate with the Imperial Japanese Government....*²⁴³

The immediate post-surrender context should be briefly recalled. In August 1945 it was not just Japan’s economy but the morale of its people, too, that was in shambles. Both on the war fronts and at home the last months of the conflict had been atrocious—with American carpet bombings of Japanese cities and the ultimate atomic horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Surrender, when it did come, opened still other painful chapters

*....one cannot minimize the suffering the Japanese were forced to endure in the first few years following defeat, despite the vigorous efforts of the Occupation regime [...]. People were not only hungry and homeless, they were also spiritually exhausted; jobs were scarce and in some sectors nonexistent; inflation raged and black markets sprang up everywhere.*²⁴⁴

Among the Japanese a shared sense of collective shame and anger for the failures of their wartime leaders was widespread. Ordinary people came to shun the militarists’ nationalistic mantra, the most used and abused of which may have been the *kokutai* (national adherence or national polity)—a now discredited ideology they believed had brought upon them disaster and ultimately occupation. Klaus Antoni, describing the roots of *kokutai* and the state Shinto ideology of the war years, an ideology amalgamated with other beliefs to serve the political objectives of nationalists and ultra-nationalists, writes:

²⁴³ Scott (2003), pp. 354-355.

²⁴⁴ Varley (1984), p. 267.

*Up until Japan's defeat in 1945, and even afterwards, this idea of the kokutai, which was centered on the idea of a divine emperor and based on political Shintō thought, formed the official and binding Japanese concept of the modern state, in which the institution of the emperor served as the metaphysical and mythical core of the national family.*²⁴⁵

In the immediate aftermath of defeat, *kokutai*, despite the space it had occupied in the psyche of the nation till then, was largely banished, making space instead for more debates and a search for other identities for Japan. Renewed interest in what could represent a less militaristic traditional Japanese identity emerged, for example as a 'nation of culture' (*bunka kokka*).²⁴⁶ Scholars and politicians, some of the calibre of Morito Tatsuo, later a minister of education and the renowned first president of Hiroshima University, became engaged in debates about what it meant to be Japanese. The Occupation provided its tacit encouragement to this line of questioning. Thus one can generally comment that culture, in differing forms and through various mediums, was considered not only a source of leisure or pleasure, but an essential tool in the process of (re)acquiring a new identity internally, and promoting a different perception of Japan externally.

Against this background and throughout the Occupation years, culture, in its various interpretations, remained a central theme. In many areas a kind of renaissance, which John W. Dower has termed the 'efflorescence' in cultural life, unfolded. The Occupation was, in general, supportive of these developments. Of course its censorship and 're-education' machinery were not always balanced—i.e., not all the arts were treated in the same manner. Excesses on the part of some zealous censors at SCAP at times imposed unnecessary burdens on certain creative sectors. Nonetheless, it can be said that the Occupation, both by design and by default, would contribute to the post-war stirrings of popular awareness about Japan's cultural heritage and institutions in a manner that was different from the ultra-nationalists' promotion of culture and

²⁴⁵ See Antoni (2016). One of the author's main arguments is that the influence of political Shinto on statecraft had long existed, since Edo and even pre-Edo periods, and that during the Meiji era (and the buildup to the wars of the 1930s) it was simply translated into 'practical politics of the modern Japanese nation-state'. The idea of a uniquely gifted 'nation of culture' has periodically been an instrument of cohesion for nationalists not willing to acknowledge the bankruptcy of *kokutai* politics.

²⁴⁶ For a more detailed discussion of how *bunka kokka* came to be defined after WWII generally to promote a certain idea of Japan, as much by the pre-war elite and revisionists as by more reform-minded scholars, see Natsuko Akagawa, *Heritage Conservation in Japan's Cultural Diplomacy—Heritage, national identity and national interest*, Routledge, London and New York, 2015, pp. 32-36.

kokutai.²⁴⁷ It can also be said that the protection of Japan's arts and monuments generally benefitted within this context.

Furthermore, as Scott has noted, the cultural preservation policy was not *ad hoc* or personal, but rather deliberate and institutional. A press release by the U.S. State Department, dated August 16, 1946, makes this point clear:

*The immediate postwar problem consists of the reconstitution of the artistic and historical heritage of occupied countries....The protection of art in time of war is based upon the universally accepted principle that cultural property is inviolable...The artistic and historic treasures of a nation are regarded as the Nation's patrimony, and the great public collections of the world as an international heritage. It is the preservation of this irreplaceable cultural heritage of all nations that is recognized, today, as an international responsibility.*²⁴⁸

The supportive stance of General MacArthur, too, legitimized official SCAP cultural policy. In an early speech he declared that the “...*historical, cultural and religious objects and installations (including several Imperial Palaces) will be carefully protected and preserved*” and his statement would come to summarize the overall tenure of the Occupation vis-a-vis culture.²⁴⁹

MacArthur has been criticized in some quarters as indifferent to culture and by extension cultural property preservation.²⁵⁰ One may question such a judgement. He was, fundamentally, committed to its safeguard, even if he was not interested in the details (he tended to delegate all details to his staff, so this attitude toward cultural property was not any different). MacArthur was a staunch conservative, and his strong Judeo-Christian faith was central to his identity. But he also seemed to possess, as a matter of principle, sensible attitudes with regard to SCAP's

²⁴⁷ This may be different from the ‘Disneyfication’ that occurred in some Southeast Asian countries from the second half of the 20th century onward. While this is an important debate that affects not just Japan but most small (and indeed even large) countries impacted by the globalization and homogenization of culture, and notably by American culture, it deserves a full study of its own and is beyond the scope of my research. Suffice it to note that part of Japan's ability to resist Western ‘resort culture’ may have been because it had been weathering the impact of Westernization since the Meiji era and had had time, thanks also to public intellectuals like Okakura, to correct excesses or develop resistance mechanisms. After the Pacific War and under Occupation, it was essential that in the SCAP machinery there were individuals like Warner, Lee, Sickman, Henderson or indeed Sirota Gordon, who not only knew the depth and wealth of Japanese culture, but also loved it.

²⁴⁸ Scott (2003), p. 353, footnote 171: press release, US State Department, The Conservation of Cultural Property (Aug. 16, 1946) Memorandum from Howard C. Hollis, Chief, Arts and Monuments Division, to Chief, Civil Information and Education Section, General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (Sept. 5, 1946).

²⁴⁹ Scott (2003), p. 353.

²⁵⁰ MacArthur's own aide de camp and interpreter, Faubion Bowers (known as ‘The man who saved Kabuki’), has called him ‘a cultural barbarian’ (in Takemae, 2002, pp. 390-391). Patrick Lennox Tierney, a representative commissioner at A&M, has characterized him as ‘culturally insensitive’ in http://www.liquisearch.com/patrick_lennox_tierney/commissioner_of_art_and_monuments

religious and cultural policies. As noted, he had stated at the very outset of the Occupation, officially and unconditionally, that it had a responsibility to respect Japan's cultural heritage and institutions. He was to honor both the spirit and the letter of this commitment. Furthermore, he was a pragmatist who did not cling to ideology alone. Despite being an ardent Episcopalian, for example, and having harbored hopes to help Christianize Japan—from welcoming hundreds of missionaries to sending Japanese who were Christian to America, all at a time when travel was strictly forbidden to ordinary people—he conceded within a year that the proselytizing was a failure, and retreated.

Initially neither MacArthur nor his immediate circle had been particularly keen to allow America's old Japan hands, presented earlier, to play too much of a leading role in the day-to-day operations of the Occupation. In the immediate months prior to surrender, a battle of wills had been unfolding in Washington among the China specialists and the Japan specialists. At the risk of over-simplifying, one can say that the former were in favor of radical reforms and a tough peace, while the latter tended to be more conservative, wanting to keep certain features of pre-war Japan intact. In general MacArthur seems to have kept himself distant from the tug of war between these different factions. Still, neither the various tendencies within SCAP, nor the officials and experts that promoted them, disappeared entirely at any given time. As it were, influences of both groups continued to shape, and temper, SCAP policies throughout the Occupation.

In symbolic terms, the eclipse of the conservative Japan specialists can be precisely dated. On August 11, 1945, Dean Acheson replaced Grew as undersecretary of state, and Acheson's comments soon thereafter about eradicating the forces in Japan that made for a 'will to war' reflected his identification with the more radical reformers. In a striking insult to the Japan crowd, the first State Department appointee as political adviser to MacArthur was George Acheson, Jr., a China specialist, rather than one of the department's senior Japan experts such as Dooman or Ballantine.²⁵¹

Furthermore, whatever the internal differences and fights, differing ideologies do not seem to have affected the work of the staff dealing with the protection of arts and monuments. Partially this may have been due to their being somewhat neutral specialists. It was also a small unit, and unlike some of the larger sections and sub-sections within GHQ/SCAP, easier to maintain cohesion within. And it helped that the person who set up the foundations for the Arts and Monuments Division in Tokyo was George L. Stout—few enjoyed more prestige and respect than this man, who had done so much for the salvage of arts and monuments on the European war front, and who was already battle-tested (thus respected by the military and not just the art scholars). But the overall favorable context, too, was important. Because of all the prior work done by the Roberts Commission during the war years to ensure political and military support for the cause of cultural heritage protection, those having to implement the policies in Tokyo did not

²⁵¹ Dower (1999), p. 222.

face much opposition to their presence from other sectors. In short it is fair to say that the work of culture specialists was not too affected by the external political or internal bureaucratic dynamics and tensions, i.e., they were able to carry on their work in relative peace.

Finally, by 1950 when the Japanese Diet passed the Law for the Protection of Cultural Property, one can also say that the window of opportunity that a few Americans within the ranks of SCAP had seized, to influence the cultural preservation and cultural policy debates, started to close. Henceforth other forces and entities would intervene, some with negative consequences but most of them positively, to build on the Occupation period's success in firmly (re)establishing the position of Japan as a cultural superpower.

4.4 The Arts and Monuments (A&M) Division of the Civil Information and Education (CIE) Section

Within the sprawling SCAP structure, the role of the Civil Information and Education (CIE) Section was significant. It had to deal with religious affairs as well as all matters falling under ‘sociological’ reforms. It was tasked to formulate education policies, democratize the national school system, recommend policies to eliminate militarisms and ultranationalism, and eradicate juvenile military training and institutions.

The CIE had originally coalesced through two entities with rather opposing characteristics. The ‘Education’ section (initially part of AFPAC’s Military Government Section) was set up in June 1945, staffed mostly by academics and teachers. The ‘Information’ section originated in the intelligence community, partially with the Psychological Warfare Branch. In the words of Takemae, the CIE was therefore “cobbled together” and incorporated into SCAP with almost two opposing wings, or identities. Overall however its main task was to advise MacArthur on *public information, education, religion and other sociological problems of Japan and Korea*, and its main counterpart in the Japanese government was the Education Ministry.²⁵²

The Arts and Monuments (A&M) Division, which brought together under one roof the MFAA officers in the Far East, was lodged within the CIE. Officially, the A&M became a Division only in 1946, but its genesis and mandate were articulated even before the establishment of SCAP itself, in the August 29, 1945 memo drafted by Lieutenant Popham to the US Secretary of War. A cluster of culture specialists, led by George L. Stout, early on formed a unit, the structure and core activities of which were, thanks to Stout’s prior experiences in Europe, swiftly articulated. The protection, preservation and salvage of works of art and antiquities was a prime focus of the Arts and Monuments Division, and the broad reach of its work included museums, libraries, archives, temples and shrines as well as historical sites.

....the Arts and Monuments branch was responsible for making recommendations and overseeing the management and financing of initiatives for protecting, preserving, restoring, salvaging, and properly disposing of works of art, antiquities, cultural treasures, museums, archival repositories, historical and scenic sites, and historical and natural monuments. In executing that task, A&M was charged with inventorying and inspecting as many cultural sites and objects of art as possible; compiling reports of field visits; attending and reporting on conferences, both private and public; responding to project requests of SCAP; reviewing press releases and commenting on public statements and

²⁵² Takemae (2002) pp. 180-188. Takemae’s monumental work, originally appearing as a smaller volume in 1983 in Japanese, dealing mainly with labor issues, is the definitive description not just of the inner workings of SCAP but also of the men and women—American and Japanese—who staffed it. Takemae has given the size of CIE, as of February 1948, as follows: *14 military officers, 24 enlisted personnel, 202 civilian officials and 323 general staff, predominantly Japanese*. It worked out of the Radio Tokyo Building in Hibiya.

*interviews; reviewing Japanese government documents relating to art and cultural property; composing lists of collection contents; assessing war damage to relevant objects; reviewing field examiner reports; and generally, assisting the Japanese in protecting cultural property and facilitating the display of and access to the objects.*²⁵³

Sherman E. Lee, who joined the A&M in 1946, comments on the surprising fact that the protection and preservation of Japanese cultural property had actually been addressed so early on, even before GHQ/SCAP proper was set up. He wrote:

*In the very early days of the Occupation, the Allies were prepared to consider the protection and preservation of Japanese cultural property. Even before the surrender on the main deck of the battleship Missouri, an advisory committee of American officers, including George L. Stout, the conservator of the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard, and Laurence Sickman, curator of oriental art at the Nelson Art Gallery in Kansas City, familiar with the new Arts and Monuments Division in the European theater, had called for a similar unit in Japan, but not necessarily staffed with active servicemen. This was to be the Arts and Monuments Division.....*²⁵⁴

Thus, alongside other qualified civilians working within the CIE, the small A&M Division gathered in Tokyo experts in various fields of art, both from the MFAA ranks and, as we shall see later, also from among Japanese scholars and curators. In September 1945, already, it was able to start taking symbolic remedial or preventive actions:

*Thus an order [...] dated 7 September 1945 placed the Imperial Palace, Buddhist monasteries, Shinto shrines and private dwellings off limits to Occupation troops. This display of respect for property aroused much favorable comment in Japan. There was also some restitution of works of art and valuables plundered by the Japanese army overseas or confiscated by the wartime authorities in Japan itself.*²⁵⁵

As noted, Stout, who had originally proposed the idea of MFAA extending its work for the Pacific theatre, was also called to set it up and sort out organizational structures for A&M. Stout would continue at the job until mid-1946, when he returned to the Fogg Museum in Boston. Upon his departure, the Division was further restructured and Howard C. Hollis, a former student

²⁵³ Scott (2003), p. 363. And also <http://www.history.army.mil/books/wwii/macarthur%20reports/macarthur%20v1%20sup/ch3.htm>

²⁵⁴ Sherman E. Lee, 'My Work in Japan: Arts and Monuments, 1946-1948' in *The Confusion Era, Art and Culture of Japan during the Allied Occupation, 1945-1952*, Edited by Mark Sandler, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution in association with the University of Washington Press, Seattle & London, 1997, p. 91.

²⁵⁵ Waterhouse (1988), p. 207.

of Warner and previously a curator of Asian art at the Cleveland Museum of Art, named chief. Hollis soon brought his former assistant, Sherman E. Lee, curator of oriental art at the Detroit Institute of Arts, to Tokyo. These former and future colleagues and friends thus managed to establish a nucleus of expertise within SCAP, mobilizing networks of Japanese scholars to help them address both Japan's larger cultural landscape as well as the minute tasks necessary to the protection and preservation of cultural heritage in Tokyo and the outlying regions.

Some of the work was highly symbolic, but most of it was quite practical. It included working with Japanese authorities to help identify National Treasures and organize best practices and exhibitions. It also required measures to address the practical needs or mundane matters related to the care of cultural treasures, such as the sufficient supply of power or lighting issues.²⁵⁶ Indeed, by 1950 and in an internal report, GHQ was to outline the enormous number of inspections and other activities conducted by the Division:

*Damage to cultural properties has been investigated, and field inspections have been made of as many as possible of the 15,039 collections, structures, and separate objects registered as National Treasures or Important Art Objects. Twelve of the fourteen national parks of Japan have been surveyed and programs have been initiated for the reorganization of their administration and the expansion and improvements of their equipment and facilities for the public benefit. Uses of cultural properties in the reorientation program have been devised, and recommendations have been made concerning the use of the fine arts in familiarizing the Japanese people with the history, institutions and culture of the United States and other democracies.*²⁵⁷

A few months after the establishment of A&M, in March/April 1946, the archeologist and curator of Asian art at the Fogg Museum, Langdon Warner, friend and Harvard colleague of Stout, came to Tokyo as cultural advisor to the Occupation. Though Warner stayed only half a year, as we shall see in detail later, his presence was highly visible in the popular press. Warner's public renown among the Japanese, as one of the best friends of their cultural heritage, and a student and disciple of Okakura Tenshin, had preceded him among the media and citizens. Some of the others in the A&M Division, too, though not as famous as Warner or as well-connected as Stout, were in their own right and respective fields highly qualified professionals.²⁵⁸ During his stay, Warner wrote home, approvingly and appropriately, that *a GHQ officer told me the other day*

²⁵⁶ In Seattle Art Museum blog on Sherman E. Lee, February 11, 2014. The blog refers to Lee and his colleagues' work to help set up the Japanese national archives and even the park system, though concretely this does not seem to have become a priority at the time. <http://samblog.seattleartmuseum.org/tag/sherman-lee/>

²⁵⁷ Scott (2003) pp. 363-364; From the Missions and Accomplishments document of General Headquarters of SCAP, January 1, 1950

²⁵⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monuments,_Fine_Arts,_and_Archives_program Retrieved July 10, 2015.

*that Arts and Monuments was known to be the only division that ran by itself and knew what it was doing.*²⁵⁹

The MFAA officers and civilian specialists and advisors, not ideologues or political operators but for the most part curators or academics, nonetheless seemed to have the backing of their superiors within SCAP. They also actively, and effectively, sought the support of the Occupation's military governors in the prefectures. At any rate they seemed to operate with the assumption that their superiors/political leaders were fully supportive of their work in protecting Japan's cultural heritage.

Takemae's description of the work of the A&M team (uncharacteristically brief) states only that Hollis and Lee "*worked closely with eminent Japanese scholars to democratize and upgrade Japanese museums and make available to the public registered works of art.*"²⁶⁰ In fact it was a rather elaborate operation, the ambitious objective of which was: *to inventory and inspect all Japanese art in the country, to determine what works had been destroyed, to assist the Japanese in the protection and preservation of their cultural property, and to encourage the display of Japanese works of art.*²⁶¹

Here a few words maybe necessary, about the question of restitution of art looted by the Japanese Imperial Army and the ensuing problems of compensation, which preoccupied Stout and the A&M early on. As noted earlier, once in Tokyo, Stout was corresponding with colleagues and experts in Washington D.C. (including the archivist Ardelia Hall) to assess the situation of looted art in the Pacific theatre and to envisage solutions for their restitution.²⁶² This issue continued to be a source of concern well into the Occupation. For some who had had to deal with it early on like Stout, even after leaving active duty it remained a thorn, and he writes about it with feeling in his letters to his friend and A&M colleague Sickman well into 1947.²⁶³

As to the Japanese general public, it is fair to say that they were initially expecting the worst from the Americans. Most were convinced that the Occupation 'would take' as compensation for the war Japan's most precious treasures. In a collection of letters covering the period of late 1945, some of America's young Japan scholars write of the fear, and the fear-mongering, prevalent broadly at the time regarding national treasures. In his letter from Kyoto, Ted de Bary,

²⁵⁹ Waterhouse (1988), quoted in Norfolk symposium, p. 206.

²⁶⁰ Takemae (2002), p. 187.

²⁶¹ Lee (1997), p. 92.

²⁶² David Waterhouse, *The General Douglas MacArthur Foundation, The 1984 Norfolk Symposium Report*, published 1988, p. 207. Waterhouse refers to the looting of works of art by the Japanese military high command overseas but concedes that this was not at the level of the 'Nazi depredations in Europe'. He does lament however the lack of thorough investigations and published reports 'on war damage to historic monuments and works of art in territories occupied by the Japanese, especially in Korea and the Philippines'.

²⁶³ Letter from Stout to Laurence Sickman, dated 20 February 1947, Box 1, folder 45, Archives of American Art, George Leslie Stout papers.

later a confucian scholar at Columbia University, writes of a December 1945 visit to a well-known Kyoto temple, where he is informed *improptu* by the young monks guiding him to the temple treasures that *soon all these things would be sent to America as war reparations*.²⁶⁴ Donald Keene, then a fresh officer and later the preeminent American scholar of Japan, also writes of a visit to Nikko in December 1945, where he is told by his young guide that the Tōshōgu Gate, a national treasure and prohibited for sale, was now probably doomed: *I suppose that it will go to America now anyway, won't it?*²⁶⁵ Considering, then, just how little ordinary Japanese expected of the occupier, the impact of realizing that the very opposite of their fears was true can well be imagined. Newspapers wrote with astonishment that the American occupiers were willing to 'protect' Japan's culture, even repair or democratize access to these assets—as most national treasures before the war could only be seen by the elite, consequently leaving ordinary people feeling little ownership for cultural property, how powerful an impression this new 'cultural' policy must have made.²⁶⁶

A few details about how the A&M actually conducted its work may be helpful. To accomplish their objectives, and considering how small the core team in Tokyo was, a network of Japanese scholars, called 'inspectors' or 'field examiners', would conduct the actual inspections as the A&M's field representatives in one or a group of prefectures. Most of these inspectors were themselves prominent Japanese scholars and academics. Among them, Lee writes, were individuals of the caliber of Fukui Rikichiro, a scholar of art history and founder of the first department dedicated to the history of Eastern art at the University of Tohoku, who represented SCAP in Kyoto, or Takata Osamu, a specialist of Buddhist art, who was based in Nara.²⁶⁷ The inspectors would usually do all the substantive work, calling on the Americans mainly for general supervision of the official inspections, or else to help them solve practical problems they could not address.

The American staff (and sometimes prominent advisors, like Warner) would frequently travel to various regions and prefectures and, according to their field of expertise—temples, museums, private collections, gardens etc.—investigate and assess the situation, or 'lend their authority' to their Japanese counterparts. The systematic regional inspection tours by A&M staff, which lasted on average 10 days, proved crucial in more ways than one.²⁶⁸ For example they made it possible to encourage/pressure the government, as well as the Occupation itself, to deal early on and far more forcefully with the theft and vandalism of works of cultural property—including by members of the US military forces—than would have been otherwise possible for the overstretched military and resource-poor Japanese government. The A&M staff were also

²⁶⁴ Cary (1975), p. 244.

²⁶⁵ Cary (1975), p. 271.

²⁶⁶ Morimoto (2010), pp. 628-629.

²⁶⁷ Lee (1997), p. 96.

²⁶⁸ Lee (1997), pp. 93-94.

important in bringing on board for the cause of protection of cultural treasures in the regions the Occupation's military governors.

The inspectors also addressed problems emanating from the chaotic post-war context, such as some of the tax measures which had done little to stem the tide of sold treasures, especially those in private hands. The dire economic circumstances of the post-surrender period forced many owners to give up family treasures often for pittance, simply to acquire life basics. National Treasures were relatively safe, but Important Art Objects could be dispersed or sold with little supervision or monitoring.²⁶⁹ Working closely with the Ministry of Education, A&M could contribute to improving the situation and legal protection systems, through which a new category of 'Important Cultural Property' was soon enacted.

Alongside the frequent regional inspection tours, there were also regular (weekly) meetings of the A&M staff with the Ministry of Education (henceforth *Mombusho*)—the broader circle of individuals involved in these meetings, often as assistants and interpreters, also included some impressive backgrounds.²⁷⁰ It is not easy to judge to what degree the meetings were policy gatherings versus simple 'shop-keeping' affairs—presumably they would have been a bit of both. The shop-keeping part, however, was essential at the time, when so much cultural property was neglected or falling into disrepair. At the very least, the regularity of the meetings—which would occasionally, and conveniently, include the Finance Ministry—and the apparently open communication lines between SCAP's culture people on the one hand with their Japanese counterparts and the national government on the other, is indicative that an effective *modus operandi* had been set in place. Lee writes:

*We had regularly scheduled meetings with officials of the Ministry of Education to consider budgets for preservation activities, particularly the restoration of registered temple buildings, neglected during the war, and the finances and activities of the three national art museums in Tokyo, Kyoto, and Nara. The Finance Ministry of Japan was often involved, and personnel were present who made little attempt to hide their displeasure and boredom with the allocation discussions involving pressing and serious conditions at registered sites.*²⁷¹

From the start the A&M staff seem to have had a clear sense of their mission, the priorities of which were the protection, promotion and democratization of cultural heritage and property. Small as it was, Lee and others certainly gave the sense that the Division fully understood the importance of this work.

²⁶⁹ Lee (1997), p. 93.

²⁷⁰ As one example Lee refers to the interpreter at the meetings between the A&M and the government, Kurata Bunsaku, a scholar of Buddhist sculpture who would later become a revered director of the Nara National Museum.

²⁷¹ Lee (1997), p. 94.

....In addition to registered works of art, including architecture, the division was responsible for national parks and for encouraging living artists and their organizations. We were also to promote 'democratization' of art museums and evenhanded operation of the art display areas, especially in Tokyo, such as the Municipal Museum in Ueno Park, the venue for annual exhibitions of the contending art societies such as the tradition-oriented Nitten and various Western-style groups including the avant-garde.

... Our office was next to the Religion and Education Divisions. In addition to the officer in charge and the adviser on collections, there was a secretary, Georgina Potts, a kind, well-mannered and cheerful woman; two Occupation inspectors: Captain Alfred Popham, a garden designer and architect; and Charles Gallagher, familiar with a range of arts, a quick learner in Japanese and Chinese art, adept at languages, and fluent in Japanese. There were two Japanese clerks, translators, and interpreters: one, a man (Masaki), the other a woman (Fujisaki), both very gentle, soft spoken, well educated, and knowledgeable about the visual arts. In the field we had a Japanese representative for each prefecture, or several prefectures, if the area was not rich in registered monuments, temples, or collections.²⁷²

After the Occupation a few of SCAP's American staff would become prominent art dealers, having benefitted from the time spent in Japan and the connections they could make there. Some were able to gather quite a significant number of precious objects, later sold to American collections and museums—the most striking example being the Harry Packard Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which the dealer and former SCAP staff sold to the museum in 1975 for the then staggering sum of \$5.1 million (it is still a cornerstone of the museum's treasures of Japanese art).²⁷³ But overall, the A&M staff seem to have been quite dedicated to their mission. There appears a meticulous quality in the work undertaken in the conduct of the inspections of cultural property. In January 1, 1950, the Missions and Accomplishments document of SCAP had written that "*the Division had inspected as many as 15,039 collections, structures, and separate objects registered as National Treasures or Important Art Objects*".²⁷⁴

²⁷² Lee (1997), pp. 92-94.

²⁷³ Japan Galleries, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, May 17, 2015, Exhibition on the American collectors of Japanese art. I was curious and somewhat troubled as to how Packard had managed to acquire such a precious collection during the Occupation years. Waterhouse (1988) suggests that the acquisitions were not improper, because Packard had established himself already as an art dealer. The lines seem blurred, however, and one is left with a very uneasy feeling (p. 208). Waterhouse also rejects suggestions of improper acquisition of works of art by Sherman E. Lee of A&M. He suggests that the purchases Lee made were *after* his return to the United States, where he became a prominent museum curator and then director (p. 208). One is inclined to agree with this assessment regarding Lee, considering his continued, lifelong work with Japanese curators and experts.

²⁷⁴ Scott (2003), p. 363.

To give a sense of the kind of cultural experts that had come together under the umbrella of SCAP in Tokyo, a brief survey of the profiles of some of its American staff may be quite illustrative:

Among the first to arrive was Walter D. Popham, initial acting chief of the A&M cluster and later a staff specialist of architecture and garden design, was also the officer who drafted the cultural policy-related statements to and from the Secretary of War, in August 1945.

Laurence Sickman, close friend and colleague of Stout, was a major in the Air Force during the war, a Harvard graduate and scholar of Chinese art, student and friend of Warner. Initially with Stout, he was at the helm of and later technical advisor to A&M, for which he undertook most of the inspections of the state of cultural monuments in China and Korea. He returned to the Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City, Missouri after Tokyo, to later become, during more than two decades, its director.²⁷⁵ In 1973 Sickman received the prestigious Charles Lang Freer Award from the Smithsonian, for his contributions to the arts of Asia.²⁷⁶

Howard C. (Coonly) Hollis, a former curator at the Cleveland Museum of Art, became chief of A&M in 1946. Hollis, who had been recommended for the post by Warner was a mentor to Sherman E. Lee and other Asian art experts in the United States and after his work at A&M, did not last long (he also did not get along with his superiors at CIE). He returned to the United States and his museum work in 1948, but very soon after, he entered into private business, dealing in Asian art objects for various museums and collectors across the United States.²⁷⁷

James M. Plumer, another Harvard graduate, professor at the University of Michigan and consultant to the Roberts Commission, who was a student of Wagner, was a Fine Arts Advisor in 1948-1949.

Lieutenant Colonel Harold Gould Henderson was a Japan scholar and art historian, a graduate of and later professor at Columbia University before and after WWII, and an assistant curator at the Far Eastern Department at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, who had spent four years studying in Japan in the 1930s. He was an advisor on education, religion and art at MFAA in Tokyo in the very early months of SCAP. Henderson was also a close friend of the reformist

²⁷⁵ <http://www.nelson-atkins.org/art/monuments-men.cfm> Retrieved December 4, 2014.

²⁷⁶ <http://www.asia.si.edu/research/freer-medal/booklets/freer-medal-1973-2.pdf>

²⁷⁷ Website of the Monuments Men, <http://www.monumentsmenfoundation.org/the-heroes/the-monuments-men/hollis-howard-c> Retrieved October 25, 2014. Hollis had graduated from the department of fine arts at Harvard and lived for some years in China, where he became fluent in the language. While serving in Japan he was apparently scandalized by the bad taste and influence of some of his American bosses and colleagues. *While in Japan, Hollis experienced frustration at what he saw as a cultural divide between Japanese artisans and Allied personnel stationed there. In observing the Japanese works being created, Hollis noted the "lack of the first-class quality [of Japanese crafts] desirable to many individuals in high places."* Archival field reports submitted by Monuments officers reflect this cultural conflict during Occupied Japan (notes from biography by Renée Albiston).

education minister Maeda Tamon, as well as of R. H. Blyth, the translator and poet who is said to have drafted the Emperor's 'humanity declaration' and would become president of the Japan Society upon his return to the United States in 1948.²⁷⁸

Patrick L. Tierney, a representative commissioner for A&M, responsible for organizing and overseeing the repair and preservation of cultural sites, was one of the few in the division who stayed in Japan after his military service. His research on Japanese art (*Mingei* art in particular) helped promote better understanding of Japanese history and culture amongst American children residing in Japan (Tierney was also one of the SCAP staff to have gone on record depicting MacArthur as culturally insensitive).²⁷⁹

Of course, not all of the staff remained engaged in cultural property work. Charles F. Gallagher, an MFAA officer, Fine Arts Advisor at A&M, did remain involved in US-Japan cultural exchanges after the war but otherwise was no longer directly involved with cultural property or art.²⁸⁰ However, as noted by Scott, among most of the staff there were academic, professional or personal continuities, connections and friendships:

This succession of distinguished scholars, the personal influences that they shared, the empathy that each had for the Japanese people and their art as demonstrated by their vocational commitments and personal efforts, and the unbroken intellectual lineage harkening back to Morse, Fenollosa, and Okakura,

²⁷⁸ Archivist Ueno Rihoko, after combing through George L. Stout's papers at the Smithsonian's Archives of American Arts, observed: *I learned that Harold Gould Henderson, a Japan scholar and Columbia University professor who would later become the director of the Japan Society in New York, was on General Douglas MacArthur's staff as an MFAA advisor and worked as a liaison to the Japanese Imperial Household alongside his friend and colleague Reginald H. Blyth. Henderson and Blyth assisted with drafting the Humanity Declaration, the Japanese Emperor's historic speech in which he renounced his personal divinity.*

<http://blog.aaa.si.edu/2012/10/monuments-men-in-japan-discoveries-in-the-george-leslie-stout-papers.html>

Sadly for SCAP, Henderson would be 'purged' early, most probably due the 'independence' of his ideas.

See also in <https://www.monumentsmenfoundation.org/the-heroes/the-monuments-men/henderson-harold-g>.

²⁷⁹ <http://www.monumentsmenfoundation.org/the-heroes/the-monuments-men/patrick-lennox-tierney>

Retrieved June 11, 2015. Excerpts of the entry read: *Due to his "valuable preparation" studying Japanese art and language, Tierney was assigned to General MacArthur's occupation headquarters in Japan as Commissioner of Arts and Monuments following the end of the war. In this role, he advised General MacArthur on all topics regarding arts, monuments, and culture, in particular the restoration of damaged cultural sites. He also photographed cultural sites, wrote reports, and served as translator when needed. Tierney often worked independently at Occupation Headquarters and liaised with Monuments Men, such as Langdon Warner, Sherman E. Lee and Laurence Sickman. He served in this position until 1952, but remained in Japan thereafter to continue his study of Japanese arts.*

(Website accessed again on May 28, 2016): While he [Tierney] was discharged from service in 1952, he remained in Japan to further study Japanese art. During this time, he studied the Mingei folk arts movement with the influential potters Soji (Shoji) Himada, Kanjiro Kawai, Bernard Leach, and the philosopher Soetsu Yanagi.

²⁸⁰ Ronald Bell (Editor) interview under chapter title 'Charles Gallagher American Scholar' in *The Japan Experience*, Tokyo, Weatherhill, 1973. The Minneapolis Institute of Art, where it is said Gallagher had some connections (which the newsletter cannot trace) calls him 'the Mystery Man'.

<http://new.artsmia.org/stories/monuments-men-at-the-mia-a-director-a-curator-and-a-mystery-man/>

*was the vehicle through which the West in general, and the United States in particular, significantly impacted the cultural property perspectives of Japan.*²⁸¹

The prominence and qualifications of the A&M staff were not only assets for Japan's cultural property protection at a crucial time, but also helped raise the profile of culture and the credibility of the Occupation as being committed to protecting Japan's cultural heritage. Three individuals in particular stand out. They are George L. Stout, Langdon Warner and Sherman E. Lee. Other than their personal merits, of which we shall read further, I would argue that it was the *timing* of the presence of each at SCAP that worked so well for the mission of A&M.

Stout, maybe more than any American, must be credited with identifying and setting in place the MFAA in the European theatre, and then bringing that experience to SCAP through the A&M of which he was to be the first chief. Furthermore, Stout brought to Tokyo the weight and prestige not just of his own personal qualifications and experience, but that of the political and military masters back home through the Roberts Commission. We now take for granted and do not question how it was possible that in September 1945 when so many urgent matters were screaming for attention, SCAP would be assigning duties and resources for the protection of Japan's cultural heritage. In fact it was nothing short of remarkable that the establishment of A&M went through the bureaucratic machinery as swiftly as it did, and the most credit must go to Stout. No other fulfilled the bridging role, between the years of effort and reflection by the Harvard Group, the ACLS, the Roberts Commission, the MFAA, and the European and Pacific theaters, than he did. That he made it to Tokyo to set up A&M—to say the least it was auspicious timing. It is also clear from his letters that Stout never intended to stay long, and probably not even as long as he did stay (about a year). But somehow he was there at the right time, to ensure personally that structures would be in place to make the A&M work.

Though officially Warner had a short-term presence within the A&M machinery, the symbolism and timing of his presence could not have been more significant. When Warner left for Tokyo in March 1946, how many among the Japanese would have sincerely believed that the American Occupation cared about their cultural heritage? It is not surprising that Warner was treated by the press as a superstar when he visited the Kansai region in April 1946. After all, here was the dean of Asia scholars of America, whose connections with Japan went back almost four decades to Okakura Tenshin, and he was now to help the Occupation save Japan's cultural assets. This, simplified, is how his presence was interpreted. The symbolic message was key.

Lee, on the other hand, comes across as a pragmatic, no-nonsense character who joined the A&M once the machinery was in place and the mission clear and endorsed. By his own admission he did not know much about Japanese art as yet, but considering the extraordinary circumstances and the kind of Japanese scholars with whom he worked, he learned fast. Lee helped make the A&M machinery work, and his continued presence in the Division was a stabilizing factor. He had productive working relations with his other colleagues at SCAP and in the field (including

²⁸¹ Scott (2003), p. 358.

with the military governors), as well as with the *Mombusho* and many Japanese scholars. His genuine interest in and refined understanding of Japan's cultural assets brought quality to the work of the A&M, and, as we shall see later, after the Occupation Lee was to play an extraordinarily significant role in strengthening cultural exchanges between Japan and the United States and presenting the best of Japan's art to an American audience.²⁸²

4.4.1 George L. Stout—Father of MFAA, Founder of A&M at SCAP²⁸³

Harvard University, notably through its Fogg Art Museum, played a central role in the realm of Japan's cultural heritage preservation efforts during and after WWII. The majority of cultural experts at A&M—Stout and Warner among them—were Harvard graduates. Of the prominent role of Stout, an article published in Harvard Magazine describes it thus:

Harvard alumni played important roles in creating and staffing the MFAA, among them Paul Sachs '00, director of the Fogg Art Museum [...] and James Rorimer '27 (future director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art). But the hero of this new work is George L. Stout, A.M. '29, formerly lecturer on design and conservator at the Fogg.²⁸⁴

George L. Stout (1897-1978) can indeed be thought of as a figurehead, albeit a modest and often overlooked one, at least until recently.²⁸⁵ Maybe more than any single individual he takes credit for articulating the idea of the MFAA in the European war theatre, and for later extending its work to Tokyo to cover the Pacific theatre. A reserve naval officer and conservator at the Fogg, Stout was a self-made scholar of great talent and originality.²⁸⁶ Friend of Langdon Warner and other prominent curators of the time, advisor to the Roberts Commission, he was also notable in having come from a blue-color working class background and served in active duty during WWI. He had then resumed his studies and opted for art, at great sacrifice and effort—unlike many

²⁸² As recently as the summer of 2014 the Kyushu National Museum held an exhibition of the Japanese collection Lee brought together in Cleveland, with a video praising the long-lasting role he had played in promoting Japanese art and culture.

²⁸³ My appreciation to archivists at the Archives of American Art, especially Ueno Rihoko for a helpful summary of the Stout papers and Marisa Bourgoïn for assistance to my proxy researcher accessing Stout boxes on July 14 and 21, 2015 in Washington D.C., and gratitude to my cousin Shariar Azimi for his help. See also Ueno in <http://blog.aaa.si.edu/2012/10/monuments-men-in-japan-discoveries-in-the-george-leslie-stout-papers.html>

²⁸⁴ <http://harvardmag.com/pdf/2010/01-pdfs/0110-36.pdf> Retrieved June 11, 2015.
<http://harvardmagazine.com/2010/01/monuments-men-rescuing-art-stolen-by-nazis> Retrieved October 2015.

²⁸⁵ Stout has become more famous in recent years. He was cast as the lead character in the 2013 Georges Clooney film 'The Monuments Men', a significantly fictionalized rendition of the work done in the European theatre by art scholars who set about salvaging many European works of art stolen or endangered by the Nazis in the final months of the war.

²⁸⁶ Scott (2003), p. 354.

Harvard colleagues who were born wealthy, Stout had reached his position of influence exclusively through his own merits and intelligence.²⁸⁷

By the time of the outbreak of WWII, Stout was established as a respected member of the community of American conservators, but as we shall see he was nonetheless among the very first to volunteer for military service. His WWI experiences had led him to be concerned about the situation of cultural treasures in war zones, and he started calling for specialized units to do conservation work there, as early as 1942. As the European front expanded, Stout worried that the politicians and even the elite of the world of art (whom he sarcastically called the ‘Sahibs’) would not understand the gravity of threats to the treasures of European art. In this case, fortunately, he had underestimated the influence of the Roberts Commission, to which he was an advisor and which was working at the policy and political level back in D.C.:

*Stout underestimated the sahibs. It is doubtful the U.S. Army would have tolerated the MFAA if not for the prestige of the Roberts Commission [...], which had been formed with Roosevelt’s explicit backing, and no one was better suited to assemble Stout’s corps of “special workmen” than the men who ran America’s cultural establishment.*²⁸⁸

By 1943, therefore, serious discussions about conservators and cultural experts becoming embedded within Allied Forces and working in advance of the military units was taking place at the highest levels, with Stout touted as taking the lead himself in forming the so-called MFAA units.²⁸⁹ By 1944 MFAA officers were already at the European war front. Stout himself was to become amply battle-tested—with the First Army headquarters at the time of the Normandy Invasion, then transferred to the Third and then the Ninth.²⁹⁰ The experiences in Europe proved exceptionally useful later, when Stout and Sickman proposed to the Roberts Commission to expedite to the Pacific theater similar units as the MFAA in Europe. The significance of Stout’s work in Europe is well-recognized, but somehow not his contributions in Japan; this is surprising, for he was instrumental not just in recommending but also personally establishing the A&M in Japan. Archivist Ueno Rihoko of the American Arts Archives, who worked through the collection of Stout’s papers at the Smithsonian, admits that even she had not known about Stout’s work in Japan until recently. She writes:

²⁸⁷ <http://harvardmagazine.com/2010/01/monuments-men-rescuing-art-stolen-by-nazis> Retrieved October 24, 2015.

²⁸⁸ <http://harvardmagazine.com/2010/01/monuments-men-rescuing-art-stolen-by-nazis> Retrieved October 24, 2015.

²⁸⁹ Stout had been involved in discussions with the military for some sort of a ‘conservation corps’ very early. See the confidential letter to Stout from the curator and art historian (and ACLS member and president) W.G. Constable, dated March 30, 1943, in <http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/viewer/w-g-constable-letter-to-george-stout-16211> Retrieved frequently April 2016.

²⁹⁰ Ueno in <http://blog.aaa.si.edu/2012/10/monuments-men-in-japan-discoveries-in-the-george-leslie-stout-papers.html> Retrieved June 17, 2015.

As a Monuments Man, Stout accomplished a great deal [...] he was appointed as the Lieutenant Commander of MFAA; and he received the Bronze Star and the Army Commendation Medal. I knew of Stout's history and of the Monuments Men's work in Europe, but the letter and the photograph of Stout and Warner alerted me to the existence of a branch of the MFAA Section in Japan.²⁹¹ [...] George Stout and fellow Monuments Man Laurence Sickman recommended creating a MFAA division in Japan following the country's official surrender on September 2, 1945. Consequently, the Arts and Monuments Division of the Civil Information and Education Section of GHQ of the Supreme Command of the Allied Powers in Tokyo was established. Stout was the Chief of the Division from approximately August 1945 until the middle of 1946. Langdon Warner, archaeologist and curator of Oriental art at Harvard's Fogg Museum, was brought on as an advisor to the MFAA Section in Japan from April to September of 1946. Other members who served in Tokyo's Arts and Monuments Division include Howard Hollis, Sherman Lee and Harold Gould Henderson.²⁹²

Stout may not have been a Japanese art specialist *per se*, but he was an expert in conservation, he was knowledgeable about (and respected by) the military, he was an able leader and administrator, and he was exceptionally well-connected. These qualifications explain the speedy creation of the A&M Division during the still chaotic early weeks of SCAP/GHQ. Very swiftly Stout started circulating possible organigrams, requesting staff and assigning tasks for the nascent division. By means of a memo dated December 4, 1945, Stout had established the general structures and tasks of A&M, and provided detailed job descriptions therein. There were, in addition to the post of chief of division, posts for a records editor, a technical advisor on collections, another on structures and sites, and a number of field inspectors.²⁹³ Though Stout was quite preoccupied throughout late 1945 with the situation of cultural property in Korea and China, and left Japan by mid-1946, the structures he put in place in the early weeks and months of the Occupation essentially functioned till the end, as we shall see further under Lee's description of his work with A&M. Warner himself was *full of praise for the work done by these men* [the Arts and Monuments staff] *and particularly for the administrative skill of George Stout.*²⁹⁴

Harvard Magazine has written that following the war and for too long afterward the work of Stout, and indeed of the entire MFAA section, was almost forgotten. These men, the article

²⁹¹ Ueno (June 17, 2015).

²⁹² Ueno, in <http://blog.aaa.si.edu/2012/10/monuments-men-in-japan-discoveries-in-the-george-leslie-stout-papers.html>

²⁹³ See organigram for A&M, hand-drawn and typed versions, from National Archives, SCAP records, batch 775017 (Appendices part #2).

²⁹⁴ Bowie (1966), p. 171.

explains, were prone to *downplay their work*, and not having a specific unit, their official story remained untold for decades.

*Perhaps because of this, the army essentially forgot about the monuments conservation effort. There was no dedicated unit equivalent to the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives section in the Korean War, and there hasn't been one in any war since.*²⁹⁵

In an editorial entitled 'The Fate of Cultural Property in Wartime: Why it Matters and What Should Be Done', the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs asks an essential question: *Why, considering all the horrors of war, should we care about the fate of cultural property?* It then answers the question with a quote from no other than the instigator of the MFAA and the A&M Division in Japan, proving that long before war, occupation and other calamities in Iraq or Syria alerted the rest of the world to the significance of cultural property, the vision of this exceptional man, scholar and soldier went far beyond mere conservation. Stout wrote:

*As soldiers of the United Nations fight their way into lands once conquered and held by the enemy, the governments of the United Nations will encounter manifold problems...In areas torn by bombardment and fire are monuments cherished by the people of those countrysides or towns: churches, shrines, statues, pictures, many kinds of works. ...To safeguard these things will not affect the course of battles, but it will affect the relations of invading armies with those peoples and [their] governments....To safeguard these things will show respect for the beliefs and customs of all men and will bear witness that these things belong not only to a particular people but also to the heritage of mankind.*²⁹⁶

4.4.2 Langdon Warner—Revered Japan Scholar Joins SCAP

If Grew can be considered the central pillar of the post-war policy planning circles among foreign affairs officers, then Langdon Warner (1881-1955) is the soul of the cultural preservation group. Ironically, neither of the two men, by then both in their 60s (they were born one year apart), were to have, strictly speaking, an official role once the Occupation started—Warner was for six months, in 1946, an 'Advisor' to the Arts and Monuments Division—but their influences in their respective milieux is undeniable.²⁹⁷ Warner also provides a bridge, on the one hand to the Boston circles around Harvard's Fogg Museum introduced earlier, and on the other into the

²⁹⁵ <http://harvardmagazine.com/2010/01/monuments-men-rescuing-art-stolen-by-nazis> Retrieved October 24, 2015.

²⁹⁶ Jennifer Otterson Mollick, 2013, http://www.carnegiecouncil.org/publications/ethics_online/0085, Retrieved November 2015.

²⁹⁷ Some accounts say Warner arrived in Tokyo in April 1946, though quite a few mention March. I have found from Warner's own letter to Stout, dated March 18, 1946, that he was to sail for Japan from Seattle on March 26, but could not identify the exact arrival day.

heart of SCAP, where he could work alongside his friend and former colleague George L. Stout.²⁹⁸

A famed archeologist and scholar, explorer, intelligence officer, founder and member of the Harvard Group and advisor to the Roberts Commission during WWII, art consultant for the Asian collection at the Nelson-Atkins Museum and many other prestigious collections, teacher and mentor, Warner's career was as colorful as—according to most who knew him—his personality was warm and expansive. He graduated from Harvard University in 1903 and arrived in Japan four years later, becoming very early on a disciple of Okakura Tenshin in Ibaraki (Warner had been a student of Fenollosa in Boston and had met Okakura when the latter took over the curatorship). Thanks to Okakura's influence and introductions, Warner was able to form life-long friendships with some of the most prominent artists and art scholars of early 20th century Japan.²⁹⁹ He was by many accounts a scholar's scholar, and his real love was for fieldwork. This is clear from the piece his *alma mater* newsletter, *the Harvard Crimson*, dedicated to his dramatic expeditions to China (in more recent years Warner was touted as one of the figures who inspired the Indiana Jones character).³⁰⁰

Warner's passion extended beyond Japan, to the origins of Buddhist sculpture, which he studied throughout his life (his book on the statuary of the Tempyo period is still a reference). In this quest Warner would participate in many archeological expeditions throughout the 1910s and 1920s, when he was frequently in the Far East—in Japan, China, Korea, Inner Mongolia, Russia.³⁰¹ After refusing offers to take the directorship of Fogg Museum—he disliked desk work, considering himself first and foremost a field man—Warner finally accepted, primarily for family reasons, the post of director of the Pennsylvania Museum, today's Philadelphia Museum of Art (in fact he was to leave this post almost immediately after a request from the Smithsonian Institution for an expedition to the Far East, but returned later).³⁰² It is also around that time that Warner, temporarily assigned to the US State Department, got involved in the efforts of the US government and military to contain the tumult in the region following the Russian Revolution.

²⁹⁸ <http://www.monumentsmenfoundation.org/the-heroes/the-monuments-men/warner-langdon> Retrieved October 25, 2014.

²⁹⁹ <http://www.stripes.com/military-life/travel/scholar-still-honored-for-saving-japanese-cultural-treasures-1.23054> published 2004, retrieved 25 November 2014. On October 6, 2015, I was able to visit Rokkakudō, the artistic community created by Okakura Tenshin in Ibaraki, where at the entrance of the compound a beautiful bust of Langdon Warner stands as a vivid reminder of the friendship between the two scholars.

³⁰⁰ <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1926/5/13/langdon-warner-writes-account-of-fogg/>

³⁰¹ As revered as Warner is in Japan, China is quite another matter. Many Chinese consider that in the same vein as colonial power archeologists from England and France, Warner too took much of their country's cultural heritage away. This is probably unfair, considering Warner's worries about the sad and precarious state cultural property was in China in the 1920's—subject to theft, destruction and disregard—when the expeditions to the Dunhuang Caves took place. See *Buddha's Caves*, The New York Times, 2008 <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/06/arts/design/06cott.html>

³⁰² Bowie (1966) p. 88 and beyond.

His close partnership with many officers dealing in military-civilian affairs, and the deep knowledge of the region he gained from frequent missions including many roundtrips from Harbin or Vladivostok into European Russia, provided him with in-depth understanding also of the political and military dynamics in East Asia and Eurasia. These experiences were *highly useful many years later when he was called to Washington as consultant to the U.S. Army during World War II.*³⁰³

After this tumultuous international phase, Warner returned to the Pennsylvania Museum in 1919, and for four years managed to lay the groundwork for the way museums dealt with cultural artifacts. His ability to detect quality work, to order and structure museum collections, to renovate and innovate so that exhibitions would be more coherent in telling a story proved his talents as a curator.³⁰⁴ The experience in Philadelphia, his outstanding research on Japanese Tempyo period statuary, his teaching throughout the 1920s and 30s and especially the work he did for the 1939 San Francisco World's Fair established Warner's reputation as a multi-talented 'Orientalist', someone who could 'make things happen'. As Bowie describes, his approach to the exhibition of Oriental Art, which the San Francisco Fair's organizers had entrusted to him, was uniquely original and well ahead of the times: he took the Pacific Ocean basin as a whole culturally, including in the same arc more than 30 cultures. Also, thanks to his Japanese friends and networks, he obtained marvelous pieces from Japan, a feat only Warner could have achieved in the chilling diplomatic atmosphere in 1938. All this may explain why Warner's joining SCAP, only a few months after the end of the war, was such a momentous event for Japanese art circles and indeed the general public:

*[...]it must be remembered that in 1938 the world was in a very disturbed state and that our country's relations with Japan were getting worse by the day. It is a tribute to Warner's eminence that the Japanese outdid themselves to help him: 481 Japanese, Korean, and Formosan works of art, the largest section in the Pacific Cultures exhibition, came from over fifty Japanese collections, private as well as official. In the circumstances, this was extraordinary.*³⁰⁵

Despite his enduring love for Japan and its culture, however, Warner was also among the first experts to be alarmed by the imperialistic ambitions of that country's military leaders. Having observed first hand the direction of modern Japan,

[...] he had not failed to comment, as early as 1913, on the dangers inherent in her [Japan] meddling with the development of the newly born Chinese Republic.

³⁰³ Bowie (1966) p. 93. It was during this same tumultuous period that Warner received from President Theodore Roosevelt (Langdon's wife was a distant relative) a donation of one thousand US dollars, to help ease the suffering of the Czechoslovaks stranded in the Far East, p. 101.

³⁰⁴ Bowie (1966), pp.103-104.

³⁰⁵ Bowie (1966), pp.148-150.

*He always made a very sharp distinction between the values to be found in Japan's ancient culture and the materialistic demands of her modern rulers.*³⁰⁶

Yet, despite his lucid appraisal of the forthcoming crisis and raising red flags about Japan's militaristic intentions earlier than most, Warner was also to go against the tide, when the anti-Japanese fever of post-Pearl Harbor America was unleashed, challenging one-sided assumptions and accusations about Japan. In a statement prepared for a radio broadcast he gave in February 1942 (portions of which he had to delete, to satisfy the censors), Warner wrote that instead of armchair swash-buckling, Americans were better advised to consider the broader, historical roots of the war, and work harder to understand the nation [Japan] that had just managed to humiliate them. He also asked how much America itself was to blame, for the mistreatment of the Japanese in the first place, and for *the folly of insults and appeasements our government and big business* heaped on Japan. Rather than boasting emptily, therefore, he suggested Americans should now collectively and deeply think about the path ahead:

*It is up to every citizen to find out everything he can concerning a people whose armed forces have beaten ours, whose citizenry have shown themselves more prepared than we have yet been to make sacrifices [...] What can we learn from them and about them? How can we profit by what we learn? [...] The thing we require to know is how a nation of little more than half our numbers and a mere fraction of our wealth has partly crippled our fleet, brought our allies nearly to their knees and secured footing on a score of rich bases in the South Pacific which for years we have known they have coveted.*³⁰⁷

Though due his age Warner could not get enlisted, he managed to remain active and engaged throughout WWII. Besides advising the Roberts Commission, he gave expert counsel to the US government on many occasions and maintained contacts with a number of influential individuals in the Administration, including former ambassador to Tokyo Joseph C. Grew. The two are even said to have worked closely, albeit unsuccessfully, to help avoid the breakout of war between the United States and Japan.³⁰⁸ As the end of the war approached, Grew, then acting Secretary of State, was keen to promote Warner's involvement with the Occupation and in August 1945 sent Warner a note in this regard; shortly after, he wrote directly to General MacArthur to recommend

³⁰⁶ Bowie (1966), p. 156.

³⁰⁷ Bowie (1966), pp. 159-160.

³⁰⁸ The circumstances of Grew's role, in arranging a letter from Roosevelt to the Emperor in November 1941, are somewhat ambiguous—it is not clear whether this was his own initiative or Warner's, who may have been trying to act on behalf of his friend, Asakawa Kan'ichi, a Fukushima native and friend of Warner's who had studied in the United States and was a prominent professor of history at Yale.

his friend and encourage the General to consider him for a position in the Occupation machinery.³⁰⁹

It is not hard to imagine the influence that a scholar of Asian art as erudite and experienced as Warner could have had on the perceptions of the Roberts Commission. To this day Warner is credited with having appealed to it for the protection of the former Japanese capitals of Nara and Kyoto during the American bombing campaign (though most scholars, including Warner himself, have repeatedly refuted the accuracy of this belief). At the very least one can well imagine that Warner's familiarity with the arts of Japan and his deep scholarship must have impressed upon the members of the Commission as well as military planners in Washington that the cultural heritage of these two historical cities, and of Japan generally, were too precious to be destroyed randomly.³¹⁰

After the war and thanks to the formal invitation of Stout, at the time head of A&M, Warner was to join the Division as expert consultant in Arts and Monuments, spending April to September 1946 at SCAP.³¹¹ Too old for any formal duties within the Occupation, his joining the A&M was mostly, other than Stout's invitation, the result of his own perseverance and efforts over months.³¹² This mission was nothing short of remarkable and its timing significant. Warner was by then probably the most recognized, and admired, American scholar of Asian art in Japan. That someone of his caliber would partake in the Occupation and physically move to Tokyo and the SCAP headquarters was an inspired idea, for his presence must have had a deep impact not just on his A&M colleagues but especially on their Japanese counterparts. Such was his reputation, in fact, that he was in some instances even compared to MacArthur.

³⁰⁹ August 21, 1945

Dear Lang:

Thanks ever so much for your letter which I heartily appreciate.

It is, of course, a profound satisfaction to be free from the cares of office for the first time in forty-one years, and I feel like a boy out of school.

If opportunities occur for me to speak of you in connection with future work in the Far East, I shall certainly take every occasion to do so.

With best wishes

Yours ever,

Joseph C. Grew

JCG:MA Harvard University Houghton Library, MS A&M 1687 v.123 (29) Letters 1945 (transcribed August 22, 2014).

³¹⁰ The final decision to remove Kyoto from the list—Nara never was a target—was actually made by then Secretary of War, Henry Stimson. See also Otis Cary in "Mr. Stimson's 'Pet City'—The Sparing of Kyoto, 1945", *Doshisha University, Kyoto, Moonlight Series No.3*, December 1975, pp 15-18. See also section on Ruth Benedict.

³¹¹ Scott (2003), p. 355, footnote 177, referring to Stout's official invitation and job description for Warner, initially submitted on January 2, 1946.

³¹² If his own letters to Stout are any indication, Warner worked relentlessly and single-mindedly to get to Tokyo. He was too old for a formal military assignment but his prestige and renown and his tireless letter-writing campaign finally came through after months. He boarded ship for Tokyo in March 1946.

*In a letter to Roberts Commission headquarters in Washington, D.C., Monuments Man Lt. Cdr. George Stout remarked, “Langdon Warner is, without exaggeration, magnificent. I believe that, next to General MacArthur, he is the most highly regarded American in Japan. Two days ago, the Nippon Times broke out a full, two-column editorial on him. Hoover didn’t get that much space and so far Eisenhower hasn’t.”*³¹³

Among ordinary Japanese, too, Warner’s presence stirred not just an outpouring of admiration that the Occupation was “benevolent” enough to bring on board one as dedicated to their culture as Warner, but also renewed attention to the state of their cultural property. A journal article noted how, while in Tokyo, grateful Japanese left Warner flowers anonymously every morning in recognition of his efforts on their behalf and for having “*patiently welcomed the flocks of war stunned citizens who sought redress for postwar injustices, and [breaking] regulations left and right in order to aid them*”.³¹⁴

The tone of the press was indicative of the symbolism carried by Warner’s presence in the ranks of the Occupation. In an editorial dated January 22, 1946, a few months *before* his arrival in Japan, the *Kobe Shimbun* had already referred to Warner’s work, lauding his efforts as the savior of Japanese art and the treasures of Kyoto and Nara:

*During the war the Art Treasure and Memorial Preservation Committee [presumably the article refers to The Roberts Commission] was organized in America under the direct control of the President. It is said that this committee [Commission] made many efforts to save certain works of art and historical relics from destruction on both the western and the eastern fronts. Upon the advice of the executives of this committee, chairman Roberts [and Dr. Warner of the Boston Art Museum] our ancient cities of Nara and Kyoto were not bombed. Many famous works of arts and significant historical memorials have remained safe, which clearly shows that the American people are interested in art and respect culture. We can only be deeply ashamed of ourselves. Ambassador PAULEY recently said that AMERICA is not inclined to take Japanese treasures and works of art of high cultural value as reparations. We express our heartfelt thanks to the kindness of the American people and we must remember this and exalt our knowledge and interest in culture and art. Therefore, I keenly feel that it is necessary that these works of art be protected by the people themselves.*³¹⁵

³¹³ <http://www.monumentsmenfoundation.org/the-heroes/the-monuments-men/warner-langdon> Retrieved June 7, 2016.

³¹⁴ James Marshall Plumer, ‘In Memoriam Langdon Warner (1881-1955)’ in *Ars Orientalis*, Vol. 2, (1957), p. 635. Retrieved from JSTOR, November 27, 2014.

³¹⁵ SCAP Records, National Archives, College Park, Maryland, *The Kobe Shinbun*, editorial of 22 January 1946, translated by the SCAP Allied Translator and Interpreter Section on February 1, 1946—the article does confuse some dates and facts but the general tone is unmistakable (on file with me).

When, shortly after arrival in Japan, Warner was to go for a tour of Kansai with Stout, the press and public followed his every move. Newspaper articles were effusive with appreciation, and curious about the cultural treasures Warner might visit. Photos of Warner and Stout with Japanese colleagues during the visit to Kyoto (as well as a later letter from the Mayor of Kyoto to Stout) further hint at the degree of goodwill and attention that these two cultural ambassadors seem to have mobilized among their Japanese hosts, during those sensitive, early post-war months when Warner was with SCAP.³¹⁶ The *Asahi Shimbun*, in a piece dated May 24, 1946, wrote:

*Dr. L. P. Warner, the benefactor of the Japanese culture who has saved Kyoto and Nara from destruction, will visit this ancient city of Kyoto now beautifully attired with green leaves of early summer. His pilgrimage of art monuments starts tomorrow, 25th May, as his train carries him thither. Dr. Warner, who prevailed upon ex-president Roosevelt and preserved the legacies of old Japan in the face of impending danger! What could such a person be like? He understood and even loved what is good and beautiful of Japanese culture that he has even adopted as his pen name Rando Warner, and did his best for his country. Professor Umehara, of the Kyoto Imperial university, and the chief editor of the magazine 'Toyo Bijutsu' Ogawa (?) is reminiscence often years past, spoke of Dr. Warner as follows: ' Dr. Warner is a Professor at Harvard University and the head of Oriental Art in the Fogg Museum. He has come over as advisor to SCAP into Oriental Art. He is an authority concerning Japanese Art. He is the author of the books entitled 'Sculpture of Asuka Era' and the Art of Japanese Sculptors. Dr. Warner began to have an interest in Oriental Art through acquaintance of Okakura Tenshin. He visited Nara for the first time forty years ago, toward the close of the Russo-Japanese War, when he was in his twenties.'*³¹⁷

The *Mainichi Shimbun*, also reporting every step of the visit, described Warner's visit in these terms in its coverage of May 25, 1946:

The one who understands Japan and appreciates her beauty, the technical consultant of the Arts and Monuments Division of CIE Section, SCAP, Mr. Langdon Warner, arrived early in the morning of the 25th..... Striped bow necktie, deep navy blue suit, and in his benign visage there was some scent of the Orient.

³¹⁶ <http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/items/detail/george-leslie-stout-langdon-warner-and-japanese-officials-nishi-honganji-temple-kyoto-japan-14421>
[haruki-watsuji-kyoto-japan-letter-to-george-l-george-leslie-stout-tokyo-japan-14539](http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/items/detail/george-leslie-stout-tokyo-japan-14539)
Letter of Mayor of Kyoto to Stout, retrieved June 17, 2015.

³¹⁷ National Archives (NARA), Warner batch, p. 7.

*In his ready response to news men's questions his deep knowledge and love of Japan was apparent....*³¹⁸

The *Kyoto Nichi Nichi* newspaper, also in its May 25, 1946 edition, published excerpts of its interview with a staff member of an antique shop, where Warner used to visit before the war, quoting him as follows:

'I am lucky to have lived on this age because Mr. Warner, who used to take nothing into consideration when he began to rummage in curios, who really loves Japanese art objects more than any Japanese, is coming.'

Dr. Warner, when he was still in his adolescence (?!), about forty years ago, became interested in Japanese art through Okakura's guidance. He came over by himself and became apprentice to the head of the Nara Art Institute [...]

*We citizens of Kyoto should express deep gratitude for those two benefactors (Dr. Warner and Lt. Comm. Stout) of ancient civilization. Professor Umehara of Kyoto University and the Chief Editor of Toyo Bijutusu, Ogawa, wait for their arrival with happy anticipation.*³¹⁹

The deep-rooted affection of the Japanese for Warner stood the test of time. Already in a Diet session on national treasures in September 1947, then Education Minister Morito, referring to the significance of Warner's presence in Japan at such an early stage of the Occupation, recalled the deep bonds that connected Warner to Japan and its arts since his youth and as a disciple of Okakura Tenshin.³²⁰ Neither would the respect for Warner dim over the years: he was honored posthumously with the Order of the Sacred Treasure, and monuments in his memory were built at Horyuji Temple and at Monju-in of Sakurai City in Nara Prefecture, in Itsuura Village in Ibaraki Prefecture, in Kamakura City in Kanagawa Prefecture, and in Kyoto. To this day, every June 9, the date of his passing, a special ceremony is held for him at Nara's Monju-in Temple.³²¹

4.4.3 Sherman E. Lee and How the A&M Worked from the Inside

Sherman E. Lee (1918-2008) was a staff of the A&M from 1946 to 1948. During this time he not only was involved in every aspect of the operations of the Division, but thanks to all the art he

³¹⁸ National Archives (NARA), Warner batch, p. 9.

³¹⁹ National Archives (NARA), Warner batch, p. 8. 'Professor Umehara' refers to Umehara Sueji, a world-renowned specialist of East Asian Bronze, and a professor at Kyoto University. 'Chief Editor' Ogawa is Ogawa Seiyō, a pioneer of photography during the Taisho and Showa periods, famous notably for his work on Buddhist art.

³²⁰ Scott (2003), p. 356.

³²¹ <http://www.stripes.com/travel/scholar-still-honored-for-saving-japanese-cultural-treasures-1.23054> Retrieved November 17, 2015. At the bust of Warner on the grounds of *Rokkakudo*, his teacher Okakura Tenshin's stunning artistic retreat in Ibaraki Prefecture, there are also references to Warner saving Kyoto and Nara (*Rokkakudo* visited October 6, 2015).

inspected and the contacts he made, was able to later exert a long-lasting and in-depth influence on the relations of American museums with Japan, and on the understanding of Japanese art in America. He also had both the opportunity and the inclination to write and speak about his experiences with SCAP in the ensuing years.³²²

While doing his doctoral studies, Lee had attended a course on Chinese art, given by James Marshal Plumer at the University of Michigan. Plumer, who had been at Harvard, introduced Lee to another Harvard graduate, Howard Hollis, at the time an Asian art curator at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Hollis ultimately arranged for the bright researcher to intern in Cleveland, from late 1939 to the spring of 1941, while still working on his doctorate.³²³ Though still young (he was 28), by the time Lee arrived in Tokyo in 1946 he had completed his doctorate, been a curator of oriental art at the Detroit Institute of Art, and served in the Navy. He joined SCAP at the behest of his former mentor Howard Hollis, who was at the time head of the A&M.

Hollis left SCAP and Japan for the United States in 1947 (he did not stay long in museum work and was to go on to a career as art dealer, both for private collectors as well as museums) while Lee continued the work with A&M. In addition to his regular responsibilities working with Japanese counterparts in the inspection of cultural property and dealing with matters of finance and budget with the *Mombusho*, Lee's tasks included efforts towards the 'democratization' of Japanese museums and the encouragement of exhibitions open to the general public.³²⁴ The work would allow him to visit thousands of Japan's treasures and meet with the most prominent Japanese scholars of arts, a rare experience at the time, or since—and one which Lee himself was aware already then that more than one scholar of Asian art could only dream of.

In a memo to his CIE superiors dated February 1947, Lee details a list of works of art he had recently inspected, providing designations and assessing the status of each. His three main recommendations at the end are quite impressive for someone who had been on the job barely a few months, in essence advising that:

1. *That inspections be continued with special regard for condition and preservation.*
2. *That consideration of revision of the registration laws be continued.* (n.b. Implying that this was already a consideration within SCAP at this early stage).

³²² Sherman E. Lee Papers, 1947-1997, Archives of American Arts, Smithsonian Institution Box 1, folders 8-9 'Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Division Material, 1947' (circa 1979). http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/sherman-e-lee-papers-6167/more#section_1 Retrieved June 25, 2015.

³²³ Mary Ann Rogers, 'Sherman E. Lee' in *Orientalism: A discovery of Asia and the Pacific*, 1993, pp. 45-59 (IHJ order, received February 1, 2014).

³²⁴ Though Lee himself admits that his experiences in Japanese art were 'meager' at the time of this appointment, he pays tribute to the many Japanese scholars, experts and dealers who in essence educated him during his SCAP years. In Lee (1997), p. 91 and p.103.

3. *That private collectors continue to be encouraged to lend their holdings, on occasion, to public exhibitions and museums.*³²⁵

As we saw earlier, the SCAP system of prefectural visits was the backbone of the small unit at headquarters, and it was in the regions that much substantive inspection work took place. Lee has described the rather efficient system set up for conducting systematic (prefectural) inspection tours, aiming to *inventory and inspect all Japanese art in the country, to determine what works had been destroyed, to assist the Japanese in the protection and preservation of their cultural property, and to encourage the display of Japanese works of art.*³²⁶ The A&M staff in Tokyo had divided the different tasks among themselves (according to Lee while he visited temples and private collections, the architect Popham inspected parks and gardens, Gallagher was interested ‘in all things Japanese’, while Hollis fought the SCAP bureaucracy):

*Visits included close visual examination for the particular object’s identity and for condition and circumstances of storage. If material was missing inspectors reported that to Mombusho, which followed up until the object was accounted for. The number of works of art seen by the inspectors was staggering, particularly in temples situated in historically rich areas, notably in the whole Kansai area—Lake Biwa, Wakayama-Prefecture, the Nara and Kyoto areas, Nagoya and old collections in Yamaguchi—and the Sendai region, to name only a few.*³²⁷

As to holding public exhibits, given how limited the resources and dismal the post-war conditions of most museums and collections at the time, this was not easy. But once held, their impact was naturally immense. In one case Lee reminisces:

*Earlier in 1947 we had some hard proof of the success of our encouragement of the ‘democratization’ of Japanese art museums and of the public availability of registered works of art in private collections. Professor Fukui served as guest curator of an enthusiastically attended exhibition of Chinese and Japanese works from private collections in the Kansai area, the exhibition opened in the spring at the Hakutsuru Museum in Kobe City, a private museum founded by the Kano family of sake producers. The sixty-seven-page catalogue in black and white on wartime-quality pulp paper is a poor thing by the luxurious standards of today, but it was at least a beginning for scholars, students, and lay people.*³²⁸

The fact that so many of A&M staff had had some previous connection to the Fogg Art Museum may explain a certain camaraderie and, just as importantly, a continuity in their work at SCAP

³²⁵ Sherman E. Lee Papers (1947-1997), Box 1, folder 8, Appendix 3.

³²⁶ Lee (1997), p. 92.

³²⁷ Lee (1997), p. 94.

³²⁸ Lee (1997), pp.101-102.

and thereafter. Lee, however, had not studied at Harvard and never personally met Stout. Nonetheless he wrote from Tokyo to ask Stout's help and advice on scientific matters pertaining to the repair work at Horyuji. Stout, by then back at the Fogg, swiftly responded, sending books and the latest scientific material on the topic, as well as his own advice. A certain shared connoisseurship is palpable in the correspondence between the two, and almost a quarter-century later the two curators were still exchanging letters and working together.³²⁹

One of the institutions, maybe the most prominent, that Lee and his colleagues felt should be opened to the public was the imperial treasury of Shōsō-in, in Nara. Soon after their inspection of the collection, in September 1947, Lee joined other Japanese colleagues and scholars to suggest greater public access to the treasures, until then limited strictly to a few rare VIPs. The campaign was a success: imperial authorities organized the first public exhibition of the treasures in 1947, and thirty pieces were shown for the first time in the repository's history to the general public. The annual two-week public viewing continues to this day, but Lee recalls of how moving it was to see in Nara the flow of ordinary people visiting, for its very first public viewing, of the millennial collection:

*Everyday there was a line of people four across, stretching from the Nara National Museum to the railroad station, waiting to see that exhibition.*³³⁰

Ueno Rihoko of the Smithsonian writes of Lee's part in this saga:

*An Asian art expert, Lee had the opportunity to examine an art collection held at the Shosoin Imperial Repository in Nara, Japan, which houses over 9000 categorized objects. Lee negotiated with the Japanese government to display the treasures, which had never before been available to the public. The first of what would become an annual exhibition was held in September 1947. To this day, the exhibition is considered the most popular in Japan each year.*³³¹

³²⁹ George Leslie Stout papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institute, Letters from Stout to Lee November and December 1946, and from Lee in Tokyo, upon receipt of the material, January 1947. More recent letter from Lee, when he is still Director of the Cleveland Museum of Art, to Stout, who has retired, dated February 23, 1972 (on file with me).

³³⁰ Rogers (1993), p. 48.

³³¹ Ueno, in <http://blog.aaa.si.edu/2012/10/monuments-men-in-japan-discoveries-in-the-george-leslie-stout-papers.html> Robert Edsel, the driving force behind the 'Monuments Men' whose efforts have brought recognition to the work of the military personnel and units which helped salvage art stolen or hidden by Nazi Germany right after the war, met with Lee shortly before his death in 2008. Edsel, too, cited Lee as among key individuals who put forth the idea of the Imperial Household treasures of Shōsō-in opening to the public. I believe it was somewhat more complex than simple negotiations between a few A&M staff and the Japanese government. The discussion about the imperial treasures, in Tokyo and in Nara, had been wide-ranging and in fact on-going for long, partially also due the cost required for their care in the difficult post-war years. Consultations with the Americans had come up early; certainly it was a topic discussed during the audience the Emperor gave Langdon Warner in or around August 1946. See Bowie (1966) pp. 175-177, and also in my section on Warner.

Among the most prominent and influential of the many mentors and friends Lee met in Japan was Yashiro Yukio, the dean of Japan's art historians. An intimate friend of both Langdon Warner and George Sansom, the erudite Yashiro was a member of the Arts and Monuments team who, after the passage of the 1950 Law, became a leading member of Japan's Commission for the Protection of Cultural Heritage (Yashiro's prestige as a scholar, supported by the vision and funding of a railway magnate, would allow the establishment in 1960 of the Yamato Bunkakan near Nara, one of the first and most comprehensive private collections of treasures from Japan and the Silk Road).³³² The lasting friendship between Yashiro and Lee was to be a productive one for both, and they were to remain partners throughout the rest of their lives. Describing their tours of the provinces together, during the years of service at A&M, Lee writes affectionately of his old friend, advisor and later benefactor:

*He was interested in everything. He went around with me when I was beginning, and I helped him with his first contacts with Chinese ceramics. You know that red-and-green overglaze enamel Cizhou jar that is now in the Yamato Bunkakan? I bought it when we were somewhere in Osaka. He cried all the way home to Tokyo so I just had to give it to him.*³³³

During his assignment with SCAP, Lee also met with many other collectors, scholars and dealers, making friends and establishing bonds that would constitute a unique network of Japanese sources and partners for his future career as a curator of Asian art in America.³³⁴

In Lee's own reminiscences one has a sense that he and his colleagues at the A&M thought highly of their mission. After the Occupation—thanks in part to the years he spent in Tokyo and the exceptional circumstances of access to Japan's best art and many of its best art scholars—he became a knowledgeable expert and educator in Japanese art and culture, as much for American specialists as for the broader American public (it also helped that he was an effective communicator and writer). In 1963 Lee organized an exhibition on behalf of Asia House, devoted to the arts associated with the Tea Ceremony, and continued presenting Japanese art of exquisite quality throughout his career.³³⁵ The last exhibition Lee was to organize as director of the Cleveland Museum of Art was a superb and sophisticated affair, entitled *Reflections of Reality in Japanese Art*.³³⁶

³³² Visit to Bunkakan, April 2014.

³³³ Rogers (1993), p. 48.

³³⁴ It is clear at any rate that Lee was in contact with many prominent Japanese scholars, and he has cited his debt to a number of outstanding figures who became his teachers and friends—Yashiro Yukio of course, but also Yamada Chisaburoh, a future director of the National Museum of Western Art, Koyama Fujiyo, the scholar of Chinese and Japanese ceramics, Fukui Rikichiro and Doi Tsugiyoshi, scholars of Muromachi and Momoyama periods, respectively, amongst others. In Lee (1997), p. 103.

³³⁵ Sherman E. Lee, 'Tea Taste in Japanese Art', The Asia Society, New York, 1963 (I-House).

³³⁶ Sherman E. Lee, *Reflections of Reality in Japanese Art*, Published by the Cleveland Museum of Art, 1983 (I-House).

Like Fenollosa and Okakura before him, Lee was called to advise a number of prominent collectors of Asian art during his long post-SCAP career. It was thanks in part to his scholarship that the millionaire John D. Rockefeller was able to bring together an extraordinary Asian arts collection, celebrated in a 2009 exhibit at the Asia Society in New York, with the following introduction:

*Sherman E. Lee served as advisor to Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd from 1963 to 1978, when the collection was donated to Asia Society. Lee helped the couple assemble one of the most spectacular private collections of Asian art in the United States by introducing them to major dealers and informing them of important pieces that were available. [...] the Rockefellers felt a responsibility to contribute to understanding and cooperation between Asia and the United States.*³³⁷

Rockefeller, who loved Japan, was in many ways also a key figure in the development of post-war Japan-US friendships, notably in the fields of education and culture. He spearheaded and frequently financially sustained a number of significant initiatives on both sides of the Pacific. In Tokyo alongside his friend the journalist Matsumoto Shigeharu, whom he had met in the late 1920s in Kyoto, Rockefeller helped establish the International House of Japan, which became (and still is) a significant institution for cultural and intellectual exchanges among American and Japanese academics (and more recently for scholars from different horizons and continents). In New York, both the Japan Society and the Asia Society were established in great part thanks to the Rockefeller vision, funding and networks.³³⁸ Over their lifetimes, both he and his wife were to continue to dedicate substantial amounts of their time, attention and personal fortune to supporting Japanese arts (and artists).

Rockefeller had been aware of the success of the Japanese art exhibition held in San Francisco right after the war (thanks in part to the interventions of David Finley and Langdon Warner) and was particularly sensitive to the impact that art and culture could have in enhancing peaceful relations.

The positive response to [the San Francisco] exhibition demonstrated the power of art as a tool for positively influencing public opinion. In 1953 [Rockefeller] and Sherman E. Lee, along with other major Asian art scholars and curators, as well as the United States Navy (who transported the works), coordinated an

³³⁷ <http://sites.asiasociety.org/asianjourneys/advisor/> from the exhibit 'Collecting Art in Post-War America' held at the Asia Society, New York City, February 10-August 9, 2009. Retrieved December 4, 2014.

³³⁸ Interviews with Beate Sirota Gordon, New York, January 2011 and March 2012.

*influential exhibition of Japanese art, which travelled to major art museums across America. Over 420,000 people are said to have visited the exhibition.*³³⁹

But as the Asia Society exhibit highlighted, in addition to the love of Japanese arts, the other factor that brought Lee and Rockefeller together was their shared universalist and pacifist values, and the belief that art and culture could, and should, be used to educate public opinion and help bring together previously enemy nations. The association of a curator of the talents and networks of Lee with a donor of the resources and passion of Rockefeller was therefore to prove providential for the post-war cultural cooperation between Japan and the United States.

The Asia Society exhibition referred to Lee's role and work during his SCAP years, in these words:

*From 1946 to 1948 Sherman E. Lee worked in Tokyo for the Arts and Monuments Department of the Supreme Commander (of the) Allied Forces in the Pacific. Lee's work for the department contributed to the establishment of the Japanese Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties regulated by a government agency called the Bunkacho.[...] While at the Arts and Monuments department, Lee helped inventory the major Japanese collections of art, many of which included works from China and Korea held in high esteem by Japanese collectors. He also formed relationships with influential Japanese art historians and art dealers. This experience profoundly influenced his taste, and ultimately the character of the collections that he helped build.*³⁴⁰

Throughout his brilliant career, Lee himself would freely admit just how formative his experiences in post-war Japan and at A&M had been. Writing of the many Japanese experts he got to personally know and work with, and the debt he would always owe them, Lee wrote in these terms:

*There were many more in the academic, museum, and dealer fields to whom I am most grateful. The whole experience was exhilarating and educational, unique and cumulative, in its effect on someone beginning a professional career. Without it there would have been an American specialist in the art of East Asia unschooled and inexperienced in the complex and subtle achievements of that region.*³⁴¹

³³⁹ Asia Society (2009).

³⁴⁰ Asia Society (2009).

³⁴¹ Lee (1997), p. 102.

4.5 Some Reflections on the 1950 Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties

The 1950 Law was of course neither the beginning nor the end of Japan's endeavors to protect its cultural heritage. As outlined in a succinct timeline by Yamamoto Tadanao, a researcher at Nara's Asia Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO, cultural heritage preservation efforts go back at least to the 19th century—already from the early stages of the Meiji reforms, the government and many citizens were concerned enough about possible losses to national cultural heritage that rapid Westernization was bringing about that they put in place legislation to ensure protection (edited by me for clarity):

- 1871 Edict for the Preservation of Antiquities (Council of State)*
- 1872 Investigation of treasures begins (Ministry of the Interior)*
- 1879 Proposition to preserve shrines, temples and their treasures forever (Ministry of the Interior)*
- 1880 Subsidy for ancient shrines and temples starts (Ministry of the Interior)*
- 1888 Tentative Bureau for Nation-wide Investigation of Treasures established (Ministry of the Imperial Household)*
- 1897 Law for the Protection of Old Shrines and Temples (Ministry of Home Affairs→ 1913 Ministry of Education)*
- 1919 Law for the Protection of Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments (Ministry of Home Affairs→1928 Ministry of Education)*
- 1929 National Treasures Protection Law (Ministry of Education)*
- 1933 Law Concerning Protection of Important Objects of Art, etc. (Ministry of Education)*
- 1950 Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties³⁴²*

In 1968 the Cultural Properties Protection Committee was to become the Agency for Cultural Affairs, fulfilling Yamamoto's wish to see a secretariat of true experts servicing the country's

³⁴² Yamamoto Tadanao, *The Protection of Cultural Properties in Japan: Characteristics and Problems*, Nara Asia Pacific Cultural Center for Unesco (ACCU), 2006. In this regard see also website latest edition (pdf, March 2015) in summary of the cultural administration system in Japan, published by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, *Bunkacho* http://www.bunka.go.jp/tokei_hakusho_shuppan/shuppanbutsu/bunkazai_pamphlet/pdf/pamphlet_en_03_ver04.pdf

cultural property. Since that time there have been many additions and amendments to the Law, though the foundations of 1950 have persevered.³⁴³

What the 1950 Law did achieve, at a time when so much else was demanding the limited resources and attention of the nation, was to ensure earlier than anyone could have anticipated and before more damage was inflicted, that cultural property protection had a place in legislative and executive priorities, and received the resources it deserved. In fact at least as early as 1947 the Arts and Monuments Division, alongside *Mombusho* and other Japanese scholars, were debating revisions to existing national legislation.³⁴⁴ Fujita Tsuneyo (a *Mombusho* representative) and one other colleague had submitted a draft revision text, which had been discussed by A&M and *Mombusho* staff at their weekly meetings.³⁴⁵ In February 1949 and after the shock of the fire at Horyuji raised public and political alarm over the safety and fate of national treasures, these plans were accelerated and the drafting of the bill started officially. It would go through some 11 revisions until May 1950, when it passed the Diet.³⁴⁶ It was good fortune that one of its key champions at the Diet was the writer, scholar and, in the decade following the end of the war, politician, Yamamoto Yuzo.³⁴⁷

A few words on this passionate advocate for culture for the people, and an articulate defender of the 1950 Law, are due. Yamamoto (1887-1974) was a towering literary figure in Japan, both during the pre- and post-war years. A successful author of novels and plays, including the classic

³⁴³ *Japan An Illustrated Encyclopedia*, Kodansha, Tokyo, 1993 p. 897. A special explanation is perhaps needed concerning the concept of ‘Living National Treasure’ in the 1950 Law, for it was revolutionary at the time and would do much to transform the very concept of culture and heritage in coming decades (not just in Japan but worldwide). Under this category the Japanese government designates men and women from the traditional performing arts and crafts as the ‘bearers of important cultural assets’ (*juyo mukeibunkazai hojisha*), known by the short designation of ‘Living National Treasure’ (*ningen hokuhō*). The Agency for Cultural Affairs of the Ministry of Education now has the responsibility for managing this process such that skills and know-how of these artists and artisans are preserved and passed on to future generations. The categories cover the performing arts, notably Noh, Bunraku and Kabuki theatre, as well as traditional music and buyō [dance], along with “*ceramics as well as weaving, stenciling, dyeing, lacquer, metal, wood and bamboo, dolls, and paper*”.

³⁴⁴ Scott (2003), p. 317, footnote 4. Scott does not consider that the only and single event, prompting the passage of the 1950 Law, was the fire at Horyu-ji’s kondo, in January 1949—though of course this did rally popular support and provided impetus for its adoption. He also considers that the role played by the Americans in general, and the A&M in particular, is hardly recognized and as he has written and told me in person, even *interviews with Ministry of Culture officials in Tokyo indicate a perspective that the United States had little influence on the passage of the Law. Neither view* [n.b. single incident of Horyu-ji or officialdom’s position] *seems complete*....

³⁴⁵ Scott (2003), pp. 379-381.

³⁴⁶ Asuka Sakaino, National Research Institute for Cultural Properties (*Tobunken*), Interview at the International House of Japan, Tokyo, March 14, 2014.

³⁴⁷ I have found fascinating Yamamoto’s role as a scholar-politician and regret that more of his writings about his work as a legislator are not translated for the benefit of non-Japanese speakers. His passionate endorsement of the cultural property law in the Diet offers a vivid picture of the degree to which Japanese intellectuals and scholars felt it necessary to both protect the cultural heritage of the land as well as seize the chance, offered by the birth of new democratic institutions, to make culture more accessible to ordinary people.

A Roadside Stone, he was elected to the Diet in 1947 on the Independent Party platform.³⁴⁸ Yamamoto was a socially engaged intellectual involved in many causes, including as a vocal proponent of protecting, reforming and simplifying the Japanese script (which he thought could be done while maintaining the integrity of the Kanji writing system). He helped establish a national holiday on November 3rd as ‘Culture Day’ and was also at the forefront of efforts to make the constitution understandable and accessible to ordinary people (*kokumin no kokugo renmei*). But maybe one of his lesser recognized though infinitely significant contributions was as the member of Diet who ably shepherded the passage of the 1950 bill for the protection of cultural property.³⁴⁹

At the time Yamamoto was chair of the Education Committee of the House of Councilors, responsible for debating the bill. In the course of its deliberations the group, he reported, met “no fewer than fifty-five times” to adopt the final version.³⁵⁰ Yamamoto’s erudition allowed him to grasp and to explain to fellow politicians and the chambers the significance of cultural asset protection, in clear yet inspirational language. His deep understanding of the importance of this work in general and in Japan’s post-war circumstances in particular; his vision for the need to assign, through a dedicated secretariat, real experts and not just bureaucrats for the task; and finally his ability to detail the various levels and categories of cultural property were remarkable—and prescient.³⁵¹ He was the providential man to uphold and advance the cause of cultural heritage protection laws at an important time in Japan’s cultural history.

In his speech explaining the submission of the legislation and why it was essential to establish *a proper culture administration organ*, Yamamoto spoke in these convincing words of the need for a ‘cultural nation’ to act up to its ideals:

Since the defeat in the war, the people speak much about the establishment of a ‘cultural nation.’ This is a very good idea. But the motto has not been acted up to.... In fact, our old cultural properties which were produced by our ancestors in ancient times, have little been attended to as they should be. No effective measures have been taken for their preservation. How can we hope to become a cultural nation by behaving ourselves in that way? Now we Japanese have surprisingly many cultural properties....But since the beginning of the last war, little attention has been paid to their protection, repair or supervision with the

³⁴⁸ Yamamoto Yuzo, *robō no ishi*, Iwanami shoten, 1941.

³⁴⁹ In 2011 the Yamamoto Yuzo Memorial Museum held a special exhibition to introduce his *passion for the postwar reconstruction of Japan and his work as a member of the House of Councilors*
http://210.135.204.227/foreign/english/news/1104/1104_06.html

³⁵⁰ Scott (2003), p. 381.

³⁵¹ Scott (2003), pp. 385-386.

*result that those invaluable properties have begun to decay or to be destroyed. Some of them have burnt down or are on the verge of utter destruction. [...]*³⁵²

The passage of the 1950 Law coincided approximately with the sunset phase of the US Occupation's influence. Japan's accelerating economic recovery (in part speeded by the Korean War), internal American battles for supremacy and for the change of pace in implementing the reformist agenda of the New Deal era (labeled later as the 'reverse course'), mounting fears of a Soviet expansion and the dawn of the Cold War, shifting priorities back in Washington and MacArthur's own waning star were already tempering deeper American influences, even as the Japanese were gaining back their footing. Nonetheless, early Occupation influences had already allowed for the creation of *an environment* where culture and cultural heritage were serious and legitimate policy considerations.

For this early passage too, the A&M deserves credit—not just for facilitating debates around the Law's formulation, but also for encouraging and empowering those in Japan who felt cultural property preservation to be a priority. It is difficult to speculate, but one can imagine that without the A&M's full and supportive endorsement of the process, the passage of the Law and the guarantees it provided for proper protections could have been delayed by at least a few years. What more damages or losses could have resulted, had this been the case?

Conclusions

By August 1945, Japan had been at war for almost 15 years. The end was catastrophic. In the months leading to its final defeat, more than 60 of Japan's major cities had been heavily fire-bombed, and two laid to nuclear waste. The number of civilian dead and wounded was horrendous, and the intensity of the suffering of those who had survived, indescribable. Though the Americans had spent most of the war years preparing for its end, and for occupation, in reality none had anticipated the magnitude of the loss and destruction. In the words of John W. Dower, they were to confront "*a populace that [...] had undergone intense 'socialization for death'*".³⁵³ Few foreign observers convey as succinctly what they saw than the historian Marius Jansen, in the opening pages of *The Making of Modern Japan*. Jansen writes how as part of his military service he was dispatched to Okinawa, finding there a gentle people "*stripped of everything except their dignity, dazed and surprised to find themselves alive after the carnage of a battle that had reduced their numbers by one-quarter*".³⁵⁴

³⁵² See text of Speech of Yamamoto to Diet at passage of the cultural property bill, in Geoffrey Scott (2003), p. 386. Original Japanese text from Watanabe Michiyo, curator at Yamamoto Yuzo Memorial Museum, received on July 5, 2014.

³⁵³ Dower (1999), p. 87.

³⁵⁴ Jansen (2000), p. xiii.

It is therefore quite remarkable that despite such precarious post-war conditions, when culture could understandably have been of least concern for leaders and ordinary people alike, so many Japanese were still devoting the kind of attention they did to culture. In fact, despite the wreckage of intense fire-bombings in the war's final months, in 1945 Japan still had a significant number of cultural treasures and institutions. Some 150 museums for example were still in existence—the buildings had been damaged or destroyed beyond hope, but many of their collections and certainly the collections of the major museums had been moved out to the countryside for safekeeping, thanks to the efforts of the staff and curators.³⁵⁵ All these treasures, as well as temples, shrines, gardens and other treasures, needed to be put under some protection measures as early as possible to escape the post-war chaos.

Did the American Occupation have any direct influence in preserving Japan's cultural heritage in the immediate post-war years? Evidence suggests that it did. To begin with, we must note the fact that the very existence of a division within SCAP, one entirely devoted to arts and monuments, was an extremely rare feature, not seen so early or at such a scale in any American military occupation, before Japan or since. The fact that the group's mandate visibly enjoyed the endorsement of Washington, the senior leadership at SCAP, the Japanese legislature and executive (notably in the Ministry of Education) was also telling. Finally, and importantly, the fact that some of the Division's advisors and staff were already, or were soon to become, prominent professionals in the circles of art and culture or among American scholars of Asian art indicates that this Occupation may well have been a case onto its own. In the words of Scott:

*This succession of distinguished scholars, the personal influences that they shared, the empathy each had for the Japanese people and their art as demonstrated by their vocational commitments and personal efforts, and the unbroken intellectual lineage harkening back to Morse, Fenollosa, and Okakura, was the vehicle through which the West in general, and the United States in particular, significantly impacted the cultural property perspectives of Japan.*³⁵⁶

To summarize these main points, we can conclude:

First, there was a clearly articulated official policy by the War Department, endorsed by General MacArthur from the early moments of the Occupation, to protect Japan's cultural property and assets. This created the right environment, a supportive canvas upon which it was possible for the few staff at A&M to help put in place protective measures, at a time when culture would have been at the lowest echelon of pressing 'to-do' lists, both on the American and the Japanese sides.

³⁵⁵ Until 1943 and even throughout the war, the Ministry of Education continued designating cultural property, but thereafter it too focused all efforts on removal and safe storage of cultural treasures. Scott (2003), p. 351.

³⁵⁶ Scott (2003), p. 358.

Second, within SCAP itself the A&M team, though small, had in its ranks competent experts who also possessed enough diplomatic skills to work ably with the US military and with the Japanese government. They also complemented perfectly the work of their Japanese counterparts, prominent scholars who worked as field representatives or examiners, interpreters or advisors to the Division. These intertwined networks of expertise laid the foundations in those crucial early months, so that Japan's pre-war efforts at cultural property inventory and protection systems not only were not lost, but emerged even stronger by 1950, despite the more than chaotic post-war conditions.

Third, the word 'democratization' with regard to access to cultural goods was part of the basic instructions of the A&M Division. Even the Imperial Household Agency's acquiescing to an annual two-week public opening of the famed Shōsō-in treasury in Nara, till then off-limits to all but a selected few, was one outcome of these subtle influences and transformations. There were even tentative lists drawn up by the A&M staff for possible prefectural museum networks. Though most such prefectural museums did not come into existence until well into the 1960s and 1970s, it is nonetheless interesting how much time and human capital SCAP was willing to invest in order to think through Japan's cultural property and institutions.

It is true that all these developments could have taken place anyway, gradually, after the Occupation, but they would not have happened so soon had the Occupation ignored, or worse, abused the defeated enemy's cultural property. We can speculate on further damages that could have been inflicted on cultural property of Japan. Furthermore, there emerges a certain solidarity and convergence of ideas, between the American and Japanese experts and scholars, towards similar goals for the protection and use of cultural assets. This was an auspicious arrangement that, as Takemae has noted, did not occur only in the CIE of which the Arts and Monuments was a part, but across SCAP in general.

Japanese employees [...] in some staff echelons, such as Legal Section and Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) outnumbered Americans. Most of these individuals, although occupying subordinate positions were not only highly qualified for the tasks they performed but firmly committed to the ideals of reform. Serving as the eyes and ears of the staff sections, Japanese [...] were consulted daily on matters large and small.³⁵⁷

It is possible to conclude that rather than any single person, policy or project on its own, it is the accumulation of all of the above factors that helped create an effective 'cultural policy' at GHQ/SCAP, to the great benefit of Japan's cultural property and also future generations, who can still enjoy the fruits of that thoughtfulness and farsightedness.

³⁵⁷ Takemae (2002), p. 141.

Beate Sirota Gordon, who had grown up in Japan and served as the first civilian woman on MacArthur's staff, from December 1945 to May 1947, described in these terms the continued post-war passion of Japanese for art and culture—in this case talking of music:

*When the war ended and the Occupation forces arrived, the Japanese were concerned mostly with keeping body and soul together. Nonetheless the music schools which had been devastated by bombs started gathering instruments....*³⁵⁸

Till the end of her life, Sirota Gordon retained her optimism about the state of the Japanese arts and her faith in the power of its culture. She also remained convinced that the American Occupation had had a positive influence on culture, as on many other aspects of Japanese society.³⁵⁹ We can conclude this section with her remarks at the Norfolk Symposium, which though about the performing arts of Japan may be equally apt for much that has been argued throughout this chapter:

*The current state of the arts in Japan is excellent. Just as Japan is exporting Toyotas and Minoltas and Hondas, Japan is sending to North America such innovative groups as the off-beat Sankai Juku dance troupe, the theater of Suzuki Tadashi, and the music of Takemitsu Toru, as well as Kabuki, Bunraku and the Japanese classical dance and music. It is interesting to note that many Americans are now studying Japanese arts both in the United States and in Japan. Who would ever have predicted that there would be a Shakuhachi school in New York with thirty pupils, with a teacher who is an American? Who would ever have predicted that Queens College or Wesleyan University would have a course in Japanese Koto? Who would ever have thought that the most prestigious orchestra in the United States would have a Japanese conductor? Who would ever have thought that such universities as the University of Hawaii and the University of Kansas would teach young Americans Kabuki acting techniques? And so the seeds sown in the Occupation of Japan have borne fruit. Not only have they brought the Japanese performing arts into the forefront internationally, but they have made Americans appreciate and respect the arts of what used to be an alien country.*³⁶⁰

³⁵⁸ Sirota Gordon, Norfolk Symposium (1984), p. 137.

³⁵⁹ Interview with Sirota Gordon, January 2011, New York City.

³⁶⁰ Sirota Gordon, Norfolk Symposium (1984/1988), p. 138.

Chapter V
IN COMPARATIVE CONTEXT

Introduction

Following the devastation of WWII, the international community came together to establish stricter guidelines for the protection of cultural property in times of war, leading to the adoption of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the international community's most important legal instrument in this field. The 1954 Convention was, however, considered lacking in teeth in the aftermath of the second Gulf War and the Balkans War and was further strengthened by additional Protocols in 1999. Yet, as we see almost daily in the news, the problem of protecting cultural heritage, in particular sites and monuments, has hardly disappeared. As the tools of war and destruction have become more sophisticated and as the epidemic of widely accessible arms spread, the problem has only grown exponentially over the past six decades. Now it is not just nation-states that have the means to bomb treasures of millennia—any terrorist group or deranged individual can do the job just as well.

It is not the intention of this research to conduct a legal analysis of the 1954 Convention. Nor do I wish to suggest that the cultural property situation of Afghanistan in 2001, or of Iraq in 2003, was similar to the situation of Japan in August of 1945. In the Afghan case, 30 years of internal and external wars and the ensuing poverty and chaos had severely diminished the country's cultural institutions, indeed all institutions of state. In the case of Iraq, its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and, following defeat in 1991, 10 years of international sanctions had already weakened one of the most noteworthy collections of cultural treasures in the Middle East. Prior to occupation then, both countries had been, for decades, under tyranny. In the case of Afghanistan, the tyranny came from the Taliban, who had little understanding of or respect for the rule of law or the value of Afghanistan's pre-Islamic cultural heritage. In the case of Iraq the tyranny belonged to Saddam Hussein, who used the rich heritage of his country mostly for the aggrandizement of his own dictatorship. Still, undeniably there were many cultural assets left to protect had there been serious attention accorded it early on, at the outset of the occupation planning phase. As in most reactive wars of revenge or profit, however, the occupying power(s) did not quite understand where they were, why they were there, who they were dealing with, and what was precious or important for the society they had just invaded.

To recapitulate the obvious: every country possesses its own specific culture and circumstances. Reasonable implications of this observation would have been to assume that Afghanistan and Iraq would be studied by the to-be-occupiers as thoroughly as Japan had been. Precisely because every society's historical, social, religious and cultural conditions and heritage are so specific and different, their study and understanding must *per force* inform and influence any given military occupation. Had this homework been done, it is possible that many problems in the early phases of the invasions in 2001 and 2003 (in Afghanistan and Iraq, respectively) could

at least have been anticipated. Indeed, getting the cultural dimensions ‘right’ can well be a reflection of the general degree of success or failure of the rest of an occupational undertaking.³⁶¹ Considering the importance accorded to the term ‘cultural sensitivity’ throughout this study, it seems necessary to analyze how and to what degree the preparations for the Occupation of Japan throughout WWII had been considered, *mutatis mutandis*, during the preparations and conduct of the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq. While it may be impossible to compare the different countries occupied, it should be possible to look at one set of occupation plans and policies of the occupying power, and within that framework consider their application, or absence thereof, in other cases.

This section therefore seeks to explore whether or not decisions to include any meaningful or comprehensive plans and policies for cultural property protection were representative of a larger set of attitudes and *modus operandi* that affected the conduct American occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq. At the time of these invasions the United States was not a signatory of 1954 Hague Convention (it would join in 2009) but even had it been a signatory, there is little reason to believe this could have equipped American occupiers with the kind of knowledge, expertise and prior planning necessary to understand the fragile, traumatized and violent societies they were threading into.³⁶² The kinds of personal and institutional relationships that had existed for decades among Japanese and American scholars did not exist, in either cases of Afghanistan or Iraq: Cold War politics dominated all else in Afghanistan, and the politics of oil dictated the essence of US relations with Iraq.

This review of occupational failures in the realm of cultural heritage protection in Afghanistan and in Iraq, however, is naturally restrained and limited. Each case deserves a full-fledged study of its own. I have merely tried to signal that in the realm of cultural heritage protection these more recent occupations, too, should be judged while keeping in mind the path taken half a century earlier in Japan by American occupying forces. Observing the unfolding failures that marked efforts every step of the way both in Iraq and Afghanistan, and directly or indirectly impacted both countries’ cultural heritage, carries sobering lessons. Revisiting them may feel like an intolerable exercise, were it not for the fact that one must hope that future occupiers could learn from them, and to wish that societies so ancient and once so rich and resilient may one day pull themselves out of their current miserable predicament to find their rightful places in the community of cultural nations.

³⁶¹ Examples of some United Nations Special Representatives, such as the Italian Aldo Ajello in Mozambique and the Brazilian Sergio Vieira de Mello in East Timor, come to mind.

³⁶² See Corine Wegener, an archeologist, member of the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield and a former US military personnel, in ‘The 1954 Hague Convention and Preserving Cultural Heritage’ in *Heritage Conservation and Archeology*, Archeological Institute of America, October 19, 2010. <https://www.archaeological.org/sites/default/files/files/Wegener%20v2.pdf>

5.1 Afghanistan

I first visited Afghanistan in 1967 with my family, traveling by land from Islamabad and crossing the border near the famed Khyber Pass. I recall watching armed men walking around: the Pass was already (in)famous as a place where everyone openly carried weapons. Nonetheless, I also recall there was little sense of threat or insecurity, even for a foreign family like ours (despite the presence of unveiled women among us, including my mother). It may have been a weaponized land, but it certainly did not seem violent. A little more than a decade later, coups-d'état, political assassinations, the Soviet invasion, regional tensions and Cold War politics became harbingers of the slow motion destruction of Afghanistan.

I returned to Kabul after a 35-year absence, in September 2002, 10 months after the Taliban regime was toppled by an American-led invasion. Words cannot describe the changes the city had undergone in just a few decades. A grey, dusty and sad place, of bullet-riddled walls and rubble-filled streets, a city that decades of war and neglect had turned into a pitiful ghost of its previous self. The population seemed, above all, tired, with little resources, energy or visible space left for culture—mere survival, understandably, was the priority for a majority of the people. I could also see what little remained of some of the Afghan capital's previous cultural and natural treasures: the Kabul National Museum, the Dulmaddin Palace, the intricate and vibrant bazaars, the local parks—all turned to rubble. Of a country so rich in heritage that Nancy Hatch Dupree, the foremost foreign authority on Afghan heritage, has said “[it] *is so rich—put a shovel anywhere and you will come back with something!*” there seemed little trace left, at least in the capital.³⁶³

5.1.1 Afghan Wars Continue

Following a period of internal strife in the 1970s, the Soviet Union, concerned with losing influence to the West, manipulated the overthrow and assassination of president Daoud Khan in April 1978. It then outright invaded Afghanistan in December 1979 and installed a pro-communist regime. Despite the Soviets' superior military power, however, resistance to their occupation—notably by the Mujahideen, supported by money and military aid from various sources including Western, Iranian and Saudi—would not be quelled. Tremendous bloodshed ensued, and finally a peace treaty was signed in 1988. Despite the retreat of Soviet forces the following year, the disastrous decade had sowed the seeds of violence, and internal war soon resumed. In 1996, the Taliban faction, brutalized by war and brutal itself, took power and imposed its hardline version of Islam. For a while Afghans entertained hopes that at least some semblance of order might prevail, but as the extremes of the Taliban rule became clear, the population's misery deepened, poverty worsened, human rights abuses multiplied, and millions of Afghans were forced to become internally displaced or refugees in Iran and Pakistan. The war-ridden country also turned into a haven for terrorist groups.

³⁶³ <http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12254&mid=15756&ItemID=32424>
Retrieved October 19, 2015.

The cultural heritage of Afghanistan was in free fall throughout this time. In March 2001, the Taliban, in what to them was a moment of showmanship, but to Afghanistan and the rest of the world, the loss of centuries, blew up the standing Buddhas of Bamiyan. And on September 11 of that same year, the terrorist group Al-Qaeda launched four attacks on the United States. In response and within three weeks, the US military mobilized its troops and the bombing campaigns against Afghanistan, where Al-Qaeda was based, were launched in October 2001.³⁶⁴

The initial objective of toppling the Taliban was accomplished in less than two months. The following phases of the Occupation, proclaiming to introduce democracy, elections and the strengthening of national institutions, started with much fanfare but had already faltered by 2005-2006, with the resurgence of the Taliban, multiplication of terrorist attacks and suicide bombings, and increasing deterioration of the security situation. When, in December 2014, US and NATO forces announced an end to their combat mission in Afghanistan, the longest war conducted by the United States had provided scant certainty for the future stability of the country or the region.³⁶⁵

After almost 15 years of the US-led occupation, the death of some 92,000 military and civilians—American, Afghan and other—and the expenditure of close to a trillion US dollars, Afghanistan still remains at the lowest ranks of the world development index.³⁶⁶ Its government, after a drawn-out and divisive presidential election in 2014, is far from stable and by any standard still faces tremendous challenges to its survival. The Taliban remain a constant and indeed rising threat.³⁶⁷

It is difficult, therefore, to write of cultural property in a void, absent the larger context. What went wrong in the occupation of Afghanistan in the realm of culture will not make full sense without at least obliquely addressing the larger question of what may have gone wrong with the

³⁶⁴ This rundown of those terrible events is a shortcut. Suffice it to say that there were no Afghan citizens involved in the 9/11 attacks—Osama bin Laden and his top men were citizens of Saudi Arabia, as were 15 of the 19 people who perpetrated the attacks. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-12024253> Retrieved September 28, 2015.

³⁶⁵ <http://www.britannica.com/event/Afghanistan-War> Retrieved October 23, 2015. The article also repeatedly refers to the internal divisions and disagreements within United States civilian and military circles, and tensions between the two, regarding Afghan war policies. This lack of a shared vision of the role of the United States and its allies in Afghanistan sapped the mission of its effectiveness from the start.

³⁶⁶ <http://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/figures/2015/SUMMARY%20CHART%20-%20Direct%20War%20Death%20Toll%20to%20April%202015.pdf> for human losses, and <http://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/figures/2014/Summary%20Costs%20of%20War%20NC%20JUNE%2026%202014.pdf>, for costs of war. Costs of War Project, The Watson Institute, Brown University, data as at April 2015.

³⁶⁷ After Hamid Karzai, president of Afghanistan for 13 years, new presidential elections were held in April and June 2014, disputed until September by two rival candidates. The president Ashraf Ghani, an anthropologist and former World Bank official, is one of the Afghan expats who from the early post-Taliban days decided to return to his country. Despite early approval both domestically and internationally (see below) the fact that he must share power with his previous rival, and the rising power of the Taliban, have blighted his presidency from the beginning. *The Economist*, September 27, 2014, pp. 25-26, and *The Economist*, 13 December, 2014, Online. Retrieved April 2, 2015.

occupation of Afghanistan *in general*. Considering the overwhelming military advantage of the US-led forces (and the quasi-primitive conditions of the Taliban and their allies in late 2001), military victory should have been but a given, and a smooth and early stabilization phase a realistic objective. Instead, despite overwhelming military dominance, and an endless flow of international money, expertise, projects and assistance, the situation remains precarious and is in fact getting worse, with a possible and catastrophic refugee crisis looming large.³⁶⁸ That precariousness, I would argue, has some of its origins also in initial cultural insensitivities, ignorance and especially sloppy preparations.

‘*The country we shall be invading...*’

By any measure Afghanistan was in dire conditions before the October 2001 arrival of American-led foreign troops. In the words of Dexter Filkins, a reporter with the *New York Times* and *New Yorker* magazine who has covered the Afghan and Iraq wars extensively, the fact that so much of Afghanistan was decimated after 22 years of internal wars (in his words, “*not just the infrastructure, but the people. And there is really nothing to work with. Everything—everything—has to be built from zero*”) made it an overwhelming challenge, immensely difficult for any outsider to address, especially perhaps the hurried and impatient Americans.³⁶⁹

Thus even in the best of conditions the task of reconstruction was already daunting to begin with. So it is fair to ask just how the planning process unfolded. How and how thoroughly did the Americans prepare for the invasion? How well did they study the society, history, geography, religion, culture and languages of Afghanistan, before dispatching the troops? What commissions, committees, sub-committees, working groups or task forces were mobilized, to advise and train the military, where were such programs based and how were they assessed? Who were the scholars who advised the Bush Administration, how knowledgeable were they about the old Afghanistan and the Afghanistan of 2001, how embedded in the actual war and occupation planning, how early did they reach Kabul and what were the resources at their disposal? Hence, a few characteristics of the Afghan invasion and occupation need to be recalled, to understand how unsuited it may have been to the situation in 2001, and how oblivious of the longer history and culture of Afghanistan.

First, the American presence in Afghanistan was declared from the start as a *military operation*. Yet immediately and in practice, as in Iraq later, it became obvious that nation building would be an essential requirement, if early and swift military victories were to be sustained in any

³⁶⁸ Through the comments—and indeed personal stories—of participants in the Hiroshima Fellowship for Afghanistan, I was familiar with the scope of Afghanistan’s brain drain, which as the article below mentions, is still one of the highest worldwide, a debilitating problem for the country and part of a recurrent pattern across much of the developing world. http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/22/opinion/the-next-refugee-crisis-afghanistan.html?emc=edit_th_20151022&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=62745058&_r=0 Retrieved October 22, 2015.

³⁶⁹ In a Q&A organized by *The New Yorker Magazine* in June 24, 2011, Filkins, responding to a question as to why the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq had gone so badly compared to Germany and Japan, said “*Different countries [...]. But also different Americas. That’s a hard one. I can’t imagine two countries harder to deal with than Iraq or Afghanistan.*” <http://www.newyorker.com/books/ask-the-author/ask-the-author-live-dexter-filkins-on-afghanistan-2> Retrieved October 16, 2015.

meaningful manner. The problem was that other than the purely military aspects, few serious nation-building plans had been thought through or drawn out by the American forces, despite it being obvious that the military part of the operation even if initially successful could and would only be a stopgap measure, after which there was need for back-up plans.

Second, once the shift to the stabilization phase started, a plethora of actors became involved, with the resulting dilution of responsibilities. The list is long: in addition to all the Afghan parties involved, the main external players included the United States and NATO forces, the United Nations, the European Union as well as a number of individually influential countries: India, China, Iran, Pakistan, all neighbors of Afghanistan and each with important and direct vested interests. This amalgam of contrasting styles and objectives hardly lent itself to rational planning or efficient execution.

Third, at the time of the US-led invasion the economy of Afghanistan was far from being 'normal', yet it was given the full liberal, market-oriented treatment. For me personally this is a key point. In an interview entitled "From Failed Interventions to a New Economic Strategy for Afghanistan" the economist Graciana del Castillo highlights some fundamental aspects of all that has gone wrong in the economic realm in Afghanistan since the 2001 invasion.³⁷⁰ The first mistake, del Castillo argued, was to believe that a postwar economic development strategy was the same as development in normal times, ignoring the fact that attaining a peace economy after decades of war requires that dogma about economic imperatives be set aside temporarily. Standard economic and financial rules and constraints needed to be suspended, at least briefly, to allow instead for the implementation of policies that could respond primarily to short-term needs rather than mid- or long-term ones, notably the creation of jobs.³⁷¹

According to del Castillo, the need was for an over-arching and shared vision that could transcend the purely development objectives imposed by the donor community and especially the United States. This latter had channeled a vast portion of its aid to the security sector (much of US financial contributions were tied to its military presence, or else benefited foremost security-related companies back in the United States). If these funds had been used as a matter of priority to revive rural areas and agriculture for example, the security may not have deteriorated so rapidly, and Afghanistan could have been in a different economic and security situation today. In a volatile post-war situation, del Castillo argues, immediate jobs and a sense of hope and *dignity*

³⁷⁰ *A UNU Conversation*, United Nations University, Tokyo, June 5, 2014.

³⁷¹ According to del Castillo, this problem afflicts much of post-war reconstruction today. Economic reconstruction under the Marshall Plan was very different from the end of the Cold War.²⁶² For Del Castillo, Afghanistan continues to have a tremendously distorted economy; it has been growing at 9 percent but such growth is 'meaningless' as the fruits have gone to just a few. The growth in other words has been mainly in construction and services, largely for the benefit of the occupying forces and the international aid community. Evidently, such a model is unsustainable. (<http://gracianadelcastillo.com/2014/09/11/where-does-afghanistan-stand-thirteen-years-after-911/>)

are far more pressing and essential than long term, purely macroeconomic and financial considerations.³⁷²

So the economic framework was shaky, and probably the main reason for this was that the Occupation had not done a proper study and assessment of past failures and successes with regard to Afghanistan, nor properly understood the underlying pillars of Afghanistan's social and historical context.

In a 2011 *Foreign Affairs* review of his book, *The Wars of Afghanistan*, Peter Tomsen, a former US career diplomat who had been assigned to Afghanistan before, during and after the Taliban reign refers to Afghanistan as follows: “no political system or ideology imposed by an outside power is likely to survive there, and any attempt to coax political change from within must be grounded in a deep knowledge of local culture and customs.”³⁷³ Tomsen was to make the following observation during his testimony to the United States Congress in 2003:

*The stunning American-led military victory in Afghanistan which ousted the Taliban-al Qaeda regime has not been followed up by an effective, adequately funded reconstruction strategy to help Afghans rebuild their country and restore their self-governing institutions. The initial enthusiasm genuinely felt by the Afghan people that peace was returning has clearly faded. . . .If present trends continue, five years from now Afghanistan is likely to look very much like it does today: reconstruction stagnation, a weak central government starved of resources, unable to extend its influence to the regions where oppressive warlords reign, opium production soars, and guerrilla warfare in Afghan-Pakistani border areas generated by Pakistan-backed Muslim extremists continues to inflict casualties on coalition and Afghan forces.*³⁷⁴

These overall planning, economic and structural problems are deeply relevant to the themes of this study, and to understanding the background to the Occupation, before we can turn to the study of the realm of culture *per se*. Furthermore, culture, in the case of Afghanistan as elsewhere, should be considered not just in its current circumstances, but within a much longer

³⁷² <http://bostonreview.net/world/graciana-del-castillo-afghanistans-misguided-economy> Retrieved April 1, 2015. In an interview in March 2016, Sima Samar, a medical doctor, former minister for women's rights, head of the independent human rights commission and one of the most respected Afghan women in the country, reiterated the same theme, namely the failure of reconstruction policies of international donors who, despite the sacrifice of many and the large sums of money spent, lacked an overall 'united, long-term strategy' or who prematurely left the country, where there is 'not a lot of job opportunity, not a lot of clear reduction of poverty...' http://graduateinstitute.ch/home/relations-publiques/news-at-the-institute/news-archives.html/_/news/corporate/2016/sima-samar-donors-in-denial-abou Retrieved March 31, 2016.

³⁷³ <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/review-essay/2011-08-19/invading-afghanistan-then-and-now>, Retrieved August 13, 2015.

³⁷⁴ Peter Tomson, 'The Good War' pp. 52-53 in 'What have we learned? Lessons from Afghanistan and Iraq', *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2014, pp. 2-54. Tomson now believes that even this assessment may be overly optimistic.

historical arch. This seems essential: Afghanistan's image is so overwhelmingly removed from what one may consider 'a country of culture' and so "*tainted by images of turbaned men carrying rifles, that is essential to remind that over the centuries tribal conflicts did not imply the absence of a flourishing and rich culture*".³⁷⁵

5.1.2 Afghanistan's Arts and Monuments, Culture and Tradition: A Reminder

A prevailing assumption among 'nation-builders' working on Afghanistan was that after years of the Soviet invasion, civil war and Taliban rule, by the winter of 2001 there was precious little culture left to protect. This simplification proved dangerous and did not alert them to the complexity of the situation, nor to the wealth of treasures that could still be salvaged.³⁷⁶

For millennia Afghanistan has been a land of passage among civilizations: east to west, north to south, mountain to plain, Eurasia to Asia, an inexorable part of the Silk Road, a pathway for Buddhist, Zoroastrian, Greek, Persian, Roman, Hindu, Islamic or Russian ideas, rule and people, many of whom traversed it on the journey across the continent to China, and back. Every valley and gorge, and most of Afghanistan's cities—Kabul, Bamiyan, Kandahar, Kunduz, Herat—count their heritage not in centuries but in millennia. Afghanistan's cultural legacy is a tapestry of diverse influences, spanning at least 3000 years.

Almost 2500 years ago, Kabul was a major Achaemenid city. The region became predominantly Greek, then Buddhist during the Kushan period, Hindu after the arrival of Indian rulers and Muslim since the 8th century.³⁷⁷ The fusion of so many traditions is visible in the architecture, metalwork, pottery, textile and glasswork, and of course the features of the people.³⁷⁸ The Achaemenid Royal Roads linked the main cities of current Afghan territory in 500 BC, and the Oxus Treasures, today at the British Museum, give us a glimpse of the splendors of that era. Treasure troves of silver and gold coins remind of the wealth of the Greek, and Greco-Bactrian age, with the city of Ai Khanoum, one of the largest among '1000 bactrian cities', so much of it lost to brutal looting in the 1990s. The standing Buddha of Bamiyan and the Buddhist complex in Mes Aynak, the many Hindu temples across the land, the city of Herat, with its elaborate and extended Citadel dating back to the 15th century and considered by the great poet Rumi as the

³⁷⁵ Marcel A. Boisard, in email commentary, October 21, 2015.

³⁷⁶ See various substantive articles, from 2001 onward, in the *Culture in Development* special issue on Afghanistan's heritage: http://www.cultureindevelopment.nl/News/Dossier_Heritage_Afghanistan Retrieved throughout October 2015.

³⁷⁷ *The Lonely Planet* guide of Kabul <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/afghanistan/kabul/history> Retrieved October 21, 2015.

³⁷⁸ 'More enduring indigenous examples of art and craftsmanship are found among the diverse creative traditions brought to Afghanistan over many centuries by Artisans traveling to this pivotal central Asian land from east, west, north and south along the routes of conquest and commerce. From 1978 onwards, however, the disruptions of war hastened the decline of crafts already affected by the introduction of modern materials, production methods, imports and commercialization.' Quote from *The Dictionary of Art* edited by Jane Turner, Oxford, 2003, pp. 187-189.

most beautiful city of the world, speak of great culture and civilizations.³⁷⁹ All these treasures—so many of them lost, so much not yet even *found* or excavated—should be constant reminders of what a *land of culture* Afghanistan in fact is, notwithstanding its tragic current circumstances.³⁸⁰ Forgetting this reality may distort a real understanding of the country and its people.³⁸¹

It is to be expected, therefore, that such a crossroad of so many rulers, religions and languages would also be, in terms of its ethnic makeup, profoundly diverse. Afghanistan's population has long been divided among three main tribes: the Pathans (of Turco-Iranian descent), the Tajiks (of Iranian descent) and the Hazara (probably descendants of the Mongols), plus a myriad of smaller ethnicities; one can see this melange in the physical beauty of the Afghans, the ethnic mixes resulting in their stunning features. 'Otherness' therefore is a big part of the physiological and psychological make-up of the population.

So much racial and cultural division in the population in good times has been a source of the legendary dynamism and energy of Afghans, but periodically and in bad times has been a curse, one source of the many debilitating internal wars the country has suffered throughout its history—it seems that diversity has more often divided rather than united the people. Still, a specifically 'Afghan' culture and sense of identity is certainly there—but more often than not those elements that could unite have been downplayed, whereas those that could divide have been reinforced. A sustainable and successful policy to create a culture that unites and turns so much diversity into a force rather than a weakness has been absent. We shall return to this point later in the chapter.

Cultural heritage in the 20th century

Roughly then three periods mark Afghanistan's cultural history: (1) the millennium till the arrival of Islam; (2) the Islamic period; and (3) the Western style dominated twentieth century. Awareness for the need to have Afghan museums dates back to this third period when, notwithstanding political unrest and wars, a number of primarily British travelers and pioneers visiting the country started taking and sending their finds, mainly ancient coins, to the British Museum in London. Following WWI, cultural cooperation with France, thanks in part to the Aga Khan, resulted in 1922 in the creation of a Délégation Archéologique Française de l'Afghanistan (the French Archeological Delegation to Afghanistan, henceforth referred to as

³⁷⁹ One of the most extensive, still not excavated Buddhist complexes in the world, dating some more than 2600 years, recently compromised by a Chinese project for the development of vast copper mines directly beneath the archeological site. http://www.cultureindevelopment.nl/News/Dossier_Heritage_Afghanistan/1746/Help_save_the_cultural_heritage_of_Afghanistan Retrieved October 22, 2015.

³⁸⁰ <http://www.cemml.colostate.edu/cultural/09476/afgh02-03enl.html> and http://www.todayszaman.com/national_war-torn-afghanistan-needs-worlds-help-to-preserve-cultural-heritage_246217.html Retrieved October 22, 2015.

³⁸¹ A superb and enlightening exhibition of Kabul Museum treasures was held at the Kyushu National Museum (Visited in February 2016). The exhibition then moved to Ueno National Museum. http://www.kyuhaku.jp/exhibition/exhibition_s42.html

DAFA, its acronym) which received exclusive rights to survey and excavate for a period of 30 years [...]. DAFA did exceptional archeological work in the country in the following decades, and the finds from its expeditions were shared between the National Museum in Kabul (henceforth the Kabul Museum) and the Musée Guimet in Paris, under the joint control of the Afghan king and the director of DAFA.³⁸² This arrangement was to continue throughout WWII, with great benefit to both partners, thus resulting in the preservation of treasures of outstanding importance.³⁸³

France lost these exclusive rights in 1962. And from 1964 onwards, no archeological finds were legally allowed out of the country, with the newly created Archeological Survey of Afghanistan overseeing the work of all foreign teams. Thus finds from Soviet, British, American, German and Japanese excavations of prehistoric and historic sites [...] were placed in the Kabul Museum. In addition, site museums were created at Bamiyan following the restoration of the site (1974-1978), and at the Buddhist monastery of Tepe Shotor in Hadda (destroyed during bombings in 1979). In addition Afghanistan, actually earlier than many countries in the region, had also created a relatively comprehensive system to archive and protect its cultural treasures (in the 1960s it was at the forefront of techniques for archiving and organizing artifacts).³⁸⁴

The Kabul Museum I saw in 2002, a huge rubble, therefore had a rich history and possessed—until not so long ago—one of the region’s richest collections of treasures, spanning thousands of years.³⁸⁵

The Kabul Museum ranked among the most opulent depositories in the world, with a collection that recorded 50,000 years of the cultural history of Afghanistan. Although the artifacts were all boxed in 1991 for safekeeping during the civil war, the museum building was extensively damaged during bombing in 1993. Soon

³⁸² http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/pdf/past_future_part7_thru_part9.pdf p. 269 and onward. Retrieved September 1, 2015.

³⁸³ Marcel Boisard pointed out to me, however, that precisely the extraordinary quality of the work of DAFA, and other foreign expeditions and partners, could have indirectly contributed to the absence of any sense of ownership among ordinary Afghans for their cultural heritage and treasures. Except maybe for a small, scholarly elite, these treasures—their historical significance, their spiritual and material value—remained alien to a vast majority of Afghans. This point is important, as it applies to so many other post-conflict countries as well. Email correspondence, October 21, 2015.

³⁸⁴ http://www.cemml.colostate.edu/cultural/09476/pdf/AIA_Afghanistan_address_lowres.pdf Retrieved October 2, 2015.

One may ask, what kind of a cultural country Afghanistan could have become, had it taken the path of building upon its tremendous cultural heritage and not fallen prey to wars?

³⁸⁵ Nancy Hatch Dupree, for the UNAMA magazine, March 2, 2010. <http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12254&mid=15756&ItemID=32366> Retrieved August 5, 2015.

afterwards artifacts from the museum began to appear on the internet art market and the ultimate fate of the collection is uncertain'.³⁸⁶

The recent destructions of Afghanistan's cultural heritage cannot be attributed solely to the Taliban or the US-led war, without remembering the devastation brought upon it and more broadly upon the social fabric of the country by the Soviet invasion of 1979. In a written interview, two scholars who witnessed those years shared with me the following:

Our cultural wealth was harshly and systematically attacked by the Soviet invasion. Russians killed intellectuals who could have otherwise contributed to the country's prosperity... Many professors such as Ustaad Alaam and Prof. Shojae were killed or were victims of brain drain [...].

Russians started literacy courses without considering Afghan culture and under the name of cultural revolution changed the educational curriculum. Dialectic materialism was incorporated into the educational system [ignoring] Afghanistan's Islamic culture. That is why [in the face of these assaults] people revolted and took to guns and resistance [...].

During the latest stages of the communist regime we were even lacking for ink and paper for calligraphy -- even in the City of Herat, a place well known for its long tradition of art and culture. So the cultural defragmentation had already begun and had its impact long before the US occupation could take it to the next black hole.³⁸⁷

In other words, the decline and disintegration of the fabric of Afghan society did not happen overnight, but came as a result of cumulative, and increasingly destructive, internal and external events and interventions. Corrective and counter-balancing measures were always to prove insufficient, but any occupation should have considered this history carefully.

³⁸⁶ 'Afghanistan' in *The Dictionary of Art* edited by Jane Turner, p. 212.

³⁸⁷ Interview (email) January 4, 2015 by Dr. Tawab Seljuki with parents, Bijan Seljuki and Abeda Seljuki, formerly from the ministry of culture and the ministry of education, respectively. Interviews edited for brevity and clarity.

5.1.3 Culture, Not a Consideration?

Considering how rapidly the decision to launch a war against Afghanistan was taken in Washington D.C., and the limited amount of scholarly input or work informing the process, it is not surprising that culture, in general, was a quasi non-existent consideration in the overall American planning and conduct of war.³⁸⁸ One would have hoped that this could have at least been rectified once the occupation was in place, but any hopes for such a rapid recovery and patient focus disintegrated with Washington's preoccupation with the invasion of Iraq.

From early on, the operating assumption in the Bush Administration seems to have been that Iraq was more important than Afghanistan. The financial resources or competent individuals that could and should have been mobilized for Afghanistan were thus pulled out and put to work on Iraq. In an analysis of why a 'Good War' like the one in Afghanistan went bad, David Rhode and David Sanger of the *New York Times* interviewed some two dozen military, diplomatic, security and cooperation experts. One of the most repeated refrains about why the Occupation started going so badly in Afghanistan was that the United States had quickly diverted much of its resources, and some of its best and brightest experts—from counterterrorism experts to reconstruction officials—to Iraq. The consequences of that shift were to be dramatic.

In October 2002, Robert Grenier, a former director of the C.I.A.'s counterintelligence center, visited the new Kuwait City headquarters of Lt. Gen. David McKiernan, who was already planning the Iraq invasion [and] asked General McKiernan what his intelligence needs would be in Iraq. The answer was simple. "They wanted as much as they could get," Mr. Grenier said.

Throughout late 2002 and early 2003, Mr. Grenier said in an interview, "the best experienced, most qualified people who we had been using in Afghanistan shifted over to Iraq," including the agency's most skilled counterterrorism specialists and Middle East and paramilitary operatives.³⁸⁹

In the case of Afghanistan, there were, of course, numerous *other* international players responsible for the civilian tasks, many of which did get involved in the immediate aftermath of the invasion, and indeed some of which were specifically dedicated to culture and cultural heritage. Within the larger United Nations umbrella of organizations, headed by the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), UNESCO with its high profile but limited

³⁸⁸ <http://www.cemml.colostate.edu/cultural/09476/afgh01.html> Retrieved October 2, 2015.

³⁸⁹ <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/12/world/asia/12afghan.html> Retrieved August 25, 2015.

resources was naturally the leader in the cultural realm. The Aga Khan Foundation³⁹⁰, and countries like France and the UK, with their historical connections to Afghanistan's cultural heritage, or like Italy or Japan, more recently engaged in heritage protection work abroad and which traditionally accord greater importance to culture and cultural institutions, also mobilized funds and other resources to focus specifically on cultural preservation.

Nonetheless, despite these relatively important and committed actors, cultural heritage protection was simply not part of the mainstream narrative of the invasion, and consequently not part of the military's priorities in the early phase of the Occupation. By the time the security situation started deteriorating dramatically (roughly around 2005-2006), cultural initiatives and priorities were further marginalized, due to other pressing priorities and the general rush to enhance security. In short, even the most important actors and entities, not embedded within a unified occupation and with little or no influence over the military planning and occupation from the start, and left to their own devices with rather *ad hoc* time-frames and resources, suffered from a lack of coordination and the dilution of mission objectives. It is quite difficult to develop a vision in such precarious conditions; the disparity of the actors had led to a disparity of the cultural mission itself.

Leadership, too, was essential. We saw in Japan the difference that the official stance of a Stimson or a MacArthur made, particularly the impact of their early official communications and instructions regarding the protection of their former enemy's cultural heritage. The disregard of the US political and military leadership concerning Iraq's cultural heritage will be later pointed out. In the case of Afghanistan, while the rhetoric about culture abounded (in particular following the shock of the destruction of the Buddhas of Bamiyan), in actual reality culture was simply a marginal consideration when it came to dollars, boots and relevant expertise on the ground. The international civilian entities charged with its protection simply did not—do not—have the resources to do the job in such difficult conditions on their own. In an interview in 2010, the then head of the UNESCO Kabul Office for example gave a succinct description of his agency's goals, but admitting implicitly the challenges it faced to reach them. The inherent weakness of cultural actors to place culture at the central table of priorities in the often haphazard and feverish attempts that mark the early post conflict reconstruction phase is not limited to Afghanistan, but has been further exacerbated by that country's tremendous challenges, including in the security sector.

³⁹⁰ The AKF deserves particular mention. More than most international organizations, or even governments, the AKF has had vision, credibility, long term presence in the region, and core funding, to act as a pillar for preserving cultural heritage in Afghanistan, notably in Bamiyan, where its preservation work has centered around Band Kabir, cave-Buddhas. http://www.cultureindevelopment.nl/News/Dossier_Heritage_Afghanistan/1675/AGA_KHAN_TRUST_FOR_CULTURE Retrieved October 23, 2015. *As an overview of the worldwide mandate of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC)..., it focuses on the physical, social, cultural and economic revitalization of communities in the Muslim world. It includes the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, the Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme, the Aga Khan Music Initiative in Central Asia, the on-line resource ArchNet.org and the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The Museums & Exhibitions unit coordinates the development of a number of museum and exhibition projects.*

Quite a number of cultural sites suffer from the effect of development, namely, the Jam Minaret and also the old city of Herat. Due to road constructions and not respecting cultural policies, some damage has already been found.... UNESCO is trying to promote how we can respect the agreement on the protection of these very rich cultural heritages with the government. [...] But we also understand that development and heritage should go together and complement each other... In other words, cultural heritage is a way for the country to develop itself.³⁹¹

It should be clear from all this that unless culture in general and heritage protection in particular are a mainstreamed part of reconstruction efforts from the *earliest planning stages*, culture will always be playing catch-up, pushed to a small corner and ultimately made irrelevant.

Progress has of course not been entirely absent. As mentioned to me by Nagaoka Masanori of the UNESCO Kabul Office, a national Heritage Management Advisory Board was set up by the government in 2013, with the objective of enhancing coordination across ministries. Efforts are also underway to make of the Bamiyan Valley a significant cultural tourism hub, despite the many challenges that still lie ahead.³⁹² UNESCO is also pressing for a more robust national law for the protection of cultural heritage, to try and slow the bleeding of looted treasures that are being illegally taken out of the country.³⁹³

It deserves repetition that none of the national or international actors, however dedicated they may have been to culture and cultural heritage preservation, have had the staying power or carrying capacity of the Americans to exert a lasting influence. Sara Noshadi, culture project manager also at the UNESCO office in Kabul, said that budgets allocated to the cultural sector by the donor community were infinitely small in comparison with more ‘popular’ sectors: governance, construction, peace and security, education, etc.³⁹⁴ She also pointed to the inability

³⁹¹<http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=12322&ctl=Details&mid=15880&ItemID=35368&language=en-US> UNAMA magazine interview with Shigeru Aoyagi, 2010. Retrieved October 22, 2015.

³⁹² Nagaoka Masanori, in interview with the Wall Street Journal, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/rebuild-afghanistans-giant-buddhas-foot-shaped-pillars-give-legs-to-debate-1411594383>

³⁹³ Japan, South Korea, Italy, to some extent the UK and France are among international donors most likely to support projects related to preservation of culture in Afghanistan. The UNESCO country report notes of September 9, 2015 (Special thanks to Dr. Nagaoka Masanori, of the UNESCO Kabul Office, for his knowledgeable commentary and advice in this regard):

The Government is receiving financial and technical assistance with a view to their effective long-term management and preservation. For instance, the Government of Japan contributed over USD 6 million for the Bamiyan projects (2003 onwards), the Government of Italy for the projects in Herat, Jam and Bamiyan, USD 3 million (2013 onwards), the Government of Korea for Bamiyan Culture Center project, over USD 5 million, Ministry of Mines and Petroleum for Heritage and Extractive Industries project, USD 2 million, and so forth.

³⁹⁴ Sara Noshadi, Culture project manager, UNESCO Kabul, Afghanistan, Interview by skype (Kabul and Hiroshima). Noshadi was introduced to me by Amir Foladi, a former participant of the UNITAR Hiroshima World Heritage Series and who now works as the culture specialist for Bamiyan at the Aga Khan Foundation in Afghanistan. Interview, March 25, 2015.

to adapt ‘normal’ development assistance to post conflict situations, in particular in the cultural realm. As an example she pointed out that one kilometer of road-building in Afghanistan cost about one million USD; in comparison, the entire annual budget allocated to culture ministry for 2014 was only 10 million USD. The scales remain vastly different.³⁹⁵

Assessing the current situation and the place of culture in the list of national/international priorities, it seemed clear to Noshadi that culture remains one of the weakest sectors. Even though Afghanistan’s new president, Ashraf Ghani, seems to have greater ambitions in this regard, in the latest National Priority Program the word ‘culture’ does not even appear. The Ministry of Culture, traditionally, remains one of the weakest, in spite of being led for many years by a culture expert (a literary scholar and writer, Sayed Makhdoom Raheen, culture minister between 2001-2014). Furthermore, funding released for the ministry of culture is frequently delayed, with claims that the submissions by ministry staff were not thorough, and consequent accusations that the funds had not been spent on time, a dreaded chicken-and-egg situation.

As to international donors, according to Noshadi, they had clearly undervalued the role of culture. Part of this was due to the overwhelming and pressing needs in other sectors, as well as to the fragmented manner in which the ‘international community’ inevitably operates. But part was also due to the general lowering of intellectual capacities of the occupiers and of the branches of humanities or socio-cultural studies engaged with occupation and nation-building. This has carried real and grave consequences, considering that alongside geopolitical considerations, some of the root causes of Afghanistan’s internal conflicts can be directly traced to cultural-social, religious and tribal differences.³⁹⁶

In the interview, Noshadi identified three main players within the international community dealing with Afghan culture and cultural affairs. These were:

- 1) The Aga Khan Foundation—probably in terms of financial resources, longevity and credibility among the Afghans one of the more significant players in the cultural realm (as it is in many other parts of the Muslim world);
- 2) UNESCO—maybe the most *visible* and prominent international player in the field of culture, but also one which receives most of its funds on an *ad hoc* basis (i.e., funds allocated for much of its work are not part of the core budget of the Organization but project-based). UNESCO remains

³⁹⁵ <http://www.tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/17318-experts-say-afghan-roads-are-too-expensive-given-poor-quality-lack-of-maintenance> Retrieved October 25, 2015. Actually a December 2014 article puts the cost of one kilometer of road not at one but at *two* million US dollars, and suggests that most of the budget for maintenance and guarantees is provided for only one year, versus the 20-year period common in most other places.

³⁹⁶ For example initially the establishment of new National Identity Cards (funded by the international community) planned the mention of ethnicity ‘Pashtun; Hazara; Tajik etc.’—adding to perceptions of separation (this was later revoked: see email of Sara Noshadi of 30 March 2015). Dari is the Lingua Franca but some ministries are still divided according to Pashtoun/Tajik divisions.

however a key counterpart for, and advisor to, the government and other members of the international community. It also sustains and supports the work of other entities dealing with culture.

3) The French Archeological Delegation to Afghanistan (DAFA, mentioned earlier)—which has a long history of presence in Afghanistan, as well as rather in-depth knowledge and competencies. Since 2009, it has focused its efforts mostly on salvaging archeological remnants of the site of Mes Aynak, threatened by Chinese copper mining projects.

According to Noshadi these three entities actually work quite closely together, using their differences and complementarity by adhering to an implicit division of labor. In addition to these larger foundations and international organizations, a number of smaller NGOs, or academic or scholarly entities, too, carry out culture-related work. None, however, were or are in any position to create or sustain a *system*, nor do they have the wherewithal to do so in the long term, resulting in their work usually ending up as becoming *ad hoc*. Furthermore, because most international donors continue to have unrealistic and *ad hoc* terms and timelines—usually requiring that project funds be spent within 6-12 months—this greatly impacts, often negatively, projects in the realm of culture where timelines are, per force, longer.

The US military, according to Noshadi, had a different set of problems. The Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP) did provide US military commanders in different regions with the authority and ability to fund certain cultural projects. Some commanders also frequently consulted with UNESCO, but generally the process was cumbersome and inefficient (sometimes 40 recipients being copied on a single email exchange). The short tour of duty of officers also often made it difficult to do anything meaningful. As Noshadi reminded me, in the cultural realm especially, "you cannot change a community in six months."

The US has contributed funds for major cultural institutions. For example, it allocated 10 million USD for the building of the new National Museum of Afghanistan in 2011, but of that amount about USD 4.5 million was spent on the design competition, a shocking USD 2.5 million on the company that designed the design competition and USD 3.5 million on the Chicago University Oriental Institute's archeology database. In fact so wasteful and ineffective has the usage of funds in the culture sector been that the US's SIGAR (Special Investigator General for Afghanistan Reconstruction) is currently investigating the matter. Finally, many international staff have pointed out that the Americans present in Afghanistan did not seem to have the kinds of training, expertise and traditions somehow still alive in the British or Russian delegations. Woefully lacking in linguists, culture or area studies experts, the Americans, according to Noshadi, at times seemed to be culturally quite at a loss.³⁹⁷

³⁹⁷ Sara Noshadi, Culture project manager, UNESCO Kabul, Afghanistan, Interview by skype (Kabul and Hiroshima), March 25, 2015.

The lack of consideration for culture was the Achilles' heel not just of the occupiers—many Afghans, too, tend to ignore culture or consider it a Western luxury. Nancy Dupree, a respected foreign connoisseur and observer of Afghan culture and history who since the 1960s has been associated with heritage conservation work in that country and who still heads a center on Afghanistan's cultural heritage, laments the disinterest—at times disregard—among the majority of even highly educated Afghans for their pre-Islamic culture. A passionate lover of Afghanistan and its cultural heritage, having spent most of her life there, Dupree suggests that one of her adopted country's greatest weaknesses is in its failing to retrieve from its rich past and historical heritage a more unifying legacy for its present.³⁹⁸

For years Dupree has been trying to sensitize Afghan and international decision-makers alike to the need to integrate cultural preservation into the basic educational system ('right from first grade'). She has spoken of the necessity of establishing a sustainable system where cultural preservation is embedded in and fully part of the community. She has also insisted on every occasion that cultural heritage is not, should not be, the luxury of only peaceful, prosperous countries. On the contrary, it is necessary to use it systematically and diligently to heal precisely those countries that have suffered most from war, violence and social divisions. As she put it:

[Afghans] don't realize that the integrity of the country depends on cultural value. It's a question of realizing the strength of the country culturally, and that comes from valuing the past while welcoming the new — the two have to be meshed together...³⁹⁹

In a 2010 interview with the UNAMA magazine on cultural issues Dupree again recommended five simple steps to help Afghanistan (her arguments apply to other post-conflict countries as well) preserve cultural heritage in the aftermath of war, or at least to stop the bleeding from the destruction and looting that remains an on-going feature of the land, despite the presence of so many from the international community. These steps include swift, coordinated action on the following:

- 1) *Guard archaeological sites—more guards, higher salaries*
- 2) *[Create] awareness via the educational system*
- 3) *Turn archaeological sites into “living sites”*

³⁹⁸ I first met Dupree on a mission to Kabul in late 2002. She would later also attend the launching event for the Afghan Fellowship in Hiroshima, in November 2003. Dupree provided the vision and the engine to help establish the Afghan Center at Kabul University (ACKU) in 2013, one of few specialized entities dedicated to the study of Afghanistan's culture and history <http://acku.edu.af>

³⁹⁹ Quoted in Lynne O'Donnell, Associated Press, December 15, 2014 <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/ee6c6625cf2e484da9aeca0c41f0ff4a/american-seeks-preserve-storied-afghan-past#> Retrieved March 2, 2015.

4) *Localize cultural preservation via provincial museums*

5) *Appeal to donors: Include cultural preservation—and coordinate!*⁴⁰⁰

The need for provincial museums is a pressing and oft-repeated one. Communities should be able to have the direct understanding—and benefits—of their own culture, rather than view it as something of interest to foreign archeological teams, central museums in Kabul or, in worse case scenarios, as a source of funds for looters. The director of the Kabul Museum himself recognized the need to decentralize culture in an interview with the UN:

*[W]e are trying our best to help local museums in different provinces such as Herat, Ghazni, Khost, Kapisa, and Bamyan. In some provinces, we don't have a building for a museum yet. In some provinces, we have land but we are looking for funds to build the museums. This would be very important for the local people. As you know, for Afghans it is difficult to visit the National Museum because of financial problems. If we have local museums, the younger generation will visit museums. They will know about the value of the historical artifacts and they will be more careful about the preservation of their cultural heritage. We are still weak in this area.*⁴⁰¹

In an email interview, Dr. Tawab Saljuki—an Afghan physician, Fulbright scholar and former UNITAR fellow and coach—provided a thoughtful insight on how divided most Afghans remained, even in a single highly educated and intellectual family, about ways to revive the country and its culture, even whether and if so, how, the country could best emphasize its pre-Islamic or Islamic identities. Dr. Saljuki wrote:

[Father] who was the cultural attaché of Afghanistan in Tajikistan and before that head of Cultural Directorate at the Ministry of Culture and Communication thinks culture is the collection of written and unwritten values of a nation, and foundation of its spiritual and mundane relations. Post war policies should pay attention to both. His view is that we must strengthen our culture by going back to our roots—both written and non-written literature / folklore and revive all ancient (including pre-Islamic?) values once important to us.

[Mother] on the other hand is a philosopher, takes it to a more abstract level and asks whether culture can be analyzed without considering the collective wisdom of a society? Traditions are part of this collective wisdom and can't be separated.

⁴⁰⁰ <http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?ctl=Details&tabid=12254&mid=15756&ItemID=32424>
Retrieved August 5 and October 19, 2015.

⁴⁰¹ http://www.cultureindevelopment.nl/News/Dossier_Heritage_Afghanistan/96/UNAMA_speaks_to_Massoudi
Retrieved October 21, 2015.

Islam is an inseparable part of our cultural identity we can't talk about Afghanistan without a discussion of Islam.

I take a more practical approach. I think financial investment in reviving our national identity is key to the country's development [... and] political decisions before, during and after war hugely affected our current situation. It seems that lack of a cultural sensitiveness, or lack of a cultural lens has drowned us in [mere] physical development—we have ignored our social capital as the fundamental part of our development.⁴⁰²

5.1.4 Broader Root Causes

So why had the United States military, the initiator and single most important actor in the 2001 Afghan war and occupation, devoted so little effort to the prior study of Afghan society and culture, or at least to some basic lessons learnt through earlier post-war reconstruction policies prior to launching the invasion?

This is a complex question, and the answers are manifold. Partially, of course, the invasion of Afghanistan was in reaction to the traumatic events of September 11, 2001, and the consequent need of America to punish culprits (the 'revenge war' approach). For the Bush Administration, specifically, it was also an opportunity to quickly establish its strong credentials and legitimacy by appearing to respond forcefully, particularly considering its controversial 2000 electoral victory and the divisive early months of the presidency. There was in consequence a higher than usual amount of political posturing—at the expense of sound policy planning and preparation—in the attempt to calm the American public still in shock and fear, and seeking vindication. The decision to go to war was made on short notice, and conceived overwhelmingly as a military operation. To its own detriment, the US Administration seemed in no frame of mind to consider the importance of cultural and historical aspects of Afghan society in its 'War against Terror'.⁴⁰³

Furthermore, despite the fact that Afghanistan was not—or rather should not have been—an unknown entity to American decision-making circles (it had after all been considered as a haven to potential enemies of America since at least the Clinton presidency), it was no longer a country that much attracted the intellectual or academic interests of American or Western scholars in general. From the time of its invasion by the Soviets in 1979 and throughout years of continuous civil strife, it had lost much of the intellectual appeal it held (even in the 1960s) for young researchers wanting to learn its languages or study its colorful and fascinating history. The destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas generated much public debate and hand-wringing

⁴⁰² Email correspondence and discussions with Dr. Seljuki on Afghan culture and cultural loss as seen by different generations in the same family, December 26, 2014.

⁴⁰³ The same can certainly be said of the feelings of Americans for Japan in the years 1942-1945—but the immense public anger against and outright hatred did not stop decision-makers in political, policy and military circles from carefully studying Japan and its people and traditions, in preparation for Occupation.

worldwide, and was felt deeply by many, including those who had studied, or understood, or simply appreciated the great cultural heritage of Afghanistan. But the late 20th and early 21st century realities of the country—a land of violence, poverty, illiteracy and refugees—had not made it an exciting discipline for scholarly research. As a consequence, there were not many specialists engaged with the US Administration and military who knew deeply about historical or contemporary Afghanistan, despite the large Afghan-American diaspora.

Finally, America has had a sorry track record in the Islamic world, where for decades its interests had been either purely economic or else, as part of the great anti-communist movement, strictly strategic. Religious studies had not been a serious part of the preparatory phase of the Occupation, and cultural sensitivities were certainly not a part of its conduct.

As the case of Afghanistan (and the Kosovo operation several years earlier) proved, the American military machine worked perfectly well—it was as good as it could only be at deposing the Taliban regime. Yet, it appeared that the U.S. administration was not as successful in peace- and nation-building (or post-conflict rehabilitation) there—it turned out that the Americans had no real plan for a post-Taliban Afghanistan. [...] Even worse, the Americans (notably, the administration) apparently hardly had [any] idea about the nature of the Afghani society and its culture. This added to the international community's growing puzzlement as to where Afghanistan, under the American guidance, was heading. A new affair in Iraq, with the job in Afghanistan not completed, was not a promising prospect to some.⁴⁰⁴

Even now, after a war that would be one of America's longest, there are not many comprehensive efforts at assessing the consequences of this lack of understanding of culture, and how it could have undermined even the best-planned military operations. One case-study, an evaluation of psychological performance for 2001-2010 entrusted by the US Marine Corp to the RAND National Defense Research Institute, revealed for example that the many techniques and instruments adopted to 'win the hearts and minds' of the Afghans had been quite ineffective. By the study's own admission, if part of the outreach campaign was to convince ordinary Afghans to join the struggle against the Taliban, and to side squarely with their government and with the foreign allies, then it had not succeeded.⁴⁰⁵

In 'Culture as a Weapon' Rochelle Davis writes that:

⁴⁰⁴ Egdunas Raciunas, 'Cultural Issues of Post-Conflict Rehabilitation' in *Post Conflict Rehabilitation, Lessons from South East Europe and Strategic Consequences for the Euro-Atlantic Community*, p. 86. Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich (full document from Vienna and Sofia forums available on-line), April 2006. Raciunas, a professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic studies in Lithuania, further believes that once the international community leaves Afghanistan, that country will again be faced, on its own, with the same primordial questions that have been hampering its developments for at least a century, namely those relating to religion, tradition and modernity.

⁴⁰⁵ http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2012/RAND_MG1060.pdf Retrieved October 23, 2015.

When the United States invaded Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 “culture” was not part of the vocabulary of war. The US had established major military bases in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and, later, Kuwait following the 1990 Iraqi invasion of its neighbor to the south. Veterans of the subsequent Gulf war recall that certain units developed informational and training materials concerning Arab and Muslim societies, including a small pamphlet or “smart card.” But this effort was fleeting. There was no cultural training policy in either the Army or Marine Corps to prepare troops to serve in the Middle East or Central Asia in the post-September 11 era. Just as the US failed to plan seriously for what would take place in Iraq following the toppling of Saddam Hussein, so the military, under the direction of Rumsfeld, failed to prepare for its own role in the long-term occupation and rebuilding of the country. This role has required considerably more of US soldiers than combat readiness.

[...] In the period from 2003 to 2007, the vast majority of the military, both leaders and troops on the ground, saw culture as either irrelevant to the mission or possibly corrosive of military effectiveness. The military had a scattershot approach to cultural training—recycling old material and hiring contractors to churn out handbooks, compact discs and Power Point presentations about Iraq, Arabs and Islam. In 2006, the Army created the Human Terrain System, in which social scientists are trained for nine weeks on the language, culture, politics and geography of Iraq and Afghanistan and then sent to work with combat units to provide relevant cultural knowledge for day-to-day interactions and the collection of intelligence.⁴⁰⁶

Here a word on the American diplomatic service may provide some insights. It is of course not the purpose of this study to look into prevalent practices for example of ‘parachuting’ handpicked ambassadors from the ranks of the moneyed private sector into America’s foreign service, or to analyze the more ‘careerist’ attitude at the middle ranks towards the profession. But some comparisons may be helpful in the future. During and after WWII, the State Department could boast of some of the best and brightest—in Japan the post of Ambassador was filled by veterans such as Joseph C. Grew and later by scholars of the caliber of Edwin Reischauer. Now, too many American embassies seem headed by individuals from Silicon Valley. As competent or successful as they may be in the private sector, men and women selected merely as a result of their wealth or their fame in corporate America are hardly equipped to understand, let alone address, the world’s increasingly complex cultural landscape in culturally distant societies.

Naturally in Afghanistan and elsewhere, cultural considerations should have occurred long *before* war and invasion. On the tenth anniversary of the occupation of Afghanistan, retired General Stanley McChrystal, a respected officer who had been tasked by President Obama to

⁴⁰⁶ <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer255/culture-weapon> In the Middle East Research and Information project, Vol 40, summer 2010. Retrieved September 4, 2015.

head the military ‘surge’ in Afghanistan, gave a startling summary of his country’s efforts in that country by stating that the United States had a “*simplistic view of Afghanistan*” and adding that “*even now [2011] the military lacks sufficient local knowledge to bring the war to an end*”. He continued as follows:

*We didn't know enough and we still don't know enough. Most of us, me included, had a very superficial understanding of the situation and history, and we had a frighteningly simplistic view of recent history, the last 50 years.*⁴⁰⁷

Prior to or even in the early stages of the Afghan war, there is no indication that the US military had been prepared in a systematic and thorough manner through training programs even remotely similar to those prepared at the Civil Affairs Training Schools (CATS). Independent academic gatherings, committees or commissions were not mobilized and tasked with studying—for any significant length of time or with any real decision-making capacity—the cultural aspects of Afghanistan, or the possible implications of a massive army of mostly Christian soldiers arriving in a predominantly traditional, Muslim, war-ridden society, with some of the world’s youngest and poorest populations and highest illiteracy rates. Neither were the topics of war and occupation of Afghanistan a regular theme addressed in scholarly forums and university campuses in America with links to or influence over the Administration. Nothing closely similar to the Harvard Group, the ACLS or the Roberts Commission during WWII influenced the prelude to the Afghan war. There was not, within the military itself, any long-term functioning or credible program equivalent to the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives (MFAA) that had been established within the US military during WWII. And of course in a country probably just as unknown to the American occupation as Japan had been, with so much potential for misunderstanding and so many cultural treasures at risk, there was nothing even closely similar to SCAP’s Arts and Monuments, or religious affairs division, to guide from within the occupation-machinery the work of the military.

Thus, patterns set at the early stages of the war—i.e., strict military focus at the exclusion of all else, economic ‘liberalism’ and a patchwork, uncoordinated approach to the work of a myriad of civilian actors—were to remain largely unchanged as the military occupation of Afghanistan took root.

Throughout this unfolding, the Afghan government was kept in place (contrary to Iraq), though this proved to be a challenge considering the limited knowhow and skills prevalent in the public sector and continued infighting along sectarian lines, which was carried over to struggles for control of different ministries. Errors made during the early years, some highly symbolic, would have harsh consequences. In one mission in 2006, I found that our Kabul guesthouse, which had but patchy electricity, running water or other basic amenities, was nonetheless receiving satellite television from the Gulf, some of its programs with explicitly pornographic content. As I wrote

⁴⁰⁷ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/oct/07/us-frighteningly-simplistic-afghanistan-mcchrysal>
Retrieved September 1, 2015.

in an op-ed piece at the time, similar mistakes and other excesses by the foreign community were to become gifts to the Taliban, in the battle for the hearts and minds of ordinary Afghans.⁴⁰⁸

The British author and parliamentarian Rory Stewart, whose 2002 book based on his walks across war-ridden Afghanistan became internationally acclaimed and who founded the Turquoise Foundation after the fall of the Taliban to help Afghan artisans earn a living from their crafts, has provided words of caution, about those with little understanding of cultures and countries they invade, writing that *“The West always lacked the knowledge, power, or legitimacy to transform Afghanistan fundamentally.”*⁴⁰⁹ But while Stewart’s statement is true, it is also true that if the West had better prepared for the occupation of Afghanistan, if its investments had been channeled into creating jobs and a level playing field, had its educational and cultural programs into helping Afghans develop a greater sense of pride about their diversity and their many different identities, the chances for resisting extremisms may have been far better.

⁴⁰⁸ Azimi, ‘Do not neglect culture’, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/08/opinion/08iht-edazimi.1.5618492.html>

⁴⁰⁹ Rory Stewart, ‘Trying to do the impossible’ in ‘What Went Wrong?’, *Foreign Policy* Vol 199, March/April 2013 p. 58 (retrieved I-House library). In the article, commenting on the situation in Libya (he could well have been commenting on Afghanistan, or Iraq) and thinking about *the profusion of young men with guns*, Rory asks, *“what I want to know is, who is going to disarm these militias? [...]who was going to put Libya back together again, and create jobs for all the armed young men?”* p. 112.

5.2 Iraq

5.2.1 The 2003 Iraq War Begins

On March 20, 2003, the United States of America, leading a coalition of troops from the United Kingdom as well as small contingents from a handful of other nations, launched Operation Iraqi Freedom against the forces of Saddam Hussein.⁴¹⁰

The attack came after more than a year of threats and accusations by the Bush Administration regarding weapons of mass destruction (WMD), which it suggested Saddam's regime possessed, and insinuations about the role of Iraq in 9/11 and its connections to terrorist groups.⁴¹¹ Throughout the months leading to war, the veracity of these claims was challenged by many—including some of America's own partners, specialized organizations, the United Nations's WMD inspection teams, as well as large numbers of American citizens and institutions.

Yet the Bush Administration seemed unshakable in its intent to prove that the war on Iraq was a 'Just War' even if much of this war propaganda later appeared to have been rife with half truths and information manipulation, even including false statements about the participation of Iraqi exile groups in the actual war, to give it what the Bush team called an 'Iraqi face'.⁴¹²

War planners in Washington had assumed that the Iraqi invasion would be swift, allowing the Americans to topple the existing regime, put in place a transition government and quickly leave. Yet their own momentous, initial decisions and actions made such presumptions impossible. First was the decision to disband the national Iraqi army and send home professional, disgruntled, unemployed (and frequently armed) former soldiers and officers, Sunni for the most part. Second was the witch-hunt of Ba'ath Party members in government and public positions, a decision which was to ultimately impact almost everyone, considering the reality of Saddam's tyrannical rule that any individual aspiring to keep a job of some consequence had to be a member of the Ba'ath Party. Third was the confusion and indeed visible and striking ignorance on the part of the American Administration of the time about almost every aspect of Iraq's fragile and fissured society—notably its bloody history and existing power structures. Even an in-depth understanding of some basic characteristics of Iraq, such as the Sunni-Shiite-Kurdish divide for example, seems to have been at best shallow.

⁴¹⁰ <http://global.britannica.com/event/Iraq-War> Plus a number of other public sources. Retrieved Sept. 23, 2015.

⁴¹¹ No weapons of mass destruction were to be found after the invasion.

⁴¹² Joyce Battle, George Washington University, National Security Archives, posted September 22, 2010. *Declassified Documents Show Bush Administration Diverting Attention and Resources to Iraq Less than Two Months after Launch of Afghanistan War* <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB326/print.htm#32> Retrieved/consulted throughout August/September 2015.

The military phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom was over within three weeks but unexpectedly, for the Administration at least, even during that phase there had been some difficult battles and an already sobering number of civilian casualties. Nonetheless, the defeat of Saddam's formal military and paramilitary forces was absolute (Saddam himself fled Baghdad and went into hiding, and most of his elite forces simply melted into the civilian population). For a short period there was hope that the transition would at least be mercifully swift. This proved wishful thinking. Though the initial military operations were relatively successful, the invasion itself would turn into a long, unprecedented quagmire.

For the United States, the Iraq War continued officially for another eight years, eight months and 28 days. Its cost, in blood and treasury, was tremendous: more than 4500 US troops dead, 32,000 injured, an equally important number psychologically scarred by a brutal and unpredictable war, and a staggering price tag of two trillion USD, with longer term estimates suggesting the bill could well rise to 6 trillion USD over the next few decades.⁴¹³

But it is for Iraq and the Iraqis that the consequences of the war have been nothing short of horrifying: hundreds of thousands of civilians killed and injured, millions in exile or displaced internally, an inconceivable degree of daily violence which refuses to recede, and a spillover of sectarian wars across the entire region (with the more recent Syrian refugee crisis unfolding in Europe merely a continuation of the same festering wounds). The destructive powers unleashed by the Iraq invasion are still hard to gauge, but the effects have been ricocheting across Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt and of course Syria, and may continue for decades. The social and physical destruction unleashed could also take decades, maybe more, to be reversed.

In light of all that has gone wrong with the war and occupation of Iraq, one could be tempted to dismiss culture in general and cultural heritage in particular—either in terms of the integration of the former into military planning, or in terms of attention paid to the latter's protection—as minor details. In reality the reverse may hold true: the absence of any meaningful and comprehensive cultural dimension, understanding or consideration in the war planning may well have been a significant part of the reason for the Occupation's failure: the absence of any policies for the protection of Iraq's cultural heritage was simply a reflection of the absence of *any* credible occupation policy. The US military manuals did refer to the Hague Convention (even though the United States was not a signatory yet, it would only adhere in 2009). But inserting some rules on cultural protection, without ensuring the expertise necessary and mechanisms for implementation, proved simply meaningless.

In 1991, following the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam's forces, the United States had led another coalition to war against Iraq (it took the coalition 38 days to reach military victory but this was not followed by an invasion). The US political and military leaders of 2003, assuming the combat phase would be just as short and the transition swift, may have thought they could be bolder this time. Precisely because prior lessons had not been heeded, and Iraqi society was so

⁴¹³ Including estimates for future veterans' claims.

unknown to the war planners, they apparently had the illusion the American invasion forces would be received by the Iraqis with open arms and ‘flowers’ and that the void created by the toppling of the dictator somehow fill itself.... Hence, at every step of the invasion, occupying forces seemed taken by surprise by the resistance and had to quickly turn defensive, conducting the entire operation in an *ad-hoc*, reactive mode. In the face of the predictable but unprepared-for military and security challenges to the Occupation, cultural questions were quickly marginalized.⁴¹⁴

In the following pages I will look into the cultural considerations and preparations (or lack thereof) of the forming Occupation machinery, again through the lens provided by cultural preparations by US military planners prior to the occupation of Japan.

5.2.2 A Plethora of Powerless Actors in the Cultural Realm

Concerns for the possible looting of Iraq’s museums and archeological sites were in fact rife, and high on the agenda of experienced scholars and experts of the Middle East in America, most of whom had already witnessed the terrible aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War (first Iraq War). During that earlier war and despite the efforts of Iraq’s cultural administration and their colleagues around the world, many treasures had been lost to looting and chaos, later making their way to illegal antiquities markets abroad.

From 2002 and even into early 2003, once they had realized that the Bush Administration’s intentions for war were irrevocable, some of these same scholars worked frenetically to caution US decision-makers and military authorities alike about the risks involved and the need to prepare appropriately for the invasion, notably by ensuring the physical security of cultural sites and institutions.⁴¹⁵ Additionally, many scholars were also keeping their distance from the Administration, not wanting to appear to help such a controversial and questionable war.⁴¹⁶ That ambiguity of feelings among the scholarly community was a significant obstacle to its full engagement to help the war effort.

Nonetheless, in the buildup to war, some groups and agencies tried to identify—and ultimately influence—those responsible within the Administration for the protection of Iraq’s cultural heritage. As the contours of the decision to go to war started taking shape within the President’s inner circle, the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the State Department, having received clearance from the Pentagon and Vice-President Cheney’s office, brought together between

⁴¹⁴ Marcel A. Boisard, commentary on Iraq, October 3, 2015.

⁴¹⁵ Maybe none as tirelessly as the archaeologist McGuire Gibson, an eminent Middle East expert from the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Gibson’s unwavering yet ultimately failed attempts to help Iraq’s cultural heritage and his Iraqi colleagues are faithfully rendered in Rothfield (2009).

⁴¹⁶ Seventy-four scholars felt strongly enough to sign a letter to the editor of the Society for American Archaeology’s Archaeological Record voicing opposition to U.S. Military action against Iraq. Helping the military in any way whatsoever, many felt, would send the wrong signal of encouragement for the Bush administration’s project for regime change. From Rothfield (2009), p. 59.

March 2002 and April 2003 a large group of experts including in particular Iraqi exiles, who would constitute the Future of Iraq Project (FOI project).⁴¹⁷ The project organizers were however forced to keep a low profile, to avoid the wrath of some conservative congressional hard-liners in the United States who wanted to endorse their 'own' Iraqi exiles to plan for the post-war leadership of that country. Rothfield maintains throughout his book that this low-key posture resulted in many cultural heritage scholars not even knowing of the FOI project's existence.

The FOI Project formed working groups on a vast array of topics, ranging from health care to transitional justice, environment, agriculture, education, etc. Astonishingly, however, there was no working group on culture or cultural heritage. This meant that any discussions on this sector were absent during the critical period between May and October 2002, and when finally a working group on culture was convened (in late 2002) it was quite late to make much of a difference.⁴¹⁸ At any rate after hundreds of hours of meetings, the FOI Project published a massive study of what would need to be undertaken after occupation.

*The "Future of Iraq Project" was [...] one of the most comprehensive U.S. government planning efforts for raising Iraq out of the ashes of combat and establishing a functioning democracy. To prepare the report, the Department organized over 200 Iraqi engineers, lawyers, businesspeople, doctors and other experts into 17 working groups to strategize on topics including the following: public health and humanitarian needs, transparency and anti-corruption, oil and energy, defense policy and institutions, transitional justice, democratic principles and procedures, local government, civil society capacity building, education, free media, water, agriculture and environment and economy and infrastructure.*⁴¹⁹

Upon its completion however, this report was summarily ignored by the Pentagon, which at that stage was increasingly taking the lead in the war planning. In fact even within the Pentagon, only a handful of individuals, those closest to Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and his deputy Paul Wolfowitz, had monopolized planning within the Office of Special Plans (OSP). This was conducted in great secrecy and excluded meaningful participation by or input from the State Department where the area expertise lay, or even from Pentagon staff with experience in post-conflict reconstruction. The planners also dismissed the report produced by the FOI project as too vast and unpractical.⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁷ http://www.historycommons.org/context.jsp?item=complete_timeline_of_the_2003_invasion_of_iraq_349

⁴¹⁸ Considering how systematically and completely the work of FOI was to be ignored by war planners at the Pentagon, one may question whether the presence of a working group on culture would have made any difference.

⁴¹⁹ National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 198 <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB198/> Retrieved September 25, 2015.

⁴²⁰ Some of the FOI leaders in response have said that their report was never meant to be a 'working plan' *per se*, but rather a process, and a forum for a diverse group of Iraqi experts to discuss issues post-war Iraq was likely to face.

On January 20, 2003, President Bush signed the National Security Presidential Directive no. 24. Only then, at the end of the month, did the Pentagon finally form the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), naming the retired general Jay Garner in charge of Iraq's post war planning.⁴²¹ This was just seven weeks before the bombing of Baghdad began.

It should be noted that throughout the initial weeks and months, the US invasion did not describe itself as an 'Occupation' proper—using instead vague formulations about the mission conceived to 'free' Iraqi from Saddam Hussein's misrule.⁴²² The leadership at the Pentagon is said to have assumed that within '60 days' the job would be done and the whole operation downgraded to an embassy.⁴²³ Nonetheless United Nations Security Council resolution 1483 (May 2003) recognized the United States and the United Kingdom as 'occupying powers' under international law and requested that henceforth the occupation be called ...an occupation.⁴²⁴ When General Garner was summarily replaced in May 2003 by Paul Bremer, the US plans too suddenly shifted gears—from the initial brisk military operation and preoccupations with avoiding any reference to nation-building, suddenly it now morphed into a full-fledged plan for the governance of Iraq.

The confusion about who was in charge of Iraq's museums and archaeological sites had started early. As Brian Rose, President of the Archaeological Institute of America, said succinctly of initial efforts by various groups trying to alert and prepare the military for the dangers to Iraq's ancient sites, cultural heritage organizations were for the most part running around "*like chickens with our heads cut off*".⁴²⁵ The US military's Central Command (CentCom) itself was to later admit that quite a number of professional associations and individual scholars had tried, desperately, to alert military planners to the many risks that invasion could pose for Iraq's cultural heritage, including and especially the potential for chaos and looting. In a report released by the military it stated:

During the run-up to the invasion of March 2003, professional associations and individual scholars contacted civilian and military authorities in Washington, warning of the dangers to Iraq 's cultural heritage [...]. Some of the world's leading scholars of archaeology, art and history warned of damage during military operations and especially the danger of post-war looting.[...]

⁴²¹ General Garner always understood his task to be short and swift, mainly to ouster Saddam and ensure that there were no humanitarian catastrophes. In his defense Garner's main area of specialty, which he had performed well and honorably in the previous Iraq war, was in humanitarian assistance...

⁴²² In transcript of speech by President George W. Bush, March 18, 2003
<http://edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/03/17/sprj.irq.bush.transcript/>

⁴²³<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/service/mss/mfdip/2011/2011lim01/2011lim01.pdf> John Limbert, The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project, interview conducted on May 30, 2006. Retrieved October 1, 2015.

⁴²⁴ 'The American Occupation Regime in Comparative Perspective: The Case of Iraq' in *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol 1, No 40, January 2014, pp. 59-60 (I-House library, April 7-8, 2015).

⁴²⁵ Rothfield (2009), p. 156.

In January 2003, a delegation of scholars, museum directors, art collectors and antiquities dealers met with officials at the Pentagon to discuss the implications of the invasion. They warned that the National Museum in Baghdad was the most important non-religious cultural property site in the country. One member of the delegation, McGuire Gibson of the University of Chicago, twice returned to the Pentagon to discuss precautions the Coalition should take. [...]

As the conflict neared, the Archaeological Institute of America, the International Council of Museums, the International Committee of the Blue Shield and other professional organizations issued public warnings, reminding U.S. leaders of their responsibilities under international law, notably the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Properties in the Event of Armed Conflict. They urged that protection of Iraq 's cultural sites and institutions be a high priority for the occupying forces.⁴²⁶

Indeed, as noted earlier, throughout the months leading to war, scholars in the United States, Britain and across a number of international organizations had been struggling to identify the locus of decision-making for cultural heritage (maybe imagining an entity similar to the Roberts Commission that was tasked to centralize and spearhead the efforts?).⁴²⁷ They were seeking someone, *anyone*, in the military itself, or in the ranks of the Departments of State or Defense, who would not only listen to their pleas about the dangers of looting but actually be in a position of power and influence *to do something about it*. In the feverish prewar weeks, however, their calls and offers of assistance, maps, data, expertise and information, even when received, were often misunderstood, ignored or simply lost in the pre-attack mayhem.

As to the liaison and coordination between State and Defense, the two most important Departments dealing with war planning, matters related to culture fared no better than in other areas, i.e. relations were nonexistent at best, hostile at worst. One stark example was that the diplomat nominated as cultural advisor for ORHA, John Limbert, an experienced State Department veteran referred to earlier, was not briefed until *after* the invasion, just a few days before arriving in Baghdad, about the exact nature of his mandate. In a lengthy interview given on May 30, 2006, Limbert unveils some of the inner workings of the Occupation, describing why many from the diplomatic service had a sense of an impending ‘fiasco’ as they watched helplessly the unfolding of the seemingly rudderless invasion. This is what Limbert had to say of the group that led the war planning back in Washington:

There was very little self-doubt. These were ideologues who knew the

⁴²⁶ <http://www.cemml.colostate.edu/cultural/09476/chp04-12iraqenl.html>
Website dedicated to the 1991 and 2003 Iraqi wars, report of 2007. Retrieved June 17, 2015.

⁴²⁷ Including UNESCO’s Director General, who tardily wrote to the UN Secretary General calling attention not to the dangers of looting of national treasures but only in general terms about the importance of Iraq’s cultural heritage.

*way the world was run. I don't know if they'd ever been out of the United States, much less to the Middle East. And frankly, they were not interested in the opinion or the experience, of people who might ask questions about "What are the consequences of putting American forces into the middle of a very complex and difficult situation, with the background involved, with the ethnic make-up, with the religious make-up of Iraq, with the particularly violent history of Iraq and what's the consequence of putting outside forces in there and what are we getting into?" Not so much "should we or shouldn't we" but "If you do this, what's going to happen?"*⁴²⁸

In *The Rape of Mesopotamia* Lawrence Rothfield, too, writes of the Administration's confusion and carelessness (emphasis added by me), in securing Iraq's treasures, referring to the haphazard appointment process of the US administrator (Limbert) to oversee the occupied country's cultural affairs. So *ad hoc* and uncoordinated were preparatory efforts regarding cultural institutions that no one had even informed Limbert about the work that experts involved in the 'Future of Iraq Project' working group on culture had done (Limbert himself has mentioned that he was first instructed to take over the commerce planning, then told that he was to take charge of religious affairs, but finally instructed to take over the culture sector):

*Not until three weeks before the war did Gen. Garner [then commander] even appoint the senior advisor who would eventually be charged with overseeing the cultural affairs of liberated Iraq, as one among several duties. The appointee was not a Civil Affairs archaeological expert or an administrator from the cultural sector, but rather an ambassador, John Limbert. [...] At first, Limbert was told he would be responsible for the Ministry of Planning, then for the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Only when he arrived in Kuwait a week or two before the war began did the ambassador learn he had been reassigned yet again to tend to cultural matters. When he asked what he was expected to do, the answer was extraordinarily vague: work with existing agencies, providing them with funding to continue operating for sixty days, at which point it was expected that the United States would be ready to turn full authority back over to the Iraqis. Easy enough, thought Limbert. No one, however, could name for him the cultural agencies in Iraq he should be trying to reconstitute. "I couldn't even find out whether there was such a thing as a Ministry of Culture in Iraq."*⁴²⁹

Meanwhile the relatively better prepared staff of the State Department's Future of Iraq project, who had arrived in Kuwait shortly before the start of hostilities to await their dispatch to Iraq, felt increasingly frustrated with not having much to do. Finally they started making plans on their own, by establishing a list of the 16 sites they all agreed were the most important for the United

⁴²⁸ Limbert interview (2006), Retrieved October 2015.

⁴²⁹ Rothfield (2009), pp. 65-66.

States military to secure upon the fall of Baghdad. Second on their list was the National Museum of Iraq, last the Oil Ministry.

In Kuwait, Erdmann [Drew Erdmann was a historian with post-conflict interest who had been advising the State Department-convened Future of Iraq Project] and some others felt so undirected that they began looking for tasks. Together they drew up a list of sixteen key sites around Baghdad that the military should secure and protect upon the fall of the city. At the top of the list was the Central Bank. No. 2 was the Iraqi Museum. “Symbolic importance,” Erdmann explained.⁴³⁰

The Americans entered Baghdad on April 5, and very soon there were bomb attacks and skirmishes in the vicinity of the National Museum. Throughout the days leading to its looting, museum staff including Dr. Jabir Khalil Ibrahim, chair of the Iraq Board of Antiquities and Heritage, and Donny George, an archeologist and the Museum’s director of research, took turns staying on the premises despite grave risks to their own lives. Like many of their counterparts in other countries during those crucial days, they were desperately trying to get the attention of the American military planners, to ensure that some show of authority was exercised at or near the museum premises, presuming this to be not too difficult as American tanks were already not far from the gates.

All these individual efforts were to be in vain. Despite these warnings, when the mobs of looters entered the National Museum compound in Baghdad on April 10, they had the place entirely to themselves for almost 48 hours.⁴³¹ The few unarmed museum staff like Donny George, who had tried till the last minute to urge the US military to intercede, were forced to leave. As a nearby American tank unit watched, some 15,000 artifacts from one of the world’s oldest and largest collections of antiquities were looted or destroyed. Not only were many of the choice pieces in the collection dispersed, but even chairs, desks, computers, cameras and office material were shattered. By the time American troops finally did arrive, on April 16, the physical damage was immense. Worse, the symbolic damage, the spectacle of one of the rare institutions of Iraqi unity—past and future—being mobbed by bands of looters while American soldiers stood by was to be profound, in Iraq and around the world.

Meanwhile museum and site lootings were also unfolding in other cities and regions across the country. The museum in Basra, among the first to be attacked, did not recover (it was later

⁴³⁰ George Packer, ‘War after the War’, *The New Yorker Magazine*, November 24, 2003. Initially a pro-Iraq war voice, Packer later wrote the prize-winning ‘The Assassins’ Gate: America in Iraq’ in which he considers the conduct of senior officials of the Bush Administration as bordering on the delusional, inept, self-righteous and unaccountable, even accusing the president and his immediate coterie of ‘criminal negligence’. Also in <http://thinkprogress.org/report/the-architects-where-are-they-now/> Retrieved September 25, 2015.

⁴³¹ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/apr/30/internationaleducationnews.arts> Retrieved October 2015.

replaced by a new building altogether).⁴³² The Coalition forces built the huge Camp Alpha on the archeological site of Babylon, among the world's most ancient cities, with tremendous damage done by the leveling of entire sections for defensive measures, tanks and even a heliport. The looting, as much by the local population as by the American and Polish military, took on in the words of one specialist "industrial proportions".⁴³³

The US military, in contrast to the civilian leadership in legislative and executive branches responsible for the war's planning and conduct—who remain firmly unapologetic—has recognized the cost of its inaction in protecting the National Museum:

*Questions have been raised about the possible lack of U.S. military preparation for what seemed like inevitable consequences of invasion (archaeological site looting, looting of the Iraq Museum, etc.) and the lack of military assets in Baghdad during the April 10-15, 2003 timeframe, which allowed the most high-profile events (the looting and burning of the Iraq National Library, the looting of the Iraq National Museum, etc.) to continue over a period of days.*⁴³⁴

5.2.3 Culture, Not a Consideration?

*Flush with money, Baghdad presided over a cultural revolution that was every bit as remarkable as its pre-eminent political and commercial power. Poets and writers, scientists and mathematicians, musicians and physicians, historians, legalists and lexicographers, theologians, philosophers and astronomers, even cookery writers—all made this a golden age. More scientific discoveries were made during the ninth and 10th centuries than in any previous period of history. In short order, Baghdad became the cultural zenith of the Islamic world and the intellectual capital of the planet.*⁴³⁵

If the shortcomings of the Iraqi occupation were so obvious, what were some of the *reasons* for them, and for the negligence on the part of the war planners in protecting Iraq's cultural heritage? Reason are probably as much political, economic, tactical and logistical, as they are cultural. Maybe the underlying reason for the indifference to cultural matters in the Iraq War was merely a reflection of the *overall* failure of planning. Rajiv Chandrasekaran, a *Washington Post* reporter

⁴³²The original museum building was finally abandoned, but since 2008 thanks to the initiative of senior former British officers and Basra scholars, the former palace of Saddam Hussein is being turned into a museum. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/31/saddam-hussein-basra-iraq-museum> Retrieved October 12, 2015.

⁴³³ Marcel Boisard, email commentary October 3, 2015. And in UNESCO comprehensive report <http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Iraq/pdf/Report%20on%20Damages%20in%20Babylon.pdf> Retrieved October 11, 2015.

⁴³⁴ <http://www.cemml.colostate.edu/cultural/09476/chp04-12iraqenl.html> Retrieved July-September, 2015.

⁴³⁵ Justin Marozzi, 'A new history of Baghdad looks at the culture as well as the blood' in *The National*, May 22, 2014. <http://www.thenational.ae/arts-culture/the-review/a-new-history-of-baghdad-looks-at-the-culture-as-well-as-the-blood#page2> Retrieved December 18, 2015.

who was based in Bagdad at the time of the invasion, spoke in an interview on National Public Radio in July 2015 of the willful ignorance and the carelessness with which the Coalition Provisional Authority stumbled through the Iraqi operation.⁴³⁶ This larger attitude of indifference and incompetence was to become emblematic of the entire occupation and therefore of its cultural component, as well.

It must also be noted that on the military front there was a vacuum at a crucial moment, and at the very top of the command structure in charge of the war's conduct.⁴³⁷ General Tommy Franks, who had led the war in Afghanistan and had become, in the months leading to invasion, responsible for Iraq, was due to retire two months after the attack on Baghdad. This hardly helped long-term planning but regardless Franks, according to many experts, did not possess the strategic abilities for a war as sensitive as the invasion of Iraq, and certainly did not understand, or care for, the longer-term thinking required for the stability phase and ensuing peace-building efforts.⁴³⁸ His boss, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, also had little patience for cultural niceties (one may say here in stark contrast with Stimson, his predecessor 58 years earlier). To make matters worse, Rumsfeld's abrasive style and open disdain for those not in agreement with his opinions, including international partners, further disenfranchised nations with the expertise and resources to help the Department of Defense and the Administration in general in cultural protection tasks. In this manner the Americans, who could have used for example the help and experience of military police for the protection of cultural sites, ended up alienating all who could have done the job (America's two main allies in the war, the United Kingdom and Australia, did not have constabulary forces). As noted by Rothfield, the results were obvious:

*If militarized police were in short supply in general, military police specializing in cultural heritage protection were even more difficult to come by. Of the two NATO nations with the militarized policing units most capable of addressing the specific security problems of cultural sites—the Netherlands and Italy—only the latter was likely to provide military personnel, but even so, not in the invasion wave. The Dutch (whose CIMIC military cultural heritage experts had deployed to Afghanistan) were opposed to the war and hence loath to commit troops.*⁴³⁹

Rumsfeld and his inner circle also set aside, as noted earlier, the rare general studies of Iraq—such as the extensive Future of Iraq project report—which at a minimum provided a basis or a

⁴³⁶ National Public Radio (NPR), Interview re-aired with Rajiv Chandrasekaran, July 8, 2015.

⁴³⁷ The difference from the steady hand and cultural acumen of General Douglas MacArthur can hardly be more striking.

⁴³⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tommy_Franks Retrieved July 19, 2015. It did not help that he was, by his own admission, tired and ready to retire from the military (which he did only a few months into the invasion) a surprising signal to be given from the commander of the occupying forces at such a sensitive time, to friend and foe alike.

⁴³⁹ Rothfield (2009), p. 64.

starting point for concerted reflection and action.⁴⁴⁰ It was clear by the start of the Occupation that the report's ambitions were unrealistic, for the Bush Administration simply did not have—or at least had not prepared—the kinds of qualified teams, financial resources or political and bureaucratic machinery that could address the requirements identified by the report in various sectors. From this lack of preparation followed an extreme reliance on private sector contractors, a reliance that continued throughout the war planning and execution. This was highly controversial, with many experts arguing that it was one major reason for the lack of coordination and the culturally insensitive conduct of the Iraqi invasion.⁴⁴¹

One must note however that the Abu-Ghraib prison torture scandal for example, one of the most shameful episodes involving the US occupation forces and the repercussions of which were to become so far-reaching, was committed not by any private sector contractors but by the regular members of the US military.⁴⁴² The larger question this dark stain on the honor of the military raises is not just about one single episode but rather about what the long-term implications of reliance on a private army may well be. When the United States imposed the national military draft (as at the time of WWII) individuals of every class and socioeconomic background were called into military service. Today, the presence of the kind of qualified professionals and scholars in the ranks of the US military that had existed during WWII would be simply inconceivable.

Of course among the Pentagon's handpicked people tasked with running Iraq there were many competent individuals as well. Yet, because the overall system was *ad hoc*, even such qualified individuals were unable to have an impact. They were also provided scant or no resources to make their interventions work, not even small amounts to bridge the period between the collapse of the Saddam regime and a new government. For example the nominee for culture, Ambassador Limbert, has lamented the fact that despite being part of some form of 'shadow government' he and his peers were simply left to their own devices and given no financial resources—not even a

⁴⁴⁰ In an interview of the American Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), General Garner is quoted as saying that he was instructed by Secretary Rumsfeld 'to shelve the Future of Iraq project' <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/truth/fighting/turf wars.html> Retrieved September 30, 2015.

⁴⁴¹ Though at least one study refutes this (while admitting its scope too limited and focused only on Iraq). In equal circumstances, the author suggests, private sector contractors have not been less effective, certainly when compared to the Iraqi army itself. Ulrich Petersohn, 'The Effectiveness of Contracted Coalitions: Private Security Contractors in Iraq' in *Armed Forces and Society*, 2012, 39 (3).

But the Journal published another article on this same topic a year later. In it the authors argue that among many complications, the presence of private sector contractors embedded in the US military generated deep sentiments of dissatisfaction with their own lot among regular service members, prompting comparisons on 'pay, autonomy and degree of organizational care', and negatively impacting the military's sense of job satisfaction, cohesion and organizational commitment. Ryan Keltly and Alex Bierman, 'Ambivalence on the Front Lines: Perceptions of Contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan', in *Armed Forces and Society*, 39 (1), 2013.

⁴⁴² Marcia Strauss, in *The lessons of Abu Ghraib*, Ohio State Law Journal, vol. 66:1269, 2006 <http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/students/groups/oslj/files/2012/03/66.6.strauss.pdf> Retrieved September and October 28, 2015.

few thousand dollar discretionary funds—that could have allowed them to intervene in some concrete manner for the specific government sectors they were assigned to.⁴⁴³

Finally the choice of Paul Bremer, a relatively junior former State Department official with little experience of the Middle East and ensconced for some years already in the private sector, to head the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), turned out to be an error of grave consequences.⁴⁴⁴ The role played by Bremer, in light of how much it influenced the unfolding of the Occupation, deserves some further consideration.

We can start by stating that from May 2003 to June 2004, Bremer was to become the *de facto* ruler of Iraq. He had unrestricted powers, yet his stint, it is fair to say, was an abject failure. The first two decrees Bremer signed—to ban the ruling Baath Party and to dismantle the Iraqi Army—were instigated with a profound lack of understanding of the possible consequences in terms of chaos or violence. With those two orders, Bremer essentially put to the death any possible chance of a peaceful transition and reconstruction for Iraq. Order No.1, on ‘De-Baathification’ was one sweeping eviction of the entire government and governance structures in Iraq. Order No. 2, which dissolved the army, police and security forces, sent back to their homes hundreds of thousands of jobless and discontented but armed and trained men, each harboring a strong grievance against the Occupation. It was all to prove fatal.

As to culture *per se*, even though decision-makers within the Bush Administration had been cautioned early on and at the highest levels of a lack of readiness to protect Iraq’s cultural heritage and institutions, and forewarned of the grave consequences if looting erupted, they took no preventive measures. In hindsight, and considering all else that was lacking or incomplete in the run-up to the war, and the haste and haphazard manner with which its aftermath was being planned, it seems hardly surprising that culture and cultural institutions fell through the seams. Cultural property protection did not seem to register with the Administration as worthy of serious debate or effort but came rather as an afterthought, or mere window dressing.

The CPA had included a post of special advisor on cultural matters, with ambitious objectives (this was first filled by Ambassador Limbert, presented earlier) but funding soon became unavailable and plans fell apart. Limbert, frustrated, left his post, to be replaced by Pietro Cordone, an Italian diplomat and Arabist. Cordone, too, would leave shortly, replaced by René

⁴⁴³ Limbert interview (2006), Retrieved October 2015.

⁴⁴⁴ The gulf separating a Bremer from a MacArthur could not have been vaster, to the detriment of Iraq. I personally became an anecdotal observer, on just how randomly human resource decisions were being made in the Bush Administration regarding Occupation personnel for Iraq. One of Bremer’s close assistants, an intelligent and amiable Texan who had been a UNITAR intern in Geneva since June 2002, and who had intended to join its new offices in Hiroshima was abruptly recruited by the US government and dispatched to Baghdad to join the Coalition Provisional Authority. His only prior professional experience—other than the UNITAR internship—was as instructor of English in Japan. Though he knew some Spanish he had had no prior knowledge of the Middle East.

Teisgeler, a Dutchman.⁴⁴⁵ Teisgeler's portfolio, as CPA's senior consultant for culture, included museums and other institutions of culture but he, too, left the post in February 2005 because there was simply no budget or financial resources available, even for basics such as chairs and bookshelves for his office.... Finally the post was just left empty and ultimately scrapped. A vast distance separated these *ad hoc* half-hearted efforts from the deliberate and organized unfolding for the creation of the Arts and Monuments Division in Japan.

But the fate that befell cultural property protection was not unique: the Department of Defense and the CPA leadership demonstrated similar ineptitude in managing other sectors, with projects for the salvage of libraries, universities, archives and most institutions of higher learning and culture all failing, as well. Those projects that the CPA *did* manage to undertake ended as mere public relations attempts, seemingly done just to project a sense of cohesion and control. The US military itself has recognized the *ad hoc*, ineffective nature of these attempts:

During a special mission to Baghdad in October, 2003, the Library of Congress proposed an expansive plan for a new National Library, as well as a training program for Iraqi librarians, headquartered in a modern building by the Tigris that had been the Senior Officers' Club during the Saddam era. The CPA applauded the idea, but later signed away the Officers' Club for another purpose, causing the promised US assistance to restore the National Library to dry up. During 2004, the CPA allocated the National Library — an institution with no electricity, no water, no pens, paper or furniture — an annual budget of \$70,000 to cover all expenses, including repairs and the purchase of new furniture and equipment.

[...]

USAID launched five projects in 2003 to support Iraqi libraries, museums and antiquities programs. American and European universities signed up to help train librarians and museum staff, promote legal research, organize online scholarly resources and other projects. But USAID failed to fund beyond the first year and the programs mostly collapsed. By 2004, under Ambassador John Negroponte, priorities shifted from rebuilding cultural institutions to security as the insurgency —which had been funded during its initial rise by the looting and sale of illicit antiquities from Iraq's museums and archaeological sites—began to accelerate.⁴⁴⁶

As noted, the American military's assessment of what went wrong in Iraq has been more self-critical than any by the political leadership, which thus far has demonstrated little sense of remorse. On the general lack of preparations, the absence of systematic plans for the protection of cultural heritage, or the looting of the tremendously symbolic National Museum in Baghdad, the military's review is openly recognizant of neglect and inaction. In one damning, publicly

⁴⁴⁵ Cordone became the target of an attempt on his life (he survived but his translator was killed) and passed away later of illness.

⁴⁴⁶ <http://www.cemml.colostate.edu/cultural/09476/chp04-12iraqenl.html> Retrieved September 21, 2015.

released 2007 report, the Central Command (CentCom) of the Department of Defense freely admits to negligence in the buildup to the Iraq war, describing how cultural heritage considerations were excluded or outright ignored during military planning in the months leading to invasion, and in its immediate aftermath. Entitled ‘Impact of War on Iraq’s Cultural Heritage: Operation Iraqi Freedom’, the report starts with the now infamous comment by former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld.⁴⁴⁷ It then unequivocally outlines how unprepared the US leadership and military were in the spring of 2003 for the safeguard of the cultural heritage of Iraq.

*"Stuff happens ... freedom is untidy." — Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld
April 11, 2003*

The immediate, near-term and long-term effect of Operation Iraqi Freedom on the cultural heritage of Iraq cannot be overstated. It also, in several respects, is not yet fully known, because ongoing problems such as site looting continues four and one-half years after the invasion, and the long-term effects of military action at Babylon. But what we do know will provoke serious discussion in the years to come, offering many opportunities to learn lessons and adjust tactics, techniques and procedures to better address cultural property protection issues and optimize U.S. military performance in the future.⁴⁴⁸

But ‘opportunities to learn lessons and adjust tactics’ are not sufficient. More is needed. A vast gulf separates realities on the ground in the increasingly volatile Middle East for example, from the meager resources and limited political capital that decision makers and politicians are able or willing to accord cultural preparation and protection (as opposed to the unlimited flow of military spending, as succinctly highlighted by the Japan Times recently—the more insecurity and volatility, and the better the business of the arms merchants).⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁷ It is hard to believe this is not an oblique condemnation of the Secretary’s contemptuous comments.

⁴⁴⁸ <http://www.cemml.colostate.edu/cultural/09476/chp04-12iraqenl.html> Retrieved frequently July-September, 2015.

⁴⁴⁹ The Japan News *U.S arms-makers strain to meet demand as conflicts rage in Mideast*, December 9, 2015.

5.2.4 Ignoring History and Culture, Igniting a Tinder Box

In light of the above, the following questions may be moot but need to be raised nonetheless, if for no other purpose than to encourage future studies and research in this area: what if the Bush Administration had mobilized teams of real scholars and experts on Iraq—including those politically not aligned with its own ideology—to advise it in its preparations?⁴⁵⁰ What if the decision to invade Iraq, controversial and questionable as it may have been, had been accompanied nonetheless with the same methodical planning, and with some of the same caution and effort, as had been applied in the case of Japan? What if teams of US policy makers and the military had actually studied Iraq, not just its military or its economy but its culture and history, its society and religions and languages, its weaknesses and strengths, long before embarking on the occupation of the country? What if there had been an equivalent to the Roberts Commission, to centralize information and expertise regarding cultural matters in one authoritative locus, and individuals like Langdon Warner, George Stout or Ruth Benedict embedded in the Pentagon, to help it think through its ‘Iraq policy’? What if key institutions of national unity in Iraq—National Museum, National Library, National Archives—had been among the first entities to be secured upon the arrival of American forces, rather than merely the Ministry of Oil?⁴⁵¹

That American war planners of 2003 did not follow any of the above is incomprehensible. After all, they should have cared more about Iraq and the Iraqis, who had done America no harm, than they did for the Japanese in 1945, considering the brutal war the United States and Japan had waged for almost four years. The opening lines of a National Security Archives study at George Washington University, released in 2013 to mark 10 years after the Iraq invasion, make one wonder about the kind of Iraq that *could have been*, had some basic measures been carried through with seriousness of purpose and the necessary resources by the Occupation:

*The U.S. invasion of Iraq turned out to be a textbook case of flawed assumptions, wrong-headed intelligence, propaganda manipulation, and administrative ad hockery.*⁴⁵²

⁴⁵⁰ It is noteworthy to remember that George Sansom, the English diplomat and Japan expert, was among key advisors lecturing American political and military leaders throughout the war years about the Japanese (see previous chapter). It is hard to imagine eminent British scholars of Iraq—some of the world’s best authorities on that country—doing the same in Washington in 2002 or early 2003. That such a scenario seems to us so improbable speaks volumes of the closed decision-making processes in the Bush Administration, and the (justified?) accusations that its decisions were usually made in echo-chambers by individuals with little knowledge of Iraqi realities.

⁴⁵¹ When American troops did occupy Baghdad, however, in the first days of April they only secured two buildings -- the Palestine Meridien Hotel, where the foreign press corps was based, and the Ministry of Oil. In *The Rape of Mesopotamia*, pp. 78 and 81.

⁴⁵² <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB418/>

To most ordinary Iraqis who witnessed (and survived) those early Occupation weeks and months at close range, and whose lives have now forever changed because of it, however, the American invaders who pretended initially to be in charge appeared simply delusional.⁴⁵³

As to the protection of cultural assets, like most other attempts at the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans, it was soon a case of too little, too late. Because unexpected (or rather unprepared-for) developments kept occurring, the Occupation lost the ability to plan ahead, struggling merely with the day-to-day, overwhelmingly negative developments. After the looting of the National Museum, the US military did try to retrieve some of the treasures lost or dispersed—work spearheaded by individuals like Mathew Bogdanos, a colonel in the Marine Reserve Corps and an assistant district attorney in New York, who with Donny Georges, former chief of Iraq's antiquities, tried to locate some of the looted items. Bogdanos, since then outspoken about the general lack of attention within the military to cultural heritage, represents the many individual efforts, to right the initial negligence in the protection of Iraq's cultural assets. *Ad hoc* heroisms, admirable as they maybe, however, cannot turn the tide when fundamental policies have been wrong. Even when with great effort and at massive cost the actual items were retrieved, it was hard to undo the tremendous symbolic harm already done.⁴⁵⁴

Considering the on-going consequences of the failed occupation of Iraq, there have been many scholarly debates about what Rothfield calls the 'autopsy of a cultural disaster'. Rothfield's frequent emphasis is that problems in Iraq were not only with the military.⁴⁵⁵ He describes in painful detail why the inability of the American occupying forces in March and early April 2003 to protect against the looting of the National Museum of Iraq had far *deeper root causes*, and ultimately consequences, than the physical destruction of one single museum, albeit one with the greatest collection of Middle Eastern cultural artifacts:

The story that emerged [from Iraq] did include some incompetence and indifference. For the most part, however, those involved in the disaster were acting in good faith and with the best of motives. The looting of Iraq's national museum and archaeological sites stemmed from deeper causes: the war fighting posture of the American military since World War II; the international framework

⁴⁵³ *Baghdad Burning—Girl Blog from Iraq*, Feminist Press, City University of New York, 2005. The blogger, who calls herself Riverbend, quotes Bremer: 'Iraq is not a country in chaos and Baghdad not a city in chaos' -- and asks pointedly *Where is this guy living? Is he even in the same time zone???* I'm incredulous...maybe he's from some alternate universe where shooting, looting, tanks, rape, abductions, and assassinations aren't considered chaos, but it's chaos in my world. Riverbend's blog is one of the most honest, poignant and painful written by young Iraqis in the early years of US Occupation (Riverbend's family was finally forced to leave Iraq in 2007 and settle in Syria, to once again leave at the outbreak of the Syrian civil war.)

⁴⁵⁴ <http://web.stanford.edu/group/chr/drupal/ref/the-2003-looting-of-the-iraq-national-museum> Retrieved September 25, 2015.

⁴⁵⁵ <https://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/books/the-rape-of-mesopotamia-behind-the-looting-of-the-iraq-museum/407713.article> http://www.academia.edu/319277/Review_of_The_Rape_of_Mesopotamia_Behind_the_Looting_of_the_Iraq_Museum_by_Lawrence_Rothfield. And in the archeological community <http://www.world-archaeology.com/books/rape-of-mesopotamia-behind-the-looting-of-the-iraq-museum.htm> Retrieved July 19, 2015.

*of conventions for the protection of cultural property in times of armed conflict; the very American refusal to recognize culture as a sector like health, education, or energy, requiring the attention of policymakers; the focus of cultural heritage NGOs on conserving and developing sites rather than on securing them; and the absence of long-term relationships between archaeologists and the military that might have made it easier for advocates to put their case to those in a position to have done something.*⁴⁵⁶

At a Q&A session at the University of California in Los Angeles, following a presentation I made on findings from this research, a participant asked whether one could even start comparing the American Occupation of Iraq with that of Japan—considering how much separated them. He added (I paraphrase) ‘at any rate we [Americans] could hardly know for example that there would be so much bad blood and hatred between Iraq’s Sunni and Shia populations’.⁴⁵⁷ I pointed out that he had answered his own question. If the United States did not understand such basic features of Iraqi society, history, culture or political context, not even enough to anticipate Sunni-Shia dynamics in a power vacuum, it should hardly be occupying that country in the first place.

The concluding chapter of the US military’s CenCom report’s is explicit. Exposing the cultural negligence of both the 1990-1991 Operation Desert Storm as well as the 2003 Operation Iraqi Freedom, the last paragraph of the report reads as follows:

*Under the Geneva Conventions, occupation forces must ensure public order and prevent looting. More specifically, the Geneva and Hague Conventions require the protection of cultural property against destruction and theft and prohibit its use in support of military action. The Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954) further specifies that an occupying power must take necessary measures to safeguard and preserve the cultural property of the occupied country and must prevent or put a stop to “any form of theft, pillage or misappropriation of, and any acts of vandalism directed against, cultural property.” The Coalition has ignored and violated these international laws, resulting in great and irreparable damage to the cultural heritage of Iraq and all humanity.*⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵⁶ See 2009 interview with Lawrence Rothfield.
http://rorotoko.com/interview/20090511_rothfield_lawrence_rape_mesopotamia_looting_iraq_museum/
Retrieved July 19, 2015.

⁴⁵⁷ <http://www.library.ucla.edu/events/terasaki-prange-presentation> At the UCLA Young Research Library, January 8, 2015. Retrieved September 22, 2015.

⁴⁵⁸ <http://www.cemml.colostate.edu/cultural/09476/iraq08-01enl.html> Retrieved September 23, 2015.

5.3 Occupation of Japan as Template for Occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq—Any Lessons Learnt?

America spent close to four years entangled with the Japanese in the Pacific War. It was a brutal and bloody conflict. In total some 1.75 million military were killed on the Japanese side, 110,000 on the American side. The battle of Iwo Jima, a speck in the Pacific Ocean, took more than 25,000 lives and left just as many wounded. The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki killed almost one in three citizens of each city.

On both sides, hatreds and prejudice ran deep. Racial stereotyping added further venom. Technological advances had given greater power to propaganda machines, which became ferocious throughout the Pacific War. Sophisticated tools in photography and mass media meant that not only anti-American/anti-Japanese propaganda campaigns were far more sophisticated compared to wars of earlier times, they were also more effective, reaching vast numbers of the population in ways that would have been inconceivable in past battles.

Caution and distrust, before and in the early phases of Japan's Occupation, were constants. In a flow of 'Top Secret Directives', prepared by the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee, signed by the secretaries from the three branches, the tension is palpable, as is a high degree of detailed consideration regarding every probable scenario and outcome for the Occupation. In a directive dated July 10, 1945, for example, one can read:

The conditions which will bring about a Japanese collapse or surrender and the situation which will exist at the time cannot be accurately foreseen. However, there does exist the definite possibility that a collapse or surrender may occur any time prior to a total defeat. In order to be prepared for this contingency, it is necessary that plans be made, based on assumed conditions. [...].⁴⁵⁹

Another directive, this one issued shortly after surrender, on August 28, 1945, reads:

It should be recognized that the estimate of occupational forces required [in Phase I and to some extent in Phase II] are based on being able to counter acts of treachery and sabotage on the part of local Japanese. Although there has been no

⁴⁵⁹ Joint War Plans Committee, a plan for the U.S. Occupation of strategic positions in the Far East in the event of a Japanese collapse or surrender prior to 'Olympic' or 'Coronet' [code names used for invasion of Japan], Appendix B. It is not surprising then, with such detailed attention to preparatory measures, that the very last paragraph of this Appendix estimates the possible time of collapse or surrender of Japan as at August 15, 1945, the exact date of surrender. From the archives of Edgar Porter and Ran Ying Porter, discussed on September 2 (received September 8), 2015.

*indication to date that such acts are likely to occur; it is considered prudent to be prepared for any contingencies until such time as experience in the occupation of the first two or three positions may warrant reduction in the estimate of forces required in these periods.*⁴⁶⁰

In contrast, prior to the invasions, Americans had experienced little actual combat with Afghans or, other than the first Gulf War, with Iraqis. In both these latter wars, America enjoyed overwhelming military power, as well as immeasurably greater economic resources. In both cases, the American occupiers were initially welcomed by a large portion of the population. In the case of Afghanistan, at least, the invasion also benefited from widespread international support and legitimacy.

There is an on-going myth that the US Occupation of Japan was somehow easy (presumably as compared to future occupations). In reality, in its own way, it was also extremely complex. At the time of its defeat, millions of soldiers of the Japanese Empire were returning from the war front. Economic circumstances were dire beyond description, and would get worse throughout 1946. With no jobs and little dignity or respect from their compatriots, there was no guarantee that at any moment a group of desperate soldiers would not make a suicidal attack against the American invaders, about whom horror stories had been relentlessly circulated throughout the war years.⁴⁶¹ Most historians now agree that had such a chaos unfolded, the Americans would have needed hundreds of thousands more occupying forces.

Thus very difficult decisions such as maintaining or not the Emperor system, or keeping or not the existing bureaucracy in place, were to be continuously debated in US decision-making circles, from as early as 1942. The main consideration that ultimately weighed in *against* the Emperor's indictment, for example, was that removing him could create such a vacuum, unpredictability or possible chaos that risks simply could not justify the end—a hard decision to

⁴⁶⁰ Joint War Plans Committee, Ultimate Occupation of Japan and Japanese Territory, J.W.P.C. 385/3 of August 28, 1945. From the archives of Edgar Porter and Ran Ying Porter, Received September 2015.

⁴⁶¹ Conversations with Professor KS, who shared that her father, in 1945 a 22-year old demobilized soldier, had vowed in the early stages of the surrender to murder General MacArthur. He was imprisoned by Japanese authorities in Hiroshima and brought to his senses by an older prison ward, who told him that nothing could be achieved by such a foolish act. She believes thousands of angry young men in Japan were in a similar frame of mind at the time.

reach for politicians considering that more than 70% of the American population wanted the Emperor's arrest as a war criminal.⁴⁶²

Similarly, the Occupation chose to work through the existing Japanese bureaucracy, in hindsight a wise decision considering how few Americans spoke the language. This policy further forced the Japanese government to take responsibility for the sensitive demilitarization of millions of returning soldiers. That this all unfolded without violence was a remarkable achievement, lulling many now to think with the benefit of hindsight that it must have been somehow easy to achieve.

Thomas Lifson notes that the risks for chaos and violence were quite high, especially at the early phases of the Occupation, and considers it unrealistic to ignore or underestimate the impact this had on many political decisions taken at the time:

...Occupation is never easy. Even the most successful of military occupations under the best possible circumstances have their troubles. This is a factor to keep firmly in mind when considering the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The American occupation of Japan has to be counted as a spectacular success—maybe the greatest success in the world's history of occupations – in retrospect [...]. But at the time, it was often dicey. [...] To be sure, there were no insurgents flowing over the border because Japan is an island nation. But the danger of a communist revolution was always regarded as serious, all the more so after war broke out on the Korean Peninsula. There was also a counter-force, the often shadowy remnants of militarist circles, consisting of secret societies, purged officials and their confederates, and those seeking to restore something like the pre-war regime.⁴⁶³

Whatever the combination of thought-out American strategies and pragmatic Japanese execution, the most vulnerable phase of the Occupation, namely the initial few months, passed generally without violence and set the tone for the rest.

⁴⁶² The issue remains deeply controversial, among both Japanese and Western scholars. In December 2014 Herbert P. Bix, author of 'Hirohito and the making of modern Japan' (HarperCollins, 2000) penned an op-ed in the *New York Times* <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/30/opinion/hirohito-string-puller-not-puppet.html> challenging the premise that the Emperor was merely a puppet of the militarists. The philosopher Kato Norihiro in another op-ed a few weeks later on the occasion of the release of the Hirohito papers made the same observation <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/15/opinion/norihiro-kato-daring-to-ask-hirohito-about-his-role-in-WW2.html> An earlier assessment, of Sebastian Swain *Reflections on the Allied Occupation of Japan: Democratization and the Evasion of War Responsibility: the Allied Occupations of Japan and the Emperor*, presented at the London School of Economics and Political Science in October 1999, argues that MacArthur's decision to maintain the imperial institution in the chaotic circumstances of late 1945 was wise, but questions the decision to protect the person of Hirohito rather than pressing abdication in favor of a less tainted imperial family member, as was suggested even by members of the Emperor's inner circles. Takemae (2002) reprises a similar position, see specially pp. 519-520.

⁴⁶³ Thomas Lifson, The lessons of the occupation of Japan, in the *American Thinker*, posted August 22, 2007, http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2007/08/the_lessons_of_the_occupation.html Retrieved January 24, 2015.

SCAP had given the Japanese responsibility for demobilizing their armed forces. Huge amounts of military materiel were destroyed, and military production facilities were set aside for reparations to be awarded later to the Allied powers after they agreed on how war material should be divided up. On October 16, 1945, MacArthur announced that Japan's armed forces "are now completely abolished....Approximately seven million armed men...have laid down their weapons. In the accomplishment of the extremely difficult and dangerous surrender in Japan, unique in the annals of history, not a shot was necessary, not a drop of Allied blood was shed." "Without doubt, the demobilization of all Japanese forces within two months of the surrender was a remarkable feat and powerful evidence of Japan's desire to carry out the surrender terms. Any threat of armed resistance had dissipated."⁴⁶⁴

In spite of some hit-and-miss decisions and more than a few errors of SCAP, history—I believe rightly—considers the occupation of Japan a success, so the ‘why?’ question remains pertinent. One succinct, simplified reason is provided by Janssens in *What Future for Japan*. Writing of policy differences within the Roosevelt (and later Truman) Administration, notably disagreements between the ‘Japan crowd’ and the ‘China crowd’, the ideological differences and the personal fights and backbiting, Janssens concludes nonetheless that:

In the end, though, in spite of all the personal conflicts and different political estimates in Washington and Tokyo, the Occupation was to a high degree a successful execution of the policies drafted between 1942 and 1945 (emphasis added by me). There were no rebellions during the Occupation, Japan was thoroughly demilitarized, substantial changes were introduced in politics, society, and economy to make Japan more democratic, and a lot of the reforms lasted beyond the Occupation.⁴⁶⁵

Janssen’s point is crucial. The Occupation of Japan was certainly not perfect. As in almost any similar endeavor, the Americans were frequently forced to change plans in the face of ground realities, in many cases to improvise. Some of their policies proved meaningless, or ill conceived. Still, essentially much of what had been planned for Japan between 1942 and 1945 remained valid and came to pass under the Occupation. Internal policy differences within the US decision-making circles were not squashed outright, and the Occupation was considered through the perspectives of different and opposing constituencies. Despite the difficult context of an on-going war, thorough, disciplined and realistic preparations took place on many fronts. That advance work paid off, but it must not be forgotten how much effort had gone into it. To remember, and appreciate in a comparative context, what it took the Americans to have in place a

⁴⁶⁴ From the US Army Center of Military History, Chapter III, The Command Structure, AFPAC, FEC and SCAP <http://www.history.army.mil/books/wwii/MacArthur%20Reports/MacArthur%20V1%20Sup/ch3.htm> pp.73-84, Retrieved December 14, 2014.

⁴⁶⁵ Janssens (1995), p. 384.

‘cultural policy’ for the post-war, I summarize below the most important entities highlighted in this research, and suggest future in-depth studies to see why, *mutatis mutandis*, similar entities did not exist in any meaningful way in the planning phases of the Afghan and Iraqi occupations:

The Harvard Group

Formed in 1940 after the fall of Paris at the initiative of a number of academics and their families at Harvard University, it gradually gained momentum and prepared key people for the work of ACLS and MFAA (see further below). In the case of Afghanistan, no single leading academic institution in the United States held a comparable dossier on the country’s culture. In the case of Iraq, despite the fact that there were far greater numbers of Middle East specialists in academic institutions in the US as well as scholarly groups engaged with Iraq’s cultural heritage, no single one was influential enough within military or policy circles to impact the course of pre-war debates on the cultural aspects of post-occupation policies.

The American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS)

The ACLS had already established a committee devoted exclusively to Arts and Monuments in times of war in early 1943. It included a number of cultural heritage specialists and renowned scholars from other fields of the social sciences and liaised effectively with The Harvard Group. Later, its work was integrated with that of the Roberts Commission. Neither in Afghanistan nor in Iraq did scholarly groups, such as the American Academy of Sciences, for example, succeed in taking a prominent role.

The Roberts Commission (American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas)

The Roberts Commission was a hub for discussing, articulating and mobilizing cultural policies, plans, resources and experts, a central platform that liaised with the Administration, the military, the various government agencies as well as the world of academe and museums. It was formed as a Presidential Commission headed by one of the most influential judges of the time (a conservative who was hardly an ally of FDR) and located in Washington D.C. The vice-chairman and the person who spearheaded its day-to-day activities, David Finley of the National Gallery of Art, was a powerful figure in the capital, who understood both the workings of the government and those of the art/policy circles. No similarly powerful locus for cultural concerns existed at the top echelons of the Bush Administration throughout preparations for the Afghan and Iraq occupations.

The US Military’s Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives (MFAA) program

Some 400 servicemen and civilians, from 13 nations, formed the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) program, created within the Civil Affairs and Military Government sections of the Allied armies in 1943. This extraordinary entity was the outcome of the efforts of some of the groups referred to above—and mostly through the influence of the Roberts Commission. I have

not found any similar systematic and large-scale inclusion of culture specialists embedded in the military to have occurred in either the Afghan or Iraq occupations.⁴⁶⁶

The Civil Affairs Training Schools (CATS) program

Training in general subjects related to Japanese culture and society was undertaken at many of the Ivy League universities during the war years. These short and longer (some as long as 36 weeks) programs managed to train hundreds of US officers in the language, culture, history, economy, education systems, religion and other aspects of Japan, in advance of the Occupation. It is hard to underestimate the influence of the CATS. Some scholars have argued that not all of the officers trained through these programs actually ended up at GHQ. But a few did, and many others were dispatched to local governments across Japan, and even to Korea. Many of these officers had worked under the best and brightest of scholars. In the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq, I have not identified any similar, systematic effort set up by the military within America's elite universities.

SCAP's Civil Information and Education/Arts and Monuments (A&M) Division

Within the sprawling Civil Information and Education (CIE) Section, the small A&M Division was one of the first to be staffed and advised by scholars and experts, men of the likes of Langdon Warner, George L. Stout, Laurence Sickman, Howard Hollis or Sherman E. Lee — many of whom were famous not just in the scholarly circles back in America, but also in Japan. The A&M established excellent working relations with Japan's scholarly community as well as the Ministry of Education. Thanks to the early inspections of cultural sites across the country, it was able to help early on with setting up protection and preservation mechanisms, and through its advice, support efforts such as on taxation and legislation to stem the tide of sales and export of cultural treasures. Also, in the early post-war months and years, when the state of cultural institutions in Japan was precarious, the A&M provided employment to many top Japanese scholars, thus preserving in the cultural sector an important capital of human resources and experts for the post-war reconstruction period. There was simply no similar division embedded in the US military or able to undertake anything close to what the A&M was tasked to do.

The accumulation of so much sustained effort at *understanding and preparing*, as well as what can only be described as an underlying but general stance of caution and modesty, resulting in an 'inquiring and learning' approach, now appear in striking contrast with future American attitudes and conduct in Afghanistan (2001) and even more markedly in Iraq (2003). In both these recent cases, limited intellectual effort to understand the larger and deeper cultural dimensions of the societies being occupied seems to have transpired. Similarly, there appears little attempt to

⁴⁶⁶ http://www.army.mil/article/40945/The_Art_of_War_and_the_War_of_Art/ Retrieved November 10, 2015.

integrate any of the prior experiences in post-conflict reconstruction into the military preparations.⁴⁶⁷

War Only?

In a forum hosted by the Cato Institute on April 5, 2015, Colonel Gian Gentile, a US army officer and professor of history at West Point Academy, suggested that the failures in Vietnam, in Afghanistan and in Iraq were the result of a systemic lack of importance attached to all other means, except war, within policy-making circles in the United States. He described this as a sort of ‘rock solid belief’ that “*War, American War, can always be made to work*”. He asks whether there is any indication that in the case of Afghanistan (or Iraq) the huge cost to the American taxpayer has been at any time worth it, considering that it costs roughly one million US dollars annually to keep a single American serviceman in Afghanistan.⁴⁶⁸

Some changes in the United States military since the Afghan and Iraq debacles are worth noting. The military of course cannot win wars alone, neither can it, by improving only itself, overcome the systemic shortcomings and tunnel-vision of the political or policy-making establishments. According to Davies, recent attempts to develop ‘cultural tools’ for the military are too patchy and utilitarian, and too frequently considered as some sort of ‘weapon’ in the arsenal of the military—i.e., culture not as a sustained and integrated principle and policy, but rather as a tool. Invariably, when culture is viewed in so utilitarian manner, it is hardly a tool for transformation.

The shift to “culture as a weapon system” allows the military to conceive of culture globally, a category that is not specific to one theater or one enemy. New military institutes are producing materials for cultural training, language study and thinking about what the term “culture” means. The Army TRADOC Culture Center, formally established in November 2005, is part of the Intelligence Center of Excellence at Fort Huachuca, Arizona. The Marine Corps Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning, also established in 2005, is focusing much of its effort on Marines deploying to Afghanistan. In 2006, the Air Force created a Culture and Language Center located at Air University, while the Navy established the Center for Language, Regional Expertise and Culture in 2007. While each of these centers hires experts and purveys knowledge, the Army TRADOC is far out in front, building a core curriculum encompassing social organization, political structure, cross-cultural communication, rapport building,

⁴⁶⁷ In his memoirs, George W. Bush refers to these criticisms and counters that preparation had in fact been made. What he does outline, however, regarding cultural preparations, seem at best surprisingly meager. *Decision Points*, Broadway Paperbacks, 2010, p. 248. The former president’s assessment at least does not try to entirely whitewash just how wrong things went in Iraq....pp. 367-onward.

⁴⁶⁸ <http://www.c-span.org/video/?311930-1/cato-institute-looks-lessons-war-afghanistan> Retrieved September 3, 2015. However, his co-panelist at the same Cato session, a prominent expert of post conflict reconstruction, Ambassador James Dobbins, mentioned that in fact the Afghan operation was constantly done on the cheap, almost 50 times smaller per capita as compared to Bosnia, for example, with only 8000 troops and with no peacekeeping agenda whatsoever.

*cross-cultural negotiation, extremism and working with interpreters—as well as the foundational question of “what culture is.”*⁴⁶⁹

In Iraq the lack of a coherent, realistic planning seems in hindsight almost preposterous, so much so that Lakhdar Brahimi, the senior UN envoy to both Iraq and Afghanistan and a generally cool-headed and reserved international bureaucrat hardly prone to perpetuating conspiracy theories, has gone on record saying that the US Occupation of Iraq was so poorly conceived and executed that one is left with the impression that such dismal performance must have been intentional.⁴⁷⁰ In the realm of culture, the underinvestment was disheartening and the absence of a comprehensive policy that would place culture at the center, as an essential tool of reconstruction, both before and after the Iraq war, painfully evident long after the looting of the National Museum. Rothfield writes:

*At the end of April [2003?], the State Department announced that the United States would contribute the munificent sum of \$2 million (later supplemented by \$500,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities, all given to American institutions to preserve and document Iraq’s cultural resources and provide professional development opportunities for Iraqi librarians). This sum is roughly equivalent to the amount spent every fifteen minutes on the overall Iraq war effort, and one-tenth of the funding provided to the Metropolitan Museum by the city of New York in 2005. [...]*⁴⁷¹

Obviously, the kind of ‘old boy network’ in cultural matters that had worked relatively well during WWII did not carry the day in the war planning for Afghanistan or Iraq. Actually it no longer even existed. There was a network of sorts, but it was far more political and ideological. The distance between the world of scholars and academics and the world of those planning the Afghan and Iraq wars and occupations could not be bridged on short notice. In the Iraq case, from the spring of 2002, for example, Arthur Houghton, a highly influential individual both in policy and cultural sectors—a former State department official, curator at the Getty Museum and a member of the president’s Cultural Property Advisory Committee—tried to find out what was being done by the Administration in preparation for the likely war in Iraq. In interviews, Houghton talked of his assumption that somewhere within Defense or State Departments people would be working on the dangers to archaeological sites and institutions of the importance of the National Museum in Baghdad. He was to discover, however, that in reality no one was working on the issue, and that within the U.S. government there were no specific entities or teams assigned to deal with the protection and preservation of Iraq’s culture.

⁴⁶⁹Rochelle Davies, *Middle East Report*, Vol 40, Summer 2010.
<http://www.merip.org/mer/mer255/culture-weapon> Retrieved September 4, 2015.

⁴⁷⁰ http://www.democracynow.org/2014/6/18/will_iraq_or_syria_survive_un Retrieved November 20, 2014.

⁴⁷¹ Rothfield (2009), p. 122.

In an earlier epoch, someone like Houghton—Harvard educated, urbane, and well connected—might have been able to bring the concerns of Hawkins and others to the attention of policy makers at the highest level simply by calling a few friends in the power elite to warn them that attention must be paid to cultural heritage protection.⁴⁷²

It was not to be so in the Iraq war.

Early decisions and actions have a disproportionate influence on the subsequent course of events in an occupation, where initial perceptions are key. Mistakes so marked the initial judgements by the US and its allies in the lead to and early stages of the Iraq war that, according to Ramesh Thakur of the Australian National University, putting together the broken pieces after so much damage inflicted and credibility lost was quite impossible. Thakur writes, with bitter irony:

If chaos, anarchy and mass violence reign as national institutions are destroyed and the country reduced to wasteland, that only proves how ungrateful the natives are for not garlanding the virtuous liberators with flowers and singing “Kumbaya” as peace, good governance and prosperity break out. How was Washington to know the extremists would quickly occupy the power vacuum its invasion created just because that has happened every time before?⁴⁷³

Finally, the Islam scholar Marcel Boisard has suggested in interviews with this author that the religious factor should be studied in depth in all three occupations. In the case of Afghanistan and Iraq, at least, an assumption of the known and at times a simplistic view of Islam seemed to prevail, as when Bush nominated a Madison Avenue advertising executive in 2002 to ‘improve’ relations with the Muslim world.⁴⁷⁴

Conclusions

At the outset of the Pacific War, by the standards of the times Japan was already a highly advanced and industrialized nation. The Meiji leaders had invested massively in education and in developing major industries so that by the 1930s, in terms of its industrial skill and output, scientific and technological prowess and the level of education of its general population, Japan was on equal terms with the advanced industrial nations of the time. Its cultural heritage, artifacts and institutions put it perhaps among the most richly endowed and better organized nations in the world. Indeed, by the 1920s and 1930s, Japan already boasted world-class artists

⁴⁷² Rothfield (2009), p. 26.

⁴⁷³ <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/10/09/commentary/world-commentary/russia-passes-west-race-across-syrian-minefield/#.VhoZC1w0jwI>

⁴⁷⁴ *Persuading Them* James Traub, *The New York Times*, November 25, 2007. <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/25/magazine/25WWLN-lede-t.html> and Interview with Marcel Boisard, May 23, 2015, and in email exchanges, October 5, 2015.

and craftsmen, historical sites and natural and cultural treasures. The heritage protection systems it had started putting in place beginning in the late 19th century, while not perfect, were in a league of their own, especially when compared to other nations in Asia.

Much of Japan's cultural property was neglected, damaged and destroyed throughout the war years, in particular during the American carpet bombings of the conflict's last few months. Nonetheless, at the end of the war there still remained a significant number of artistic and cultural treasures, and the remnants of a tested legal and institutional framework, as well as the know-how and skills that had existed before the war. It is therefore tempting to conclude that for the American occupiers, paying attention to the cultural heritage of Japan after defeat would have been a natural outcome.

But American political and military attention to cultural aspects of Japan—in the broadest sense—had started long before the Occupation, indeed only shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor.⁴⁷⁵ Such efforts by the Americans gained further momentum, depth and scope as the war front expanded, so that by the time the Occupation actually began (in reality even *before* it began) the Americans had, in the realm of culture as in a number of other sectors, a rather clear idea of what needed to be done.⁴⁷⁶

In theory at least, today culture and cultural property are serious consideration in the US Department of Defense planning. Joris D. Kila and Christopher V. Herndon, in their article in the *National Defense University Press*, have argued that by ratifying the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of War in June 2009, the United States now has the legal responsibility to prepare its military appropriately for the task.⁴⁷⁷ Consensus in this regard has yet to translate into broad policy changes, but it is clear that occupational failures in Afghanistan and Iraq have nonetheless had a profound impact on the US military, if for no other reason than that the toll it has had to pay has been so high. In a number of official statements the military has recognized, at the highest levels, the pressing need to learn from these failed experiences. In a speech to West Point cadets on November 27, 2011, Robert Gates, US Secretary of Defense from 2007 to 2011, said that after the experiences of Afghanistan and Iraq, any future defense secretary who would encourage a land invasion of countries in Asia, the Middle East or Africa 'should have his head examined'. In the same speech, Gates added that his priority since taking office had been to encourage cadets to become proficient in other cultures and languages. In his words,

⁴⁷⁵ As we saw earlier, attention to questions of culture and cultural heritage among American political and military circles dates to the fall of Paris, in June 1940.

⁴⁷⁶ Scott (2003), p. 354.

⁴⁷⁷ In National Defense University Press <http://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/NewsArticleView/tabid/7849/Article/577538/jfq-74-military-involvement-in-cultural-property-protection-an-overview.aspx> Retrieved November 10, 2015.

On that last note, I would encourage you to become a master of other languages and cultures, a priority of mine since taking this post. A pilot program begun in 2008 to incentivize ROTC cadets to learn foreign languages has grown from a couple dozen participants to some 1,800 today.⁴⁷⁸

Another approach has been the military's emphasis on developing its own cross-cultural competence. The rationale, after the failures in Afghanistan and Iraq, has been that internal diversity and cultural sensitivity could naturally lead to a deeper understanding of and respect for foreign cultures. Remi M. Hajjar, a professor of behavioral sciences at the West Point Military Academy writes:

...[A] link exists between the armed forces' internal cultural diversity issues and the military's objective to heighten its ability to work effectively in foreign cultures. [Cross-cultural] competence means the knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral repertoire that military members require to accomplish all given tasks and missions involving cultural diversity.⁴⁷⁹

Hajjar argues that a policy encouraging more diversity within the ranks of the military is bound to have an impact on its ability to nurture the necessary attitudes and skills for a culturally more challenging world. He also refers to many senior military and government officials "*who cite the problematic, flawed culturally based assumptions used to plan the invasion of Iraq in 2003*".⁴⁸⁰

While the military has been making efforts at learning and adjusting, this work cannot be the military's alone. It is difficult to see how the military, powerful and adaptive as it may be, can change the dynamics and attitudes of politicians and senior decision-makers in Washington D.C. or, indeed, in other capitals around the world. As we saw in the case of Japan, developing cultural policies for the military requires not just the full endorsement of the generals, but the active engagement of the civilian leadership, to which the military must report, and the scholarly community, the insights of which it needs.

As the UNESCO Kabul Office report states, culture in its broadest sense must become part of the mainstream, and its role in improving a range of post-conflict challenges must be better studied and articulated:

⁴⁷⁸ <http://www.stripes.com/news/text-of-secretary-of-defense-robert-gates-feb-25-2011-speech-at-west-point-1.136145> Retrieved September 28, 2015. On November 19, 2015, Robert Gates made a similar comment when asked what he thought of sending ground troops to combat ISIS. He said that after 14 years of war, and the mistakes in Afghanistan and Iraq, the US had still not learned much of the lessons related to non-military options—including on issues related to governance. <http://www.cbsnews.com/videos/ex-defense-secy-robert-gates-on-u-s-military-response-to-isis/>

⁴⁷⁹ *A New Angle on the U.S. Military Emphasis on Developing Cross-Cultural Competence: Connecting In-Ranks' Cultural Diversity to Cross-Cultural Competence*, by Remi M. Hajjar, in *Armed Forces and Society*, 2010, vl (36) 2, from I-House Library, 6-8 April 2015 Tokyo, p. 247.

⁴⁸⁰ Hajjar (2010), p. 248.

Efforts to preserve cultural heritage in Afghanistan must also be seen in the context of it being placed low on the agenda of general development policies and priorities in a country with one of the lowest standards of living in the world. Therefore, a challenge for organizations working in the profession within Afghanistan is to raise awareness of the greater role that culture can play in peace and development, and to explain their projects and objectives in relation to broader goals that address a wider range of pertinent issues, such as poverty alleviation, health, education, national identity and the state-building processes.⁴⁸¹

Such an attempt would require that the Occupied ‘other’ and his or her culture—in the broadest sense—be studied, and understood. In an essay published earlier this year, entitled ‘Amidst the chaos, learning from the wisdom of history’, I addressed the connections between some of the themes raised in this study and recent violent events in the Middle East and beyond. I wrote:

The success of Japan’s Occupation, which lasted till 1952, was a testament to the resilience and resourcefulness of the Japanese, but also to the work of an informed, far-sighted and competent American administration. As early as 1942, shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the US government was rushing to mobilize teams of experts and scholars, to help its military planners better understand who the Japanese were, what motivated them, what could defeat them and, most astonishingly, considering the war was still raging and its outcome uncertain, how an American occupation could become a transformative force and change Japan into a peaceful, prosperous nation.

Hardly had the ink on President Franklin Roosevelt’s “Day of Infamy” speech dried that across the White House, State Department, War Department and various ad-hoc committees involved in the war effort, scholars of the quality of Hugh Borton of Columbia University and the British diplomat George B. Sansom were being called in, to help make sense of the enemy. Even those Occupation decisions that remain controversial to this day--maintaining the emperor system or working through the existing Japanese bureaucracy and government--seem wise, in a context where avoiding more chaos and violence was the single most pressing goal.

There was also, from the start, an official American policy, to protect Japan’s cultural heritage and assets. Thus, within weeks of the troops’ landing, plans were already drawn up for a small Arts and Monuments branch at SCAP. That such a unit even existed--and was endorsed by Washington and SCAP’s senior

⁴⁸¹ UNESCO Kabul Office, September 9, 2015. UNESCO’s Cultural Activities, Challenges of the Past, and Visions for the Future: Safeguarding the Cultural Heritage of Afghanistan, (ref Nagaoka Masanori).

leadership--is in itself remarkable. But it is the high quality of its staff and advisors that truly stuns--many were or would later become some of the most influential figures in America's Asian art circles. In March 1946 Langdon Warner, a curator at Harvard's Fogg Museum, an archeologist as prominent in the US as he had been in pre-war Japan, joined as advisor. The popular perception that the Americans cared enough for Japan's cultural heritage to bring on board individuals of Warner's stature, raised morale--with newspapers following his every move. In those bleak post-defeat months, the cumulative impact of these and other wise policies on endearing the Occupation to a nation hungry for dignity can hardly be imagined.

Comparing the approach of the American Occupation in Japan in 1945, to that in Iraq in 2003, must become mandatory for any policy-maker contemplating the Middle East today. The root causes of the violence that engulfs Iraq, and the origins of the festering terrain in which groups like ISIL thrive, may also be traced to a severe lack of understanding of the enemy, which no number of American military 'surges' have been able to overcome over the past decade.⁴⁸²

In her opening address to the conference on the protection of Syria's cultural heritage, the director general of UNESCO distilled why protecting culture in times of war is so important:

I am keenly aware that in the context of a tragic humanitarian crisis, the state of Syria's cultural heritage may seem secondary. However, I am convinced that each dimension of this crisis must be addressed on its own terms and in its own right. There is no choice between protecting human lives and safeguarding the dignity of a people through its culture. Both must be protected, as the one and same thing—there is no culture without people and no society without culture.⁴⁸³

Yet, exactly 68 years earlier, similar words were used to express not mere dreams or distant aspirations but concrete policy principles and operational guidelines of the world's most powerful army: it is maybe appropriate to end this chapter, by recalling the words in the Memorandum of August 29, 1945, addressed to the Secretary of War of the time:

The occupying army is cognizant of the fact that the age-old cultural and artistic monuments in the lands to be occupied are a part of the cultural heritage of all

⁴⁸² Nassrine Azimi, 'Amidst the chaos, learning from the wisdom of history', *Hiroshima Peace Media Center*, February 2015 <http://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/?p=40724>

⁴⁸³ Irina Bukova, statement made on August 29, 2013. <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ERI/pdf/ReunionPatrimoineSyrie.pdf> Retrieved November 17, 2015.

*peoples, and it is a fundamental policy of this army to protect and preserve in every way possible these monuments.*⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸⁴ Memorandum from Walter Popham (a future staff of A&M) to Secretary of War, as in Scott (2003), p. 354.

Chapter VI

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This research set out to find answers to three sets of questions:

- (1) Was the American Occupation of Japan prepared with an eye to understanding the cultural aspects of the country (or put differently, understanding the country through its culture) and if so, was this approach to the benefit of or part of the ‘success’ of the Occupation?
- (2) Was the American Occupation a positive influence in protecting Japan’s cultural property in the immediate post-WWII months and years?
- (3) How do pre- and post-WWII American Occupation policies in Japan, specifically in the realm of cultural understanding and cultural heritage protection, compare with policies in the period immediately before and after the occupations of Afghanistan or Iraq?

It is now possible to answer the first two questions affirmatively, and reconsider the third with a different, broadened perspective. There was clearly, among American war planners, a consistent consideration of broader cultural issues. While fighting Japan, they were also trying to understand it, and believing they would ultimately be victors in the war and occupiers in peace, they prepared for the job. As we have seen, the preservation and protection of Japan's cultural property benefitted, concretely, from resources of the occupying army—it even had its own dedicated division within the Occupation machinery, staffed by relatively competent and qualified professionals. American policy planners’ comprehensive approach to preparing for the occupation of Japan, and their commitment of resources and man-power for the practical work of protection of cultural heritage should be seen as complementary. By making distinct these two separate but mutually reinforcing threads, it becomes all the more striking how neither occurred in Afghanistan or in Iraq.

Despite a devastating war that reduced the country to rubble, and an almost seven-year long Occupation, many—not all—of Japan’s cultural treasures, traditions and legal protection measures survived. The American Occupation did not create these treasures and traditions, but at a critical juncture and a time of extreme vulnerability when the Japanese were hardly interested in culture, by ensuring that their protection became an official Occupation policy, it pushed for equally appropriate government policies and even contributed to enhancing the trends towards the democratization of cultural assets.

6.1. The Long Road Travelled—Building Blocks for Safeguarding Cultural Property

As **Chapter II** made clear, for nearly three and a half centuries some of the benefits of education and culture had already been reaching ordinary Japanese. It may be self-evident, but nonetheless worth remembering, that the country had started investing in education for the masses since the Edo era, some of whose leaders, followed by those of Meiji, perceived that an educated nation was preferable to an ignorant, unrefined one. Not all but a few also personally tried to uphold these high standards, treating art and culture with respect, and embracing unfamiliar ideas (such as the need for cultural property protection). They supported the construction of new museums and the preservation of old temples, shrines and gardens. They became patrons of artists and of craftsmen, and at times even became artists and craftsmen themselves. The Edo period allowed the flowering of a moneyed urban class interested in the arts. The *sankin-koutai* system prompted a major up-haul of the country's travel and cultural infrastructure, and developed not just the main cities but also the outlying regions that had to service the comings and goings of feudal lords and their retinue to Tokyo. It also forced regions to try to rival one another for cultural and artistic pursuits. The *nihon sankei* started a tradition of listing the country's natural and built treasures.

During the Meiji, through missions such as the Iwakura, the Japanese acquired the know-how to start structuring their cultural assets with great speed and energy. The drive, while creating Western-style museums and cultural institutions, imperiled the traditional arts of the country. A few visionary individuals, of the stature of Ernest Fenollosa and especially Okakura Tenshin, led the charge for the protection of the country's heritage.

Similarly, were it not for friendships and scholarly exchanges among Japanese and American civil society—universities, museums, private collections—the A&M story itself might have unfolded in a different way entirely. The long history of cultural exchange presented in Chapter II reminds us that the A&M's work was not done in a vacuum, on the run, or on short notice. There was human excellence, commitment to culture, intellectual generosity, a continuity of bonds of friendship and scholarship, and a certain cultural legacy transmitted from one generation to another—from Morse and Fenollosa and Okakura Tenshin, to Warner and Sansom, and all the way to A&M staff, Stout or Lee. Each of these scholars, connected to one another, shared genuine passion for Japanese culture and for cultural property protection. It bore fruit.

6.2. Early, Broad and Multifaceted Occupation Planning Matters

What motivated American policy makers to even think about Japan culturally, in the midst of an all-out war, and then to prioritize the protection of the enemy's cultural property upon victory? The Americans could have decided they had no obligation for cultural heritage protection in Japan—yet they set up policies and plans for this purpose, allocating precious time and resources to the endeavor.

One explanation, maybe too simple a generalization, is that *enlightened individuals produce enlightened occupation policies and enlightened policies produce effective occupations*. As we saw in **Chapter III**, from 1942 onward, American war efforts included the study of Japan, and the understanding of Japanese culture and society. The Americans also prepared for this task in entirely different ways than they had done before, or would do in future: the Roosevelt Administration, still imbued with New Deal ideals, seemed willing to include a wide array of experts, diplomats and scholars, frequently with quite differing opinions, to help shape its thinking about how to deal with the (eventual) occupation of Japan. This open-minded and broad approach to understanding the enemy—not just militarily but socially, politically, historically and culturally—was not easy at the time: one should remember just how many learned groups, societies and associations, councils, committees and commissions, military schools and training programs, policy guidelines and directives, were involved in the effort. Throughout the war, the Roosevelt Administration commissioned a slew of papers and reports, participated in debates and conferences, mobilized researchers and think-tanks and spearheaded initiatives to help it better understand and plan. That all this took place in the midst of a brutal and all-consuming war, the outcome of which was far from certain, makes the efforts all the more remarkable.

The very creation of the Roberts Commission itself during WWII was the result of a particular political and social environment, and of a far more intricate and sustained mobilization of America's best institutions and individuals for the war effort. This occurred from the early stages of hostilities, from June 1940 and the fall of Paris.⁴⁸⁵ The Roberts Commission in 1943 did not happen overnight but was a continuation of other, earlier initiatives, notably the American Defense-Harvard Group, as well as the American Council of Learned Societies. The involvement of these groups also reflected the respect for and influence allowed to the scholarly community by political powers that be (and vice versa). The influence of the Roberts Commission on the cross-agency cultural work during WWII directly, and on the future work of A&M indirectly, was immense. By making so central the question of cultural heritage, at such a high level and so early on, and by establishing a commission that actually had both the clout and the expertise—

⁴⁸⁵ <http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/finding-aid/civilian/part-2-notes.html>
#15 in Civilian Agency Records, National Archives. Retrieved July 20, 2015.

the means and the will—to decide and act, and finally by ensuring that its decisions would be respected by officers on the ground, the United States gave a great gift to the embattled and occupied nations of Europe and Asia. Comparable arrangements in the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq, *mutatis mutandis*, were simply nonexistent or at best developed haphazardly, at the last minute, as an after-thought, shallowly conceived and poorly executed. Naturally, they had no tangible impact.

During WWII, the domestic perception of a ‘Just War’ was widespread in America, including among intellectuals, and the national draft provided the means to translate those sentiments into practical contributions by calling to military service citizens from all walks of life, including scholars. Thus with the support of the Roberts Commission, the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives (MFFA) division was created within the Civil Affairs and Military Government Sections of the Allied Armies. With the support of the scholarly community, the US military also started the Civil Affairs Training Schools (CATS), months-long preparatory programs for officers destined for the occupation of Japan, covering training not just in language but in history, culture, religion and society. The CATS were held at the country’s best universities and encompassed classes given by first-class academics and experts.

The policies of SCAP were the product of a government influenced by New Deal ideals. The Roosevelt era ethos and policy agenda as a whole influenced the Occupation, but the planners at times had to work *despite* the politicians, prompting some historians to suggest that SCAP was the last major undertaking of the New Dealers. Some of those who worked behind the scenes were clustered for the most part at the State Department and around the person of Joseph Grew, the former ambassador to Tokyo until Pearl Harbor. Others, like the British diplomat and historian of Japan George Sansom, worked informally, educating and guiding perceptions of war planners in Washington D.C. Yet others, like the anthropologist Ruth Benedict, an outsider without any political or policy clout, nonetheless managed to think deeply about Japan and about war and occupation, and wrote work that has had profound influence to this day on perceptions of the enemy. FDR’s death in April 1945 strengthened the hands of the specialists, especially those at the State Department who had been spearheading the planning for Japan’s post-war regime and who, more than FDR himself, favored a soft peace. Truman’s greater reliance on such experts and on the bureaucracy made possible the translation of their ideas and ideals into actual policy.

6.3 Polices/Institutions/Individuals Matter: The Langdon Warner Factor

As noted in **Chapter IV** SCAP, by any historical or present standard of military occupation, was unique. It was unique in its ambition (transformation of a country), unique in the sheer amount of thinking that had gone into its creation (almost three years of planning), unique also in the quality of some of its staff. SCAP had a real and meaningful cultural protection policy, formulated even before its official establishment, as reflected in the August 29, 1945 Memorandum sent to the Secretary of War. Douglas MacArthur's own stance and official statements reinforced this policy. Ideals and policy were not enough however—an institutional locus was necessary. Thus George L. Stout, one of the core people to have conceived of the very concept of MFAA during wartime, by 1945 probably the most experienced and foremost conservator of art in the US military, became the first head of the cluster that was to become SCAP's Arts and Monuments Division. Stout and many of his colleagues had been exposed to the war (in Stout's case both WWI and WWII), many had served in it as officers—they possessed a clear-eyed understanding of its realities. Yet, being professionals of art, they also understood what needed to be done practically to protect Japan's cultural heritage. It deserves saying: many were also idealists—it is difficult to read the letters of Stout and Warner in particular, and not admire their knowledge and professionalism but also their personality, their humanity, their genuine faith in the power of culture. There is simply no easy substitute for the insights that real scholarship can offer. While it is true that some of the Occupation staff would benefit in later years from their privileged positions and connections with Japanese scholars and art dealers, these were incidental and for the most part mutually beneficial developments that take nothing away from the superb work done in Tokyo by A&M.

Thus, just as during the war years, the hub of preparatory efforts regarding culture had mostly centered on the political, policy making, military and cultural circles in Washington D.C, Boston and New York, once the Occupation started, these coalesced within SCAP's CIE and later its Arts & Monuments Division in Tokyo. Sustained early efforts before, and a consistent and clear policy and operational stance regarding culture afterwards, paid off handsomely for both the Americans and the Japanese. The experts and scholars who converged around the Arts and Monuments Division were, if nothing else, pragmatic: the no-nonsense manner with which they set out to inspect, categorize, repair and protect cultural heritage must have influenced and encouraged their Japanese counterparts immensely. In hindsight, their work makes any similar attempts in Afghanistan and Iraq appear amateurish and inconsequential.

6.4 ‘The Fate of Cultural Property in Wartime: Why it Matters and What Should Be Done’

Reflecting on the Afghan and Iraqi cases of American-led occupations, one must wonder about the root causes of differences in US occupations of the three foreign countries separated by no more than 60 years.

As we saw in **Chapter V** in late 2002 and early 2003, as the Bush Administration was preparing to attack Iraq, the official drumbeat of Japan as a possible model for a shining future became so loud that the dean of American historians of the Pacific War, John W. Dower, felt compelled to publicly refute any possible comparisons between the occupations of Japan and Iraq. Dower’s ‘A Warning from History—Don’t expect democracy in Iraq’ may be an apt description of how essential it will be, now as in the future, for any occupation to possess that intangible quality of legitimacy:

The postwar occupation of Japan possessed a great intangible quality that simply will not be present in the event of a U.S. war against Iraq. It enjoyed virtually unquestioned legitimacy—moral as well as legal—in the eyes of not merely the victors but all of Japan’s Asian neighbors and most Japanese themselves. [...] Quite the opposite can be anticipated if the United States attacks and then occupies Iraq. The United States will find the legitimacy of its actions widely challenged—within Iraq, throughout the Middle East and much of the rest of the world, and even among many of its erstwhile supporters and allies.⁴⁸⁶

Under international law and the 1954 Hague Convention, in times of conflict an occupying power has the responsibility to protect the cultural heritage of the occupied nation. The United States was not a signatory until 2009. In interviews, John Limbert, the shadow ‘culture minister’ upon the fall of Baghdad in 2003, has suggested how much cultural protection depends on the overall general context of the occupation, and the degree of understanding and knowledge underpinning it. Throughout the period leading to war, there was in the Bush Administration an assumption of dealing with the known. The experiences of Afghanistan and Iraq are reminders that in these recent wars much of the fine detail about what the deeper, broader implications of occupying another nation, especially ones as wounded, complex and dysfunctional as Afghanistan and Iraq, were ignored or left to chance. In such carelessly organized occupations, cultural and historical considerations inevitably fell to the wayside.

⁴⁸⁶ John W. Dower, ‘A Warning From History’, *Boston Review*, February 1, 2003.

<http://www.bostonreview.net/world/john-w-dower-warning-history> These concerns were not just raised by scholars. Indeed, so off the mark have the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq been that many officers, some high-ranking generals who actually took part in the wars, are publicly calling for an official inquiry about the mistakes made. http://www.democracynow.org/2014/11/12/why_we_lost_retired_us_genera Retrieved November 20, 2014.

For Afghanistan, there was never any systematic and sustained effort in Washington, to understand the society prior to war and occupation, and plan accordingly. Once the actual invasion started, the United States, almost entirely focused on military aspects, left all other tasks to a host of international players. These players, fragmented, resource-poor, with short-term mandates, could never have the same carrying capacity to embed culture, cultural understanding and cultural heritage protection in the occupation machinery. For the U.S. military—the single most important player in the early months and years of occupation—culture was simply an overlooked orphan child, and anyway any substantial resources it could have earmarked to culture later disappeared, once the war in Iraq started.

In Iraq, considering that country's resources, general level of education and the cultural heritage it had and had managed to preserve, efforts for heritage preservation should have been more successful. Yet there too there was failure. The Bush Administration planned the war and occupation without understanding, as John Limbert wrote, 'basic human nature and history'.⁴⁸⁷ It also alienated a wide range of much needed partners, domestically and internationally, including the vast majority of the U.S. and international academic community. Because it relied so much on questionable information provided by a few select Iraqi exiles as 'insight into Iraqi society', from the outset it was in no position to anticipate the consequences of the invasion. Its failure to set up even modest mechanisms to protect Iraq's cultural heritage—in spite of repeated and desperate warnings from experts—was therefore not surprising, considering the manner in which the protection of even highly visible and symbolic institutions, such as the Iraq National Museum, Library, Archives and other treasures, were left to chance.

Why such a disregard for culture? There are many cumulative reasons—ranging from the 'professionalization' of the US military service, to the radicalization of opinions in US politics in general and within the Bush Administration in particular. As a contrasting example, there had been much internal debate and disagreement among US policymakers throughout the Pacific War on the subject of post-war policies toward Japan's Emperor system—a debate foremost political, but also eminently cultural. Whatever one may think of the outcome, there seems to have been space for discord and a diversity of views in the American policy circles of the 1940s. In contrast there was self-assurance and hasty plans in the Bush Administration for Afghanistan and Iraq. 'Wars of Revenge' do not adjust well to thorough, deliberate planning and preparation, and leave little space for opposing views or considerations. It is not clear how much thinking took place and whether it had any tempering influence on war plans—for example about the role of religion and risk of religious strife in Afghanistan's tribal society, or on the consequences of the dismissal of the army and of Ba'ath Party members, a huge segment of public sector and military personnel, in a post-occupation Iraq.

It is still early to draw definitive conclusions about the reasons that may have doomed the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq from the start—there will surely be large numbers of studies investigating why the conditions for success were absent. Such inquiries, while of great

⁴⁸⁷ In email of November 25, 2015.

relevance and value to current global challenges and contemporary conflicts, go beyond the scope of this research, but I hope a few general lessons may nonetheless be drawn from my work, as suggested in the following section, and I hope to see others continue the reflection.

6.5 Quo Vadis? Some implications for the future

Will it be possible to nurture and involve, in matters as grave as culture and identity in war and occupation, the best and brightest people, individuals of the stature of an Okakura Tenshin, a Stout, a Warner, a Sansom, or a Benedict? Will it be possible to nurture people, and through them policies, that understand even in the midst of conflicts the universal need of people everywhere, for a sense of dignity and identity? Must we not be thinking about today's conflicts with solutions that may take decades to bear fruit?

The United States may still have more than its share of qualified expert individuals and organizations, but a certain empowering environment and a certain vision and value system, such as the New Deal, appear essential if qualified individuals are to bear influence on policies and politics. Amazingly, despite the calamitous invasion of Iraq and its aftermath, current trends in the United States do not bode well. Referring to the elimination in 2013 of the State Department funding for advanced Russian language and cultural training, Charles King of George Washington University laments decreasing resources for area studies, once the great strength of the United States. King writes that even as an increasingly sophisticated military costs more and more, international programs that would allow America to better understand the world around it are weakening, in some cases even disappearing.

The end of the United States' premier federal program for Russian studies saved taxpayers only \$3.3 million—the cost of two Tomahawk cruise missiles or about half a day's sea time for an aircraft carrier strike group. The development was part of a broader trend: the scaling back of a long-term national commitment to education and research focused on international affairs. Two years ago, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences warned of a hidden crisis in the humanities and social sciences. [...] The rise of the United States as a global power was the product of more than merely economic and military advantages. Where the country was truly hegemonic was in its unmatched knowledge of the hidden interior of other nations: their languages and cultures, their local economies and human geographies. Through programs such as Title VIII, the US government created a remarkable community of minutemen of the mind: scholars, graduate students, and undergraduates who possessed the linguistic skills, historical sensitivity, and sheer intellectual curiosity to peer deeply into foreign societies. Policymakers sometimes learned to listen to them, and not infrequently, these scholars even became policymakers themselves.⁴⁸⁸

The political scientist Francis Fukuyama, too, laments the lowering emphasis on area studies and cultural understanding. In an interview, Fukuyama describes what this trend has done to the nation-building mentality, criticizing current political science's focus on theory, abstraction and generality, at the expense of specific knowledge and understanding. He says:

⁴⁸⁸ Charles King, *The Decline of International Studies in Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2015, pp. 88-98, I-House library, Tokyo.

*We don't teach area studies, we don't teach languages [or] culture. We teach abstract theory that is of zero use in most of these real-world situations [and citing the decisions by Douglas MacArthur to leave the Japanese Emperor in place and Paul Bremer's decision to disband the Iraqi army, Fukuyama observes,] Just think about what kind of knowledge you need to have to make that decision in the first place and you'll see that it's all entirely local, contextual, historical, cultural, and the like.*⁴⁸⁹

As to cultural property, funding for its long-term protection is generally among the lowest priorities on most international donors' lists. Afghanistan and Iraq were no exceptions. The Afghan Ministry of Culture (now Information and Culture) is, as UNESCO's Noshadi stated, one of the least funded government agencies, and the new Afghan reconstruction strategy report does not even mention culture. Amidst all the pressing challenges facing Afghanistan, including the pervasive perception of its lack of security, it has been understandably difficult to gain long-term national or foreign donor commitment and funding, but the fact remains that unless the good intentions are set in a larger policy context and backed by adequate resources, all efforts will remain *ad hoc*.

In the wake of the Iraqi debacle, the international community too has sought to further sharpen its tools of occupation administration (for the next war), when understanding the culture and history of the enemy may become essential, and protecting its cultural heritage, invaluable.⁴⁹⁰ UNESCO as the protector of the 1954 Hague Convention has taken the lead, and much reflection has been ongoing through its deliberations, including on the plague of the illegal trafficking of cultural treasures.⁴⁹¹ Though these themes deserve full-length studies all their own and are beyond the scope of my current research, even a cursory look into the investment(s) in human, financial and institutional capital and in training the militaries of member states in cultural training for war and post-war occupation shows how small scale they are, and what a long road remains ahead.

Following the massive destruction and looting of cultural heritage in territories of Iraq and Syria held by ISIS (or DAESH) insurgency groups, the international community is struggling to find ways of responding, not just to their loss but also to the appalling conditions of life and threats of

⁴⁸⁹ Francis Fukuyama in E. Doyle Stevick, 'From transmission and influence to dialogue and understanding' in *Ethics and International Curriculum Work—The Challenges of Culture and Context*, edited by Terrence C. Mason, Robert J. Helfenbein, Information Age Publishing (IAP), 2012, p. 67.

⁴⁹⁰ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/armed-conflict-and-heritage/training-for-the-military/>
Retrieved September, 2015.

⁴⁹¹ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/armed-conflict-and-heritage/>

death for those responsible for their protection.⁴⁹² One recent example is the suggestion to revive the idea of UN peacekeepers (Blue Helmets) for the protection of cultural heritage sites. Though such measures are still symbolic or palliative at best, in the face of ever-expanding means of destruction observed since the cultural vandalism of the Balkan Wars, nations worldwide are concerned enough to explore any and every option. Clearly, more than ever, thinking about our collective cultural heritage, the heritage of humanity, has become urgent.⁴⁹³

If the broader picture of resources devoted to culture in post-war situations remains unsatisfactory, how much have things changed within the US military itself over the past 14 years? The United States Army is hoping to revive something akin to the ‘Monuments Men’ (and women) of WWII, and to do so in a sustained, long-term manner, rather than simply as reaction to disasters such as the looting of the National Museum of Iraq. C. Brian Rose, archaeologist and the curator-in-charge of the Mediterranean section at the Penn Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, would have cultural heritage training made a mandatory part of pre-deployment training for *all* US troops, as it is for reserve officer training corps and civil affairs officers.⁴⁹⁴ Rochelle Davies suggests that since the Iraq debacle, the military has in fact tried to make some institutional changes, to include the understanding of protection for culture as one of the essential preparatory measures for war. But she also suggests that these efforts are, at best, *ad hoc*, and still too frequently undertaken merely as yet another ‘tool of war’ rather than as a genuine attempt to understand the other.⁴⁹⁵ One must also keep in mind that an all-volunteer, professional army could hardly be expected to be able to keep in its ranks distinguished scholars of art and culture, as was the case in WWII.

Under international law, every occupier has the responsibility to protect the culture of the occupied nation. But the letter of a law is not the same as the practice under the law. The preparation for and conduct of the Occupation of Japan, with regard to culture, demonstrates how much work, discipline and resources must go into creating conditions necessary for success in such an endeavor. It was an aggregation of policies and people, attitudes, resources and plans that determined the way priorities were set within the Roosevelt Administration and military, in dealing with the question of Japan’s cultural heritage.

⁴⁹² On the lack of understanding and knowledge of other societies and nations, and the catastrophic consequences thereof, see the chilling account by Dexter Filkins on the root causes of ISIS (or DAESH). ‘Did George W. Bush Create ISIS?’ Dexter Filkins, *The New Yorker*, May 15, 2015. <http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/did-george-w-bush-create-isis>

⁴⁹³ In *Blue Helmets to protect Heritage sites*, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/17/un-peacekeepers-protect-world-heritage-sites-isis> Link and commentary provided by Sara Noshadi, Unesco, Kabul, October 2015.

⁴⁹⁴ *Wanted: a new generation of Monuments Men for US army -- Curators, art historians and museum directors sought to provide expert advice in combat zones*, by Helen Stoilas, *Art news*, issue 265, February 2015. <http://old.theartnewspaper.com/articles/Wanted-a-new-generation-of-Monuments-Men-for-US-army/36935> Retrieved Aug 25, 2015.

⁴⁹⁵ Davies (2010) <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer255/culture-weapon>, Retrieved September 6, 2015.

In the course of this research, I have often heard that Japan had far more cachet amongst cultural experts in the America of the 1940s, than did either Afghanistan or Iraq in the America of the first decade of the twenty-first century. The point is moot. One may well argue that mutual misconceptions, racial antagonism and hatreds ran deeper in the case of Japan: except for a brief period of a few weeks, the majority of Iraqis were not battling Americans in 2003, while the Japanese and American forces were engaged in widespread face-to-face combat and bloodletting for years. Yet American leaders in WWII apparently saw cultural understanding and cultural heritage protection not only as necessary to the understanding of another people—even a hated, feared and defeated enemy—but part of the responsibility of any civilized nation, and a fundamental obligation of an occupying power.

The pre-occupation planning for Japan, already started by 1942, sets itself apart from what was done (or not done) for Afghanistan or Iraq, but also from almost every other military occupation of a foreign country that the United States has undertaken before or since WWII. It has not been the main purpose of this study to compare what happened in different eras, wars and countries – particularly ones as vastly distant as the Japan of 1945 versus the Afghanistan or Iraq of the early part of the 21st century. Still, it seems singularly fitting to the problems of our times to consider how and why one and same occupying power, only a few decades apart, could so differently approach a task as consequential as the occupation of another nation.

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Islam scholar, former executive director, UNITAR

On Iraq/role of religion in occupation, interview by email and in person, Geneva, May 20, 2015.

FUKUI Haruhiro

Professor Emeritus, Department of Political Science, U. of California, Santa Barbara

Since September 2013~; by email~; in person September 2014 at I-House.

NAGAOKA Masanori

Head of UNESCO Culture Unit, Kabul, Afghanistan

Interviews in Hiroshima, April 23, 2015, and by email.

NISHIKIORI Akira

Architect, formerly Hiroshima Prefecture Association of Architects and Engineers

On postwar reconstruction and architectural preservation in Japan

Since 2013~, conversations in architectural magazine April 2014 and thereafter.

NOSHADI, Sara

UNESCO Office, Kabul, in charge of culture,

Interview (by skype) March 25, 2015 and email.

SAKAINO Asuka

National Research Institute for Cultural Properties (*Tobunken*), Tokyo

Introduced by Professor G.R. Scott, interviewed at I-House, Tokyo March 14, 2014.

SCOTT Geoffrey R.

Professor of Law, Pennsylvania State University, on Japanese and other cultural property laws:

From September 2013-now; On-going (by email); December 17, 2013 (by skype); Interviews in person, August 2014; October 16, 2015 (by skype); by email.

SELJUKI, Tawab,

Physician, Fulbright scholar, Hiroshima Fellowship coach and mentor, December 2014/January

2015 by email; including interview with parents, Bijan Seljuki and Abeda Seljuki, formerly from the Afghan ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, respectively.

SOKOUT, Sabahuddin,
Coordinator, UNITAR Hiroshima Fellowship for Afghanistan in Kabul, interviews in person
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***Main Libraries/Collections/Museums
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Yamamoto Yuzo Memorial Museum, Mitaka City, Tokyo (visited July 5, 2014), Ms. Watanabe
Michiyo, curator.