

Leading the Retentionist View:
Joseph Grew's Influence on U.S. Decisions

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Introduction:

Joseph Clark Grew was a well-known career diplomat, serving in countries such as Denmark, Switzerland, Turkey, and Japan. His most notable duty was his ten-year term as Ambassador in Japan between 1932 to 1942 as Grew witnessed Japan's military strengthen over a decade until Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. Joseph Grew's primary purpose was practicing diplomacy through peaceful negotiations. As Ambassador, Grew worked to ensure stability between U.S. and Japanese relations but was not as successful near the last couple of years of his ambassadorship due to negligence of Japan's leaders. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, he returned to the United States and became Under Secretary of State from 1944 to August 1945.

Near the end of the Pacific War, Grew was most influential in advocating for an exception to America's unconditional surrender policy—to preserve the Japanese Emperor and Imperial institution as a Post-War Constitutional Monarch.¹ Among the U.S. leadership, there was a division between “retentionists” and “abdicationists.”² With an existing division of opinion among American leaders and a strong public opposition, his request was not easily supported by U.S. decision-makers. Grew was one of the top Japan specialists at the time. Serving as ambassador in Japan for ten years, his understanding of Japan's way of thinking and psychology of the *kokutai* concept was often unquestionable. Regardless of his knowledge, his recommendations of U.S. policy towards Japan were often overlooked. Although the U.S. did retain the Emperor in the occupation, U.S. decision-makers initially rejected Grew's proposal.

Considering Grew's background and experience in Japan, *why did Grew support the retentionist view, of preserving the Emperor in the post-war, and why was his view ignored?* In

¹ Grew, Joseph. “The Grew Memo: Emperor as Post-War Constitutional Monarch” in *Hiroshima's Shadow*. Bird, Kai, and Lifschultz, Lawrence. Pamphleteer's Press, 1998. p. 504-507.

² Suzuki, Takeshi. *The Rhetoric of Emperor Hirohito: Continuity and Rupture in Japan's Dramas of Modernity*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007, p. 71.

the end, *how influential was Joseph Grew in U.S. policy decision-making?* Joseph Grew was quite a prominent figure who strongly advocated for the retention of the Imperial Institution and Emperor Hirohito as a condition for Japan's surrender. Gaining support for incorporating this condition in the surrender terms was a complicated process due to strong opposition from American leaders and the public. There was a clear division in the State Department between the "Japan Hands," that Joseph Grew contributed to, and the "China Crowd." Many of the diplomatic advice offered by Joseph Grew and other Japan experts were often neglected, as policy suggestions towards Japan were met with criticism. Joseph Grew was determined to preserve the Emperor due to his understanding of Japan's history and the mindset of the Japanese people. This was mainly acquired through his ten-year term in Japan and his relations with specific individuals. The reasons why Grew's suggestion was met with disapproval was because of the existing strong support for an unconditional surrender policy; the assumption that Joseph Grew was sympathetic to the Japanese; and the common idea that Emperor Hirohito was responsible for the war.

This paper will begin by exploring Joseph Grew's background and experience as a diplomat, focusing on his ten-year term in Japan between 1932 to 1942. This section will include an analysis of how Ambassador Grew came to understand Japanese culture – ultimately used in his arguments for his advocacy. Many influences include Grew's interactions with elitists, working alongside Japan specialists, and witnessing Japan's intense military development throughout the 1930s. The next part will discuss Grew's advocacy for a one condition surrender, demanding the U.S. to retain the Emperor. There will be an analysis of how Grew applied his understanding of Japanese culture and way of thinking, to defend his suggested condition for surrender. This section will also examine the reasons for opposition towards

Grew's advice. To offer some perspective, the following section will analyze Joseph Grew's possible biases he may have had in his motives and approach, such as his secure connections with Japanese elitists and lack of the Japanese language. Finally, the conclusion will assess the role and effectiveness of Joseph Grew and his suggestions towards Japan.

Grew's Experience in the Far East

Joseph Grew was raised in Massachusetts and attended the Groton School and Harvard University before he became a career diplomat. He had interesting connections, including his family ties with one of the world's foremost financial figures at the time, J.P. Morgan. Due to his relations with J.P. Morgan, Joseph Grew had direct links to many of the Japanese businesses and men that Morgan had formerly invested in and had connections with.³ Additionally, his wife Alice Grew, formerly known as Alice D. P. Perry, was the grand-niece to the well-known Commodore Matthew C. Perry, who was responsible for the opening of Japan back in 1854. Given Alice Grew's relations to Perry, Joseph Grew and his wife had links to many Japanese elitists and social circles as well.⁴ As an ambassador in Japan, Joseph Grew had a significant advantage due to these connections. He had networks with Japanese politicians, bureaucrats, diplomats, and people in business, that were quite influential to his views and understanding of Japan.

Beginning with Grew's ten-year ambassadorship in Japan between 1932 to 1941, Joseph Grew was well-skilled in diplomacy but lacked reading, writing, and speaking skills in the Japanese language. During Grew's ten-year term, he was guided by the U.S. to Japan's

³ Davis, Glen, and Roberts, John G. An Occupation without Troops: Wall Street's Half-Century Domination of Japanese Politics. 1st ed., Yenbooks, 1996.

⁴ Nakamura, Masanori. The Japanese Monarchy: Ambassador Joseph Grew and the Making of the "Symbol Emperor System," 1931-1991. M.E. Sharpe, 1992, p. 43.

Counselor of Embassy, Neville, and Dooman, who were familiar with the Japanese language and culture. Working alongside these two Japan specialists, Grew learned Japan's history and culture, without ever thoroughly learning the language. Dooman especially had a long history in Japan, spending a majority of thirty-three years (1912-1945) there. However, despite his knowledge and experience in understanding the people and cultures of East Asia, Dooman's advice to American leaders were often overlooked.⁵ Acknowledging this fact, it was difficult for experts on Japan, (and possibly other countries in the Far East), to influence how American foreign-policy decisions were made. Nevertheless, it was no secret that Dooman and Neville had a crucial understanding of Japan. The two ministers assisting Ambassador Grew over the decade positioned him to understand Japan on a deeper level, influencing his ideas and recommendations later on.

During his time in Japan, countless events significantly shifted Japan's position in the world arena. This included the development of Manchukuo, Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933, the occurrence of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, Japan's entry into the Tripartite Alliance with Germany and Italy in 1940, and then the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.⁶ In 1943, Grew described Japan as being "immensely strong – physically strong, technically strong, militarily strong, and most of all, psychologically strong."⁷ With his experience in Japan and unique connections, Grew understood that Japan was not going to be easily defeated. Witnessing Japan's military expansion and development in Korea, Manchuria, China, and their Southward Advance, Grew was aware of Japan's military capabilities. In a 1933 letter to

⁵ Adams, Peter Alexander. "Eugene H. Dooman, "A Penny A Dozen Expert:" The Tribulations of a Japan Specialist in the American Foreign Service, 1912-1945." Master's Thesis. In Maryland. University of Maryland, 1976, p. 8.

⁶ Nakamura, The Japanese Monarchy, p. 3.

⁷ Grew, Joseph C. "Japan Against the United Nations." Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science, vol. 20, no. 2, 1943, JSTOR, Accessed on November 11, 2019: www.jstor.org/stable/1172840. p. 93.

Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Joseph Grew described, "Turning to the armed forces of the country, it is my opinion that Japan probably has the most complete, well-balanced, coordinated and therefore powerful fighting machine in the world today."⁸ Comparing its military to other nations', Grew was aware of the strength of Japan's army, naval, air, and land forces. If this was a fact discovered in 1933, there was no doubt that Japan's military capabilities advanced further throughout its expansion in the Far East.

While witnessing the rise of Japan's military within the decade, Grew gained close relations with "moderates" in Japan, who were patriotic to their nation and Emperor, but opposed the war. According to his entry in *Ten Years in Japan*, Grew felt less of an outsider interacting with the upper-class moderates. He felt an intimate connection with the group, similar to his peers back in Boston.⁹ Some of these moderates included Kabayama Aisuke, Shidehaa Kijuro, Makino Nobuaki, and Yoshida Shigeru. To offer perspective, Grew's Japanese contacts consisted of pro-American diplomats, Japanese business magnates, highly ranked admirals of the imperial navy, and the court entourage.¹⁰ To Grew, his connections to these individuals served as a channel to the Emperor. As most of these individuals knew English, they became a crucial source of information for Grew. At the same time, they also offered Grew their insight on Japanese history and their political views – which may have influenced Grew's understandings about Japan and their leaders. The moderates shared the idea of a "pendulum theory" to explain the behavior of Japan's cyclical nature between extremism and moderate politics in history.¹¹ For Joseph Grew, Count Makino Nobunaki was the most trusted moderate. However, it was Count

⁸ Grew, Joseph C. "Letter from Joseph C. Grew to Cordell Hull, May 11, 1933." 1933. American Experience, PBS. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/fdr-japan/> (9 December 2019).

⁹ Grew, Joseph C. *Ten Years in Japan: A Contemporary Record Drawn from the Diaries and Private and Official Papers of Joseph G. Grew, United States Ambassador to Japan, 1932-1942*. Simon and Schuster, 1944, p. 319.

¹⁰ Nakamura, *The Japanese Monarchy*, p. 41.

¹¹ Grew, *Ten Years in Japan*, p. 359.

Makino and a few other liberals that had shared this “pendulum theory” to Grew to explain Japan’s history and current domestic affairs. This idea of a swinging pendulum in Japan later influences Grew’s reasoning for retaining the Emperor in the post-war. Thus, it is essential to consider that his lack of Japanese language skills, made him subscribe to some of the "moderates" ideas.

His close relations with Japanese elitists and moderates, his knowledge of Japanese history and culture, and the guidance from Counselor of Embassy Neville and Dooman were significant in shaping Joseph Grew's point of view on Japan. Applying what he discovered during his time as Ambassador in Japan, Joseph Grew deliberately worked to convince American leaders to accept the preservation of the Japanese monarchy as a condition for Japan’s surrender.

Grew’s Proposal: A Post-War Constitutional Monarch

As mentioned previously, Joseph Grew was influential in leading the retentionist view. As a diplomat, Grew sought a peace settlement for the war by offering Japan the preservation of the Imperial Monarchy as the means for their surrender. However, it was more than just an agreement. He was confident that Japanese leaders and the Emperor would come to terms on surrender if the United States guaranteed the preservation of the Emperor and Imperial Institution.

Although many in America believed that militarism and ultra-nationalism derived from the Imperial system, Joseph Grew argues that the nature of militarism is entirely separated from the Emperor.¹² To him, it was more important to remove the military leaders over the Emperor, because they were the root of the problem. However, he did recognize that the Emperor had

¹² Grew, “The Grew Memo,” p. 506.

some responsibility for the war by signing the declaration of war forced upon by the militarist leaders. In a Memorandum of Conversation between Joseph Grew, President Truman, and Judge Samuel Rosenman in 1945, Joseph Grew presents a history of Japan and the role of the Emperor, to defend his case on how militarism is a separate entity from the Emperor. He explains how military shoguns practically ruled Japan for over 300 years, depriving the power of the Emperor.¹³ He goes on stating that once the Imperial Institution was once restored in 1868, Emperor Meiji had to overcome the uprisings of militaristic shoguns.¹⁴ Decades after Emperor Meiji, military extremists were able to take control once again. In his conversation with Truman, Grew argues,

Japan does not need an Emperor to be militaristic, nor are the Japanese militaristic because they have an Emperor. ... Their militarism springs from the military clique and cult in the country which succeeded in gaining control even of the Emperor himself and rendered powerless the Emperor's advisers...¹⁵

This demonstrates an element of the retentionist view; that stripping the power of the Emperor would not have an effective nor lasting effect. As mentioned previously, this was also related to the “pendulum theory” Grew learned from the Japanese moderates. By understanding Japan’s history, Joseph Grew was aware of Japan’s waves of militarism and the actual role the Emperor had during these instances.

Ultimately, why was preserving the Emperor important for Grew? In his mind, the Emperor was simply a figurehead of Japan’s political system. He understood that for the Japanese people, protecting the *kokutai*, or national polity, was ingrained in their psychology. The people of Japan sought to protect the Imperial Institution at all costs. Stripping away the

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

center of the *kokutai* would ultimately lead to chaos in Japan. Grew knew that the Japanese people would not accept an unconditional surrender without the guarantee of retaining the Emperor.

To Grew, the Emperor was simply a figurehead. Although he did have legitimate formal power, he was mostly influenced and limited by the objectives of his surrounding militarist officials. The Emperor had opposed acts of war towards the U.S. but felt obligated to accept because of the pressure from militarist leaders. Beyond the manipulation of the Emperor towards militarist agendas, Grew understood that the Emperor was seen as a divine entity to the Japanese people. Thus, removing the Emperor would impact the foundation of Japanese society. This was a population that sought to protect and preserve the *kokutai*, and it was understood that abolishing the Imperial Institution and the figurehead of the system, would cause havoc among the people of Japan.

It was emphasized that the Emperor institution would be the most successful in exercising a stabilizing influence in postwar Japan. After removing the militarists from Japan's political structure, the Emperor would be most capable of controlling the Japanese people while fundamental political and economic reconstruction occurred during postwar U.S. occupation. In Joseph Grew's infamous "Queen Bee" speech, he compared the Emperor to the queen bee, to demonstrate to U.S. leaders the importance of the Emperor in Japan and to illustrate a parallel between the two. This speech was given to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings on December 12th, 1944, explaining the role of the Emperor to many U.S. leaders at the time. Grew's use of the Emperor as a "queen bee" metaphor stated, "...if one were to remove the queen from the swarm, the hive would disintegrate."¹⁶ Grew's Queen Bee metaphor explained

¹⁶ Nakamura, The Japanese Monarchy, p. 66.

that like a queen bee, the Emperor's primary role was to unify the Japanese people by its very own existence. Mainly, it was understood that if the Emperor were removed, there would be expected social chaos.

Grew believed that the military was manipulating the Emperor. Due to his understanding of the Emperor's opposing position of the war with the U.S, Grew may have viewed the Emperor more like a pacifist.¹⁷ In his Grew Memo, he cited many historical events to prove his point on the position of the Emperor and the acts of extreme militarism. This included the ruling of military shoguns for 300 years during the Tokugawa Period, the uprising of military samurais after the Meiji Restoration, the weakening of following Emperors after Emperor Meiji, and the assassination of Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi by military extremists in the February of 1932. Grew argues in his book, *Turbulent Era: A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years 1904-1945*, "The cult of manifest destiny and of military aggression has been artificially developed, and the Emperor has quite simply been used as a convenient façade to justify and to consecrate that cult in the eyes of the people."¹⁸ This firmly grasps his idea that the Emperor's role, was used as an advantage to the militarist leaders of Japan to mobilize support for the war and the grand strategy in the Pacific.

Grew put the blame on militarists, over the Japanese Emperor or the people. For him, it was the military leaders who have taught these men to be ruthless, brutal, and cruel. In a Radio Address on August 28, 1943, Grew expresses that "Man for man, the Japanese people at home in their own land are not inherently the wolves in human form which some of our own people who

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 29.

¹⁸ Grew, Joseph C. *Turbulent Era: A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years, 1904-1945*. Houghton Mifflin, 1952, p. 1412-1413.

do not know them believe.”¹⁹ He wanted to make clear to the American public and leaders that the fault laid in the hands of the militarist leadership of Japan. At this time, many Americans believed that the Japanese people were ruthless, inhumane beings. Grew attempts to argue that the Japanese military leaders had a significant role in influencing the actions and mindset of the Japanese soldiers during the war. This contributes to the idea of dominant militarists, abusing their control for their extremist agendas.

As mentioned earlier, Grew believed that the Emperor opposed many of the acts of war towards the U.S. Although the same cannot be said about the aggression towards Asian countries. Nonetheless, to demonstrate the Emperor’s common opposition, Grew mentions in a 1940 journal entry in *Ten Years in Japan* the opinions of Emperor Hirohito and Konoye before the signing of the Tripartite Pact. Acquiring this information indirectly from a member of the Imperial family, Grew discovered that Hirohito and Konoye were against the alliance with Germany and Italy, but understood that they must accept, to protect themselves and their positions.²⁰ This mainly feeds to Grew's belief of the Emperor acting purely as a symbol of the state.

In terms of the foundation of postwar Japan, many Japan experts saw the Emperor as a possible asset to social and political reconstruction. More specifically, it was Shintoism that was seen as an asset to control the eventual impact on Japanese minds, after the militarists were removed. On a radio broadcast on August 28, 1943, Grew expresses:

If an ancient tree is torn up by the roots and remodeled it will not live, but if the healthy trunk and roots remain the branches and foliage can, with care, achieve regeneration.

¹⁹ United States. Department of State. American Diplomacy in the Far East; Official Press Releases of the U.S. Department of State on the Sino-Japanese Situation during 1938. 1939, p. 679.

²⁰ Grew, Ten Years in Japan, p. 347.

Whatever is found to be healthy in the Japanese body politics should be preserved; the rotten branches must be ruthlessly cut away.²¹

Ultimately, Joseph Grew's understanding of the system was that if the Japanese Monarchy was destroyed, and Western standards remodeled the nation, Japan's ability to reconstruct and adapt would eventually fail. To Grew, the Emperor was necessary for the U.S. to successfully occupy and rebuild Japan, mainly to contain the Japanese people and the new order that was to come in the post-war occupation.

In this case, Joseph Grew had multiple reasons for supporting the preservation of the Emperor institution. One reason Grew gave to support the retention of the Emperor for post-war reconstruction was that it was necessary to have a significant leader control the eventual impact of Japanese society, considering Japan's destruction, defeat, and occupation from a Western country. Another reason was that Grew viewed the Emperor as merely a symbol and that without its existence, there would be no guarantee of stability among the Japanese society. Lastly, Grew emphasized the distinction between the militarist leaders and the Emperor institution. He attempted to clarify that the Emperor institution had never had direct influence in spreading militarism, and that militarists were most influential to the rise in extremism during the Pacific War. In the end, Grew incorporated this logic to defend his retentionist view towards post-war policy of Japan. Interestingly, Grew was criticized for failing to explain if the symbol of the Emperor had any role in influencing Japanese people to pursue a stronger and more aggressive militarism.²² However, this argument could be contended. The Emperor never enforced militarist thoughts. Militarist leaders were known to utilize the idea of the *kokutai* and the Emperor as a way to motivate the Japanese people, especially the soldiers.

²¹ United States. American Diplomacy in the Far East, p. 676.

²² Suzuki, The Rhetoric of Emperor Hirohito, p. 79.

Again, Joseph Grew's beliefs towards Japan were commonly shared among a group of other retentionist supporters. The retentionist school included Joseph Grew, Cordell Hull (former Secretary of State), Eugene H. Dooman (Former Counselor of Embassy for Japan), Joseph W. Ballantine (Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs in the State Department), and Professor George Hubbard Blakeslee (Chairman of the Far Eastern Area Committee of the State Department).²³ This group, also known as the "Japan Hands," shared the same beliefs of Joseph Grew, and supported the preservation of the Emperor institution for Japan and opposed the remaking of Japanese society. They were identified as conservatives and realists, with a strong business background. At the same time, they were conscious of the threat of a strengthening Soviet Union and were perceptive of the Cold War. In terms of Japan. Most of these individuals had prior experience in Japan and exceptional knowledge of Japanese history, culture, and politics. These were the top Japan experts within the U.S. State Department. Joseph Grew had closer relations with this group, especially with Dooman, working alongside him during his time as Ambassador in Japan. In terms of Secretary of State Hull, Grew had remained close contact with him throughout his entire time as ambassador, reporting to him regularly on updates of Japan. Their constant exchange for almost ten years may have contributed a large part to influencing Hull's ideas and knowledge of Japan as well at the time. Joseph W. Ballantine, as a closer officer to Grew, also had experience in Japan and a vast understanding of their language and culture as he was a student interpreter there.²⁴ Even with Joseph W. Ballantine, Grew entrusted Ballantine to run the Office of Far Eastern Affairs, regarding him as a "wise and well-fitted deputy."²⁵ These individuals in the "Japan Hands" group advocated for a soft peace

²³ Ibid, p. 71.

²⁴ Barnes, Dayna L. *Architects of Occupation: American Experts and the Planning for Postwar Japan*. Cornell University Press, 2017, p. 40.

²⁵ Grew, *Turbulent Era*, p. 1383.

argument with U.S. policy towards Japan. They sought peaceful diplomacy over aggressive action. Nonetheless, they all shared a similar retentionist view, putting blame on the militarists for Japan's wartime aggression and seeking the preservation of the Emperor institution as a means for an effective post-war reconstruction in Japan.

On another note, Joseph Grew was a strong anti-communist. Grew feared the threat of Communism – especially in Japan. Imagining a weakened Japanese society after destruction and defeat, Grew believed that the Soviet Union could eventually influence Japan if the U.S. sought to reconstruct Japanese society entirely. Thus, he emphasized that keeping the Emperor was necessary to ensure Japan would not fall into the Soviet orbit.²⁶ Due to this threat, the fear of Communism was a motivation for Joseph Grew.

Ultimately, there were elements of Grew's experiences and opinions of the current state of affairs between Japan and the world that influenced his determination for advocating. Grew's motivations were based on his Grew's understanding of Japanese history, his views on the Emperor and its institution, his close relations with the "Japan Hands," and his fear of the Soviet Union overtaking Japan. Overall, Joseph Grew led the retentionist view of preserving the Emperor institution and allowing the Japanese to rebuild itself after a temporary occupation by the U.S. However, he was also met with opposition, which became a challenge to Grew and his supporters, near the final months of the war.

Grew's Opposition

In contrast to the "Japan Hands," there was the "China Crowd" who opposed the retentionist view and sought to re-develop Japanese society and its political structure entirely.

²⁶ Pyle, Kenneth B. Japan in the American Century. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2018, p. 90.

This group, also known as the abdicationists, consisted of Secretary of State James Brynes, Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson, J. Carter Vincent, Stanley Hornbeck, and Owen Lattimore.²⁷ This group were considered to be liberals with idealist views on war and post-war policies. Their view was primarily influenced by the China activists, who were well aware of the atrocities in China committed by the Japanese military.²⁸ Many individuals had either witnessed the growing military presence the Japanese in China during the 1930s or had a clear understanding of the atrocities in China.

Overall, the abdicationists view included the idea that the Emperor was entirely responsible for the war, that Emperor Hirohito and the Japanese Emperor Institution needed to be abolished to reconstruct Japan. Finally, that militarism was linked to the Emperor and Shintoism. With the full support of these ideas, the "China Crowd" was especially opposed to retaining the Emperor in the post-war. Many of them worked against Grew, and the "Japan Hands" recommendation. They convinced President Truman during the Potsdam Declaration to exclude any assumption of negotiation with the Japanese based on the surrender terms. There was also a China lobby in America that supported China as a U.S. ally and sought to convince the abolishment of the Emperor system in Japan. Major anti-emperor campaigns were pursued by the Chinese lobby and relayed to the American media to influence the opinions of the public, and leadership.²⁹ For them, they sought to condemn Japanese militarists and leaders, including the Emperor. With the strong influence of the abdicationists and China lobby, Joseph Grew and other Japan experts were met with obstacles to pursuing their suggested policy. There was a clear division among the U.S. State Department, and Grew's policy was often challenged.

²⁷ Suzuki, The Rhetoric of Emperor Hirohito, p. 71.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 72.

In 1943, Joseph Grew presented a speech at the Annual Banquet Celebrating the 90th Anniversary of the Illinois Education Associate. Also known as Grew's infamous Chicago Speech, this was one of his first instances publicly expressing his support of the retentionist view. Discussing the unrelated nature of militarism and Shintoism, Grew argues, "Just so long as militarism is rampant in that land, Shintoism will be used by the military leaders, by appealing to the emotionalism and the superstition of the people..."³⁰ In this speech, he expressed how the Emperor could be used as an "asset" to a peaceful post-war reconstruction of Japan. After this speech however, Secretary of State Hull requested Grew to suspend his public speech-making activities based on this topic. This was mainly because of the American people's animosity toward the Emperor and the emperor system. After this, he was limited to discussing his efforts in advocating for the preservation of the Japanese Monarchy only in private with the State Department.³¹ Many criticized Grew for "protecting" the Japanese Emperor, who was considered by the American public as a monstrous war criminal.

In addition to the opposition and instances of neglect Joseph Grew had faced, the American public also contributed to this struggle. According to a poll in May of 1945, a majority of Americans held the Emperor personally responsible for the war; 4% viewed the Emperor as a figurehead; 3% considered the Emperor as a potential asset in managing Japan after the war.³² At this time, there were strong wartime feelings among the American public. After ending the war in Germany, most people wanted to end the war in Japan with a victory sooner rather than later. Also, most of the public was influenced by anti-Japanese propaganda and campaigns initiated by

³⁰ "Joseph Grew, Address in Chicago, December 29, 1943." National Diet Library. Address at the Annual Banquet celebrating the 90th Anniversary of the Illinois Education association. Houghton Library, Harvard University. <https://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/shiryō/01/003shoshi.html> (9 December 2019), p. 28.

³¹ Nakamura, *The Japanese Monarchy*, p. 28.

³² Frank, Richard B. *Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire*. Random House, 1999, p. 255.

the China lobby. In this regard, the majority of the American public heavily opposed Joseph Grew's suggestions on keeping the Emperor and held a similar "abdicationist" view. However, Grew also emphasized the lack of cultural understanding Americans had towards Japan and their people.³³ It is expected that people who have never been to Japan nor thoroughly studied the history and culture of Japan would not comprehend the complicated dynamics of Japan's political affairs. To Grew, those who opposed his ideas lacked any understanding of Japan. After being out on diplomatic service for so long, the American leaders and people believed that many of Grew's perspectives lacked substance. Waldo Heinrichs argues, "His long residence abroad and socially elite background set him apart from most Americans and left him vulnerable to the criticism of being an unrepresentative American."³⁴ Due to this, he had to ensure stable relations with the State Department and the President.

Overall, Joseph Grew had an opposition to overcome to get his suggestions through. Before the summer of 1945, Grew was determined to persuade the top U.S. leaders (especially President Truman) on his proposal of preserving the Emperor and applying that to the surrender terms. Once the meeting for the Potsdam Declaration came around, Grew struggled to get President Truman and Secretary of State James Brynes to include his recommendation in the Potsdam Declaration, although they shortly considered it. Working alongside Secretary of War Henry Stimson on convincing this policy, it was intentionally absent in the Potsdam Declaration. Although the leaders initially considered it, the surrender terms were ultimately revised because of the broader military strategy involving the use of atomic bombs.³⁵

³³ Nakamura, *The Japanese Monarchy*, p. 31.

³⁴ Heinrichs, Waldo H., Jr. *American Ambassador: Joseph C. Grew and the Development of the United States Diplomatic Tradition*, Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1986. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/washington/detail.action?docID=270955>. (11 November 2019), p. 385.

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 74.

However, on August 10, 1945, the Japanese government decided to accept the Potsdam Declaration to surrender under one condition.³⁶ After a long debate, the White House agreed to accept without the full intention of commitment. Later, General MacArthur decided to implement Grew's policy. Finally, on August 15, 1945, Joseph Grew resigned as Under Secretary of State, satisfied with the outcome of Japan's surrender.

Ultimately, the reasons for the opposition was because of the existing strong support for an unconditional surrender policy, the assumption that Joseph Grew was sympathetic to the Japanese, and the common idea that Emperor Hirohito was responsible for the war. There was some discussion for a compromised approach by replacing the Emperor with his Oxford-educated brother Prince Chichibu, or minor son the Crown Prince. However, these were options less likely considered by both opposing schools.³⁷ Regardless of constant debate and neglect over Grew's recommendation, his efforts were ultimately effective considering the outcomes of the surrender and occupation policy. Unfortunately, Joseph Grew's determination for a peaceful negotiation to end the war sooner was not as successful. Nonetheless, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) ended up preserving the Emperor's institution and utilizing its foundation as an asset to the reconstruction and democratization of Japan in the post-war occupation period. Even with the implementation of Grew's recommendation, some may question if Joseph Grew may have been biased towards his opinion on Japan.

Was Grew Biased?

It is evident throughout this analysis that Joseph Grew had particular opinions of Japan, based on his prior experience and understanding of the nation and its people. However, it is

³⁶ Ibid. p. 78.

³⁷ Grew, Turbulent Era, p. 1414.

questionable if his reasonings for his view were ever bias. A number of his ideas were supported by historical facts and experiences he acquired during his time in Japan.

As mentioned in the section on *Grew's Experience in Japan*, he had strong personal relations with Japanese elites that shaped his perspective of Japan and its history. In this case, Joseph Grew may have been biased based on his connections with Japanese elitists, moderates, and important business groups. For example, an element of his argument is supported by the “pendulum theory,” first introduced by Count Makino. This theory to explain the swings of militarism within Japanese political history was applied to defend Grew’s case on preserving the Emperor and establishing a Japanese Constitutional Monarch. His countless meetings with the group of political “moderates” contributed to his knowledge of Japan beyond just direct personal experience. Additionally, he rarely interacted with people outside the elitist groups, meaning that he had no honest understanding of Japanese citizen perspectives.³⁸ Considering these relations and influences, Joseph Grew most likely developed biases by the elites to support his opinion.

In addition to his close ties with elites, his lack of Japanese reading, writing, or speaking also limited his ability to fully understanding the Japanese nation. Dooman and Neville were of great assistance to Grew during his time as ambassador, as they were exceptional in the Japanese language. Some may question if individuals, such as Dooman or Neville, also shared the same preconceptions of Joseph Grew – and if they did, were they a significant influence on Grew’s view? Eugene H. Dooman had a different perspective on Japan's root of militarism. He believed that militarism derived from American anti-Japanese behavior in the 1920s, including the U.S.'s insistence on the abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1921, 1924 Exclusion Act, and the lack of American support to the Japanese for China's treaty violations.³⁹ Contrary to the

³⁸ Nakamura, *The Japanese Monarchy*, p. 58.

³⁹ Barnes, *Architects of Occupation*, p 40.

views of Grew and other Japan experts, Dooman believed that Japan's aggressive orientation came from the neglect of the American response. In this case, Dooman did not have a direct influence on Grew's beliefs.

Even if Grew was biased, he was not the only individual in America that supported the retentionist view. Many Japan experts, too, agreed with Grew. In many cases, experts of both Japan and China were also biased as they experienced varying wartime circumstances. Dayna L. Barnes argues, "The department's Foreign Service officers understood Asia through the lens of their postings in Japan or China. Because most officers served in only one country or the other, they often absorbed the antagonism and biases between these warring neighbors."⁴⁰ Therefore, many individuals in the "Japan Hands" and "China Crowd" group had distinctive biases, based on their understanding of the country's history, culture, politics, and more. In this regard, it was common for biased ideas to influence motives for advocacy and persuade an agenda.

Conclusion:

Leading the retentionist view, Joseph Grew was determined to convince the top U.S. leadership to apply his recommended policy for post-war Japan and surrender. Many of his motivations oriented from his views of the Emperor as a symbol, the rising threat of Communism, and his understanding of Japanese political history. Overall, it is essential to acknowledge that although Joseph Grew was quite influential in introducing the policy on preserving the Emperor as means for Japanese surrender, Grew also had limitations to his role as well. Often met with strong opposition, the members of the "China Crowd" sought an abdication or removal of the Emperor, in stark contrast to Grew's desires. The motives for opposition included the belief that militarism was deep-rooted in the Emperor institution, the blame put on

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 37.

Emperor Hirohito for the responsibility of the war and the strong support for an unconditional surrender policy. Analyzing the motives and effectiveness of the two groups in the State Department illustrates how U.S. policy decisions were often weighed out and determined.

In terms of the effectiveness of Joseph Grew's efforts, he was ultimately successful in framing out the foundation for post-war occupation and reconstruction in Japan. After the process of disarming Japan in the occupation, Grew emphasized the importance of a U.S. role in Japan's economic and social rehabilitation. Although Grew did not have a significant influence on Japan's reconstruction after his retirement, he did continue to offer advice. Overall, Grew became quite influential after returning to the United States in 1942. He was pragmatic in his views and determined to succeed until the end of the war. Regardless of the distinct division in the department, Grew ultimately overcame the opposition and became a crucial figure in the development of the eventual surrender policy.

Additionally, it is also critical to know that Joseph Grew was not pro-Japanese during the Pacific War. He much supported the American war effort and the need to end this war with an American victory. Regardless of his close relations with the Japanese, he acknowledged the harmfulness of Japan's current political and militarist state at the time. It was ultimately his mission to convince the U.S. leaders to work to eliminate the extreme militarism existing among Japan. He truly believed that as a result, the Japanese political structure and society would fundamentally reconstruct without ultra-nationalism and militarism.

Bibliographic Essay

I first approached this topic by questioning the application of culture in U.S. foreign policymaking. I wanted to evaluate the effectiveness of advice offered by Japan experts during WWII, hence my research focus on Joseph C. Grew. I have relied extensively on two of Grew's most notable works, *Ten Years in Japan: A Contemporary Record Drawn from the Diaries and Private and Official Papers of Joseph G. Grew* (1944) and *Turbulent Era: A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years, 1904-1945* (1952). *Ten Years in Japan* offered a vast collection of journal entries and official papers dating from Grew's arrival in Japan in 1932 to the end of his ambassadorship in 1942. This collection of entries and papers provides insight to Grew's day-to-day experience in Japan, including his meetings with important Japanese ministers, official letters to U.S. Secretary of State and President Roosevelt, conversations with the Japanese imperial family, and his relationships with the so-called "moderates." This collection of documents from Joseph Grew between 1932 to 1942 highlights his experience in Japan and how he strengthened his expertise of Japan over the decade. This was especially helpful in my research in reviewing the influences Grew faced during his experience abroad.

Joseph Grew's *Turbulent Era* piece also discusses similar topics, but with further detail and analyzation offered by Grew. He includes radio addresses, letters, official papers, and many more. Although this piece covers his entire years as a diplomatic, he goes beyond by including his experience as Under Secretary of State. His section on "The Emperor of Japan and Japan's Surrender" (p. 1407-1442) clearly illustrates Grew's view of the Emperor and the frustration held at the Potsdam Conference.

Other important primary sources that were critical to my research included The Memorandum of Conversation with Joseph Grew and President Truman, also known as "The

Grew Memo,” accessed in the book *Hiroshima's Shadow* (1998). This memo provided important quotes from Joseph Grew, especially his application of Japanese “militarist” and “moderate” history – to support his case on the Emperor. In addition, the National Diet Library (Japan) has an extensive collection of official documents, including Grew’s Annual Banquet Address in 1943, also known as the “Chicago Speech.” This specific document offers an exact forty-page transcript of his speech.

In terms of secondary sources, Nakamura Masanori’s *The Japanese Monarchy: Ambassador Joseph Grew and the Making of the "Symbol Emperor System* (1992) was an important piece to my research. It offered an excellent analysis of Joseph Grew’s influence in the Emperor System, thoroughly elaborating on Grew’s relations with each “moderate,” and identifying how Grew’s plan of postwar policy for Japan came to be. Nakamura also offers fresh perspective by incorporating criticisms of Grew’s efforts and honesty within his publications – although Grew’s intent was unclear. He then links all of his analysis to explain the origins of the “symbol,” connecting it to the British Monarchy.

Takeshi Suzuki’s piece, *The Rhetoric of Emperor Hirohito: Continuity and Rupture in Japan's Dramas of Modernity* (2007), greatly supplemented my research, as it elaborated on the division in the State Department involving the Japan and China experts. Suzuki further explains the retentionist and abdicationists views, while comparing and contrasting their motives for supporting either of the perspectives. Chapter Three (The Alteration of Rhetorical Reality) of this book was the most intriguing, as Suzuki attempts to evaluate the means of persuasion between Joseph Grew and Sun Fo’ arguments towards retaining or removing the Emperor. Overall, all of these sources of materials have been the most important to my research, while they provided me with a vast amount of information and different perspectives about the topic.

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