

Meiji-style thinking outdated

**By Wang Ping (China Daily)**

**Japan will be the loser if it fails to heed the lessons of the past and dares to revive its military expansion nowadays**

In the mid-19th century, a sense of national crisis arose in East Asia, as the traditional Sino-centric sphere of order was challenged by Western powers such as the United Kingdom. Japan's diplomatic strategy in Asia was closely related to its outlook on China, and this crisis prompted an about-face in its outlook toward its neighbor.

In the early days of the Meiji Restoration (1868-1912), Confucianism lost favor and followers in Japan, as it was viewed as inferior to the "real learning" of the West. Despite debates about Confucianism and total Westernization in the early period, Japan's rising strength and political and military ambitions allowed ultranationalism to emerge from the wave of nationalism, which then served as spiritual guidance for the Meiji government to embark on its invasion of Asia.

With the signing of Sino-Japan Friendship Treaty in 1871, the Japanese Emperor finally gained equal footing with his Chinese counterpart for the first time in history.

But equal as the treaty was, Japan had no intention of addressing the Western threats with its neighbor. Instead it erroneously believed that the best way to resist the imperialist powers was to become one itself. This stark contradiction was characterized by aggressive expansionism and standing up to the intruding Western powers.

The former led to the Japanese aggression toward China and the Korean Peninsula, while the latter required Tokyo to unite its Asian neighbors. On the one hand, Japan craved enrollment in the capitalist world by yielding to the Western powers with greater military power; on the other, its tireless efforts to establish a "new" Asian order posed a grave challenge

to many Western powers' interests in Asia.

Aside from sheer military power, the aggression launched by the Meiji government was also cloaked under the justifications of international laws and the veneer of a civilized society. Those Asian countries refusing to meet any of Japan's groundless requirements, such as signing unequal treaties, were labeled "barbarian".

Fukuzawa Yukichi, an important Japanese thinker in Meiji times, used to categorize Japan as a "civilized" country, China as a "semi-civilized" one and Korea as a totally "barbaric" society. Such a distortion of the Sino-centric sphere of order eventually led Japan to launch its large-scale invasion in Asia, and ultimately its defeat in WWII.

After winning a war against China in 1894 and a war against Russia in the early 20th century, Japan blatantly revealed its militarist expansion in Asia, and the "new order" and "co-prosperity" it vigorously agitated brought nothing but endless misery to East Asian nations. From uniting and reforming to annexing Asian states, Japan's gradual expansion and Asia policy exactly synchronized with the growth of Japan's military power and the increasing weakness of China's Qing government, which eventually collapsed in 1911.

Worshipping extreme utilitarianism while implementing a "continental" policy and "oceanic" strategy, modern Japan was dedicated to maximizing its national interests in Asia regardless of international laws. Now, 120 years after the First Sino-Japan War, the Abe administration has opened Pandora's box by claiming the right of collective right of defense. This not only allows Japan to go to the aid of its allies if they are attacked, it also enhances the US-Japan military alliance which poses great danger to the stability in the Asia-Pacific.

With its booming economy and rising political status in the international community after WWII, Tokyo now brazenly seeks to relive its militarist past to get rid of the restrictions placed by the allied nations on Japan as a defeated fascist power in WWII.

More importantly, Tokyo once again seeks to be the leader in Asia and is attempting to contain the rise of China by challenging it with groundless territorial accusations, along with some Asian countries such as the Philippines.

However, China is much stronger than it was 120 years ago, and Asia is unlikely to be at a single power's disposal. China as a responsible emerging power has been actively contributing to regional stability and prosperity, such as pushing for the Confidence-Building Measures in Asia and the BRICS development bank.

Tokyo should keep in mind that its rise in late 19th century and downfall in WWII were all due to the wars it provoked, and Japan as a whole will surely be the loser if it dares to revive military expansion nowadays.

2014年7月23日《中国日报》第八版

---

## 从甲午战争看日本的亚洲外交战略与政策（中文原稿）

王 屏

近代中日之间的第一次战争（甲午战争）是日本大规模侵略亚洲的开始，第二次战争（抗日战争）是近代日本侵略亚洲的结束。近代日本的亚洲外交战略与政策自始至终与日本的对华认识密切相关，甲午战争是日本人中国观第三次变迁的标志性历史事件，也是日本人对中华文化由崇拜到蔑视的转折点。日本人的“中国观”在漫长的国际关系发展史上几经变迁。而这种变迁往往都伴随着日本社会内部结构的动荡与重组以及周边国际关系格局的调整与秩序的重建。日本人的对华认识是其亚洲认识的重要组成部分，这种认识建筑在日本应对国内外形势的变化而形成的新的价值观基础之上，它以历史、文化为其出发点并最终归结为对本国利益的追求上。日本人的中国观在其变迁的各个阶段都表现为一种对“实力主义”、“现实主义”价值取向以及“国家利益优先”原则的追求上。

19世纪中叶，以“中华帝国”为中心的大“华夷秩序”受到来自西方列强的严重挑战，同时，对于处于东亚一隅的日本“小华夷秩序”来说也是一种挑战，东亚各国的民族危机感同时增强。1871年“日清友好条约”签订，日本天皇终于和大清皇帝平起平坐，这是日本“开国”以来所签订的唯一的平等条约。与此同时，也让

日本找到了凌驾朝鲜之上，构筑自己“小华夷秩序”的理论根据。刚刚迈入近代的日本，并未仿照“日清友好条约”与周边的亚洲国家及民族建立对等的关系，而是选择了对外扩张与侵略的道路，朝鲜和中国成为日本侵略亚洲的首要目标。日本的攘夷与扩展国权是同时进行的，攘夷需要联合亚洲，扩展国权又导致日本对亚洲的侵略，近代日本就是在这种自相矛盾中构筑着自己的亚洲外交战略与政策。日本通过屈服有军事实力（即所谓“武威”）的西方列强而被编入资本主义世界，又通过侵略亚洲构筑自己的亚洲“新秩序”并与西方列强争夺在亚洲的利益。

明治政府在进行对外扩张的过程中不光使用武力，而且还披着“国际法”、“文明论”的外衣，以使其对亚洲各国所提出的无理要求具有法律上的“正当性”。亚洲各国如不接受这些无理要求就被视为“野蛮”。明治维新后的日本自觉是亚洲的“华”，而亚洲各国被其视作“夷”。福泽谕吉就试图规划出“文明—半开化—野蛮”的亚洲模式。即日本是“文明国家”，中国是“半开化国家”，朝鲜等国为“野蛮国家”。日本式的“小华夷秩序”观导致日本对中国以及亚洲国家的疯狂侵略，同时也将自己逼上战败和亡国之路。可以说，对儒家学说及中华文明如何评价成为衡量日本亚洲认识的一个计量器。甲午战争之前虽然有“脱亚论”主张出现，但“日中提携”、“亚洲联合”的社会思潮同时存在。

明治初期，日本大量吸收了西方的“实学”知识及其价值观念，儒学被作为一种无用的“虚学”遭到排斥。明治中期，国粹主义兴起，“教育敕谕”的颁布又使儒学与“神道”一起成为反对“欧化主义”的思想武器。但随着1890年前后“东洋史学”的建立，日本自认为是东洋的“小西洋”，而在亚洲构筑以自我为中心的霸权秩序。明治后期，日本通过“日清”、“日俄”两场“赌国运”的战争，最终与帝国主义列强为伍，使其构筑亚洲霸权结构的幻想有了现实基础。儒家学说以及中国的威信一落千丈，西方文明也同时遭到排斥，“神国”思想、“军魂”精神被特别推崇，日本走上了军国主义不归路。日本兜售的“东亚新秩序”并没有给东亚带来和平与发展，所谓的“共荣圈”其实就是日本自己的“军事圈”、“经济圈”以及“生存圈”。日本的亚洲认识经由“联盟论”、“改造论”，进而发展为扩张国权的“盟主论”，中日两国军事实力的消长决定着日本中国观的变迁与亚洲战略与政策的决策方向。

近代日本学者中江兆民说“日本无哲学”，现代日本学者入江昭说“日本外交无战略”。其实，近代日本不是无哲学，而是将功利主义作为国家发展的哲学理念。日本外交也不是没有战略，“大陆政策”、“海洋战略”的制定与实施，在亚洲谋求国家利益的最大化就是近代日本国家发展的大战略。近代日本的亚洲外交战略与政策经历了从“兴亚”到“侵亚”的战略转变，在“北上”还是“南下”的决

策争吵中，日本选择了“大陆政策”和“海洋战略”同时实施的愚蠢方案。

甲午战争已经过去整整 120 年，日本人的“中国观”在第四次变迁的过程中又显示出其“实力主义”与“现实主义”的明显特征。战后日本随着经济大国战略目标的实现、其“政治大国”的目标也基本实现，只是日本感觉自己是个“被绑架”的政治大国，于是，“军事大国”成为战后日本的第三个国家发展战略目标，并以此巩固其政治大国地位。安倍政府解禁集体自卫权的目的是为了建立“日美军事同盟”，并在日美同盟的框架内实现“日美对等”。同时，日本试图在与西方大国以及亚洲小国合作的前提下对中国实施围堵，争夺亚洲的主导权。为达目的，日本再度走向扩充军备和扩张国家利益的道路。

然而，今天的中国已经不是甲午战争前的中国，亚洲也不是当年的亚洲。日本从崛起到衰败始于战争终于战争。中国确信自己能在与亚洲各国和平与合作的过程中实现自己的“中国梦”。“亚洲一体”不是梦想，新世纪的“区域合作”与开放并非无缘。亚信会议与金砖银行让人看到亚洲乃至世界“新秩序”的曙光。中国作为亚洲负责任的大国，一定会准确地把握维护国家利益的“度”，并使邻国外交处于可控的均衡状态。日本如果还想走近代扩张的老路，只能比近代输得更惨。中日之间的摩擦虽然不断，但是“合则两立，败则俱伤”应该成为中日两国的共识。