

## Research Article

# The Rise of The Rising Sun: The Roots of Japanese Imperialism in Mutsuhito Era (1868-1912)

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## Abstract

This article aims to discuss the Japanese modernisation of the Mutsuhito Emperor Era, which focused on the developments that triggered Japan to become an imperialist country. The Bakufu government, which had been in power for more than 250 years, must finally end. After being deemed unable to handle the country's condition, the Bakufu government returned the Japanese government ultimately to Emperor Mutsuhito. During the occupation of the Empire's seat, Emperor Mutsuhito was assisted by his advisers to make changes in all fields. The main fields were built by them, such as reorganise the political bureaucracy, developing industrial-economic, and developing military technology. Supported by the progressive developments in the country, Japan was transforming into a large industrial nation. To meet its industrial needs, Japan became an imperialist country and defeated China and Russia during the Mutsuhito period of government. The method used in this research is historical and has five steps, among others determining the topic, sources collection, sources criticism, interpretation, and writing. The results showed that the aggressive development and strengthening in political bureaucracy, industrial economics, and military technology in the Meiji era were the roots of the spirit of imperialism of new Japan. Political, economic, and military are the reasons to undertake imperialism besides cultural and religious reasons.

**Keywords:** aggression; destructive; literature; psychology; ronin

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## 1. Introduction

The agreement between the Tokugawa and the United States was finally made and became known as the *Kanagawa* agreement. After the agreement was made with the United States, a similar agreement was made with other countries. Britain represented by Admiral Sir James Sterling in the agreement of *The Anglo-Japanese Friendship Treaty* or *Nichi-Ei Washin Joyaku* in 1854. Russia was represented by Admiral Yevfimiy Vasilyevich Putyatin in the *Shimoda* agreement or *Shimoda joyaku* or formally called the *Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between Japan and Russia*

in 1855. The opening of this country was considered a betrayal and weakness of the Tokugawa Shogun. Since that time, the Tokugawa government had been criticised for severe challenges from conservative groups *Satsuma*, *Choshu*, *Tosa* and *Hizen* (*Saga-han*). When Japan was in chaos, these clans succeed to save the young Mutsuhito ("Japan." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Monday, March 23 1868, Page 3).

The Meiji Restoration was led by these clans or better known as southwestern power or *Ishin Shishi*. The restoration was a civil war, the war between the northwest armies against the southwestern armies.

However, this conflict is a battle between the alliance of wealthy farmers with the lower class Samurai against the upper-class Samurai that was supported by feudal rulers (Horie, 1952: 31). The driving force of the Meiji Restoration was the anti-feudal movement and opposition between the farmers and the poor urban.

Domestically, there was a terror movement spearheaded by conservatives. They carried out the killings of Westerners and Japanese who were felt support for the West ("Japan." *The South Australian Advertiser*, Tuesday, September 29 1868, Page 3). Japanese society in the *Bakumatsu* era was divided into three groups. First, Shogun supporters wanted to defend *Sakoku's* politics but were unable to face Western power. Second, educated groups wanted to accept the entry of Western nations because of the development of science. Third, the *Daimyo* group wanted the return of power to the emperor and drove out Westerners (Subakti, 2011: 24).

Pure Shintoism provided an ideology for conservatives and demanded the emperor's return of power, abolished the shogunate and expelled foreigners. This group, in its movement, carried a flag with the symbol *Hinomaru no hata* (sunrise). *Sonno joi* was born in the conservative group, which means "return power to the emperor, drive out the people of the bars (Westerners)".

The terror carried out by the conservatives grew even greater until finally, the Tokugawa relied on the *Shinsengumi* elite military corps loyal to the Tokugawa Shogun. The *Shinsengumi* had brutal rights and were given the authority to kill as punishment. This political crisis heightened when Tokugawa Yoshinobu served as the Shogun to replace Tokugawa Iemochi. Yoshinobu was unable to suppress *Sonno joi* movements with violence because Yoshinobu came from Daimyo Mito. Mito is the branch of the Tokugawa clan besides Owari and Kii. Mito domain was built by Tokugawa Yorifusa (Mito

Yorifusa). He was the eleventh son of Tokugawa Ieyasu. Finally, on November 8, 1867, Tokugawa Keiki (Yoshinobu) was willing to give political power over Japan to the emperor (Ike, 1948: 1; Kramer, 1953: 317). In January 1868, it was decided that the shogunate government was abolished.

The resignation of the Tokugawa government in 1867 restored the emperor's position to the government. Mutsuhito governed Japan with the title of Meiji, so the era of Mutsuhito's government could also be called the Meiji period. Emperor Mutsuhito, assisted by his advisers to make changes and improvements to the government structure, known as the Meiji Restoration. It cannot be separated from the encouragement and pressure from the outside world (Western countries), thus made Japan strived to mobilise its people to catch up. It was a dynamic change that was happening throughout the country, and it was a social change. In this case, Japan was the first non-Western country that succeeds in industrialisation and was able to emulate Western countries (Ohno, 2000: 38).

The Meiji government had two pillars as an ideology to build a government and a factor that influenced the emergence of the roots of imperialism in Japan, namely *Shokusan kōgyō*, *Wakon yosai* and *Fukoku kyōhei*. First, the *Shokusan Kōgyō* consisted of four general instruments to maintain the Japanese industry, including protecting industry in Japan, determining subsidies, renting out and delivering new machinery for industrial activities, and setting up pilot factories (Samuels, 1994: 37). *Shokusan kōgyō* was a tool to support modern Japanese infrastructure and industry (Crawcour, 1997: 69). Second, *Wakon yosai*, this term can be interpreted as "the spirit of Japan, studying the West", basically in the Meiji era, Japan imported goods and technology and Western science, however, rejecting the existence of Westernization (Koizumi, 2002: 30).

The refusal of westernisation is more leads to the refusal of colonialism or

western occupation. At the time, some of the western countries had been occupying some of the regions in Asia. Some fields that focused on changes that affected Japanese imperialism's roots are politics, economy, and military (Mangandaralam, 1993: 18-19). Every industry needs raw materials where these raw materials are essential for manufacturing a product (Floren, 2013:1). Raw materials are essential for technological growth because technological development supports industrial growth (Wara & Hymore, 2004: Nevertheless, the Japanese ambition to build the giant industry was not supported by its natural resources.

*Fukoku kyōhei* consisted of four Chinese characters, namely *fu* (rich), *koku* (nation) *kyō* (strong) *hei* (army) which became a standard term in the Meiji Government. The term was not originally from Japan but was written by *Shang Yang* (338 BC), a statesman and philosopher from the Qing Dynasty (Samuels, 1994: 35). *Fukoku kyōhei* was an ambition in the reformation program, inspired by various Western countries' practices and policies. This policy greatly affected the government and education, specifically on the military and economy. Japan's ambition was proven when it was able to defeat China and Russia in the war in the Meiji Era (Fletcher, 1996: 49). In the Meiji period, Japan builds economic independence. Japan built this program to tackle western economic imperialist. Japan was developing heavy industries and light industries and manufactured domestic products, and new land clearing and new and using new farming methods for farmers (Obispo, 2017: 61). The armed forces have a function to ward off every single military threat. However, in imperialism, the armed forces could be used to intervene and pressure other countries.

As the basis for building the Empire, the Meiji government successfully rebuilt the domestic political order. Spirit of *Shokusan Kōgyō* to develop the modern

industry, *Wakon yosai* is the spirit of learning the western technology, and spirit of *Fukoku kyōhei* to build the economy and strengthen the armed forces, had made Japan as a modern country and gave birth the roots of imperialism. Indeed, the imperialism program was carried out by Japan to find colonies to support its industry and economy by military aggression.

## 2. Methods

The historical method has been used to examine the roots of Japanese imperialism in the Meiji era. This method has five steps, among others are determine the topic, heuristic (sources collection), verification (sources criticism or historical criticism), interpretation (explain the meaning) and historiography (writing of history) (Kuntowijoyo, 2013: 69). The primary sources are obtained from the *National Library of Australia* and *National Diet Library Japan*. Meanwhile, the secondary sources are obtained from books and research articles. All sources are focused on the developments in politics, industrial economy, and military technology in the Meiji era, in which these points are the critical roots of imperialism.

## 3. Result and Discussion

### 3.1. Transformation of Japan Political Policy in the Meiji Period

The meaning of the roots of imperialism of Japan is the seed of Japan's Empire to build up the modern state. Efforts to support imperialism could be seen from improvements of several aspects of the state. The result of improvements brought him into the circle of imperialism. Therefore the restoration of Japan in the Meiji era could be said to be the birth of Japan's imperialism until its defeat in World War II Pacific theatre.

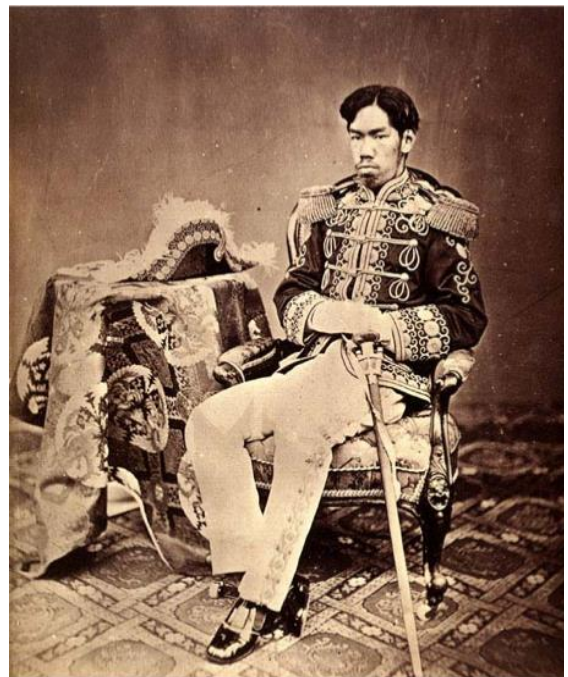
Political stability must be improved first because the Meiji government transferred the government from the Tokugawa Shogun to the Empire to reach

the root of imperialism. Therefore, the restoration in the first years was concerned primarily with balancing the power structure and maintaining political unity (Sakata & Hall, 1956: 50). It has been explained above that this transfer of government did not go smoothly and followed by chaos. Therefore, political governance must be stable to support the development and growth of the Japanese industrial economy and military.

On January 2, 1868, Iwakura Tomomi summoned and invited the Samurai from Aki, Tosa, Satsuma, Echizen, and Owari to his house to help *Ōsei-fukko* or to restore imperial rule (Beasley, 1972: 290). Moreover, on January 3, 1868, in the Kogoshō Hall, Mutsuhito made a formal declaration of the *Ōsei-fukko*, it was a direct of emperor's responsibility to the state administration and the inauguration of the new era of Japan (Beasley, 1957: 89; Sakata & Hall, 1956: 48; Breen, 1996: 414). In his political policy, Mutsuhito abolished the Samurai class while simultaneously removing the Shogun position, which had long been an obstacle to the emperor's political power. Moreover, it also took the land and people from the Daimyo as a feudal ruler (Nio Joe Lan, 1962: 138). The abolition of the Shogun's position was replaced by new positions which were directly under the emperor, that is, *sosai* (Prime Minister), *gijo* (Advisory Council Member), and *san-yo* (Young Advisory Council Member). On April 6, 1868, Emperor Mutsuhito issued the *gokajo no goseimon*, referred to as *The Charter Oath* or *Imperial Oath of Five Articles* (Devine, 1979: 50). It consisted of five essential articles as the principle that became the basis of the Meiji government (Jansen, 2002: 338). This oath was the result of the discussion among of the new leaders of Japan, such as Yuri Kosei from Fukui, Yokoi Shonan from Kumamoto, Fukuoka Kotei from Tosa, Iwakura Tomomi from Kyoto, Nakayama Tadayasu from Kyoto,

and Kido Takayoshi from Yamaguchi (Wilson, 1952: 297).

The Meiji government used a law called *Seitaisho*. The Empire ordered Fukuoka Kotei and Soejima Taneomi to prepare a government reorganisation plan. The instruction was carried out by investigating China's political system, several western countries, and the political system of the ancient Japanese Empire. Within two months after the *Gokajo no goseimon* was announced, the result of the work of Kotei and Taneomi was accepted by the Imperial Council and announced as *Seitaisho* on June 11, 1868 (Wilson, 1952: 298). This document had 11 articles, article I of the constitution reaffirmed The Charter Oath and articles II, III, V, and IX were known to be influenced by Western concepts. Although it followed Western constitutional ideas and democratic principles, the Japanese government did not leave its traditional system borrowed from China in the seventh century. Western and traditional concepts were simultaneously applied (De Barry et al., 2005: 672-673).



**Figure 1.** Potrait of The Mikado (Emperor) Meiji. Note: Photograph by Uchida Kyuichi, 1873.

Based on the concept of Seitaisho, the Meiji Empire re-established the *Dojokan* (State Grand Council), which was established in the Nara Era to assert the highest political power in the hands of the emperor. Dojokan was divided into several sections, *Giseikan* (Legislative Department), *Gyoseikan* (Executive Department), *Jingikan* (Shinto Department), *Kaikeikan* (Ministry of Finance), *Gummukan* (Department of War), *Gaikokukan* (Department of Foreign Relations), and *Keihokan* (Department of Law) (Mahmud, 1996: 108). *Giseikan* itself was divided into two councils, that was the high council and the low council. Seitaisho, in his job, also held the election of high officials (Ishii, 1989: 125-128).

*Hanseki hokan* program was a political policy initiated in 1869 by the Satsuma, Choshu, Tosa, Hizen (Saga) clans to control the *han* and their inhabitants Emperor Mutsuhito (Yates, 1995: 189). Thus, the Hanseki Hokan policy ended the feudal political system. Other Daimyo followed this method, and after all, the *Daimyo* returned the land and its inhabitants, then the government formed a governor in each *han*. However, in August 1871, the government declared to remove more than 260 *han* (Umegami, 1986: 91). However, the Meiji government replaced it by establishing a prefecture (Iwata, 1964: 143). *Han* that had been abolished was merged into 72 *ken* and three *fu* (important province in Tokyo, Osaka, and Kyoto). Nevertheless, in 1889, the number of *ken* was reduced to only 43 (Ishii, 1989: 131).

Samurai was a symbol that cannot be separated from Japan. In the Tokugawa Era, Samurai received a particular position in society, but there were very significant changes during the Meiji era. Samurai as a privileged group began to be reduced, although they still received a salary from the Empire. The Empire gave the salary could not be long-lasting. The salary was gradually reduced until it was stopped.

Moreover, the rule that had become controversial was the prohibition of Samurai to carry a sword. *Katana* was the soul or life of a Samurai, but it was prohibited in the Meiji Era (Suradjaja, 1984: 39). So, to meet their daily needs, the Samurai must find a new field of work (Suryohadiprojo, 1987, 27). However, this has not diminished respect for the values of Samurai until now.

In 1881, the imperial government confirmed that a parliament would be opened in 1890. In the formation of the parliament, Ito Hirobumi held a significant role. Hirobumi was sent to several European countries to study the constitutional system. After his return from Europe, Ito Hirobumi founded *Seido Torishirabe Kyoku* (Bureau of Investigation Organization) on March 17, 1884, with Ito Hirobumi as a leader (Spaulding, 1967: 54). The bureau was tasked to conduct research and investigations on the constitutions of Western countries (Dobrovolskaia, 2017: 45). The study results would be a draft of the Japanese Constitution (Norman, 1940: 240). On July 7, 1884, *the Kazoku Rei* Law (noble law or title law) was arranged, which set five royal titles: prince, marquis, count, viscount, and baron (Dean, 2002: 87).

The Japanese constitution or better known as the Meiji Constitution, came into force on November 29, 1890, at the opening of the session for the first time in the imperial parliament, but this constitution had been promulgated at the Imperial Palace on February 11 1889 (Colegrove, 1937: 1027; Teters, 1969: 322). The Meiji Constitutional Structure consisted of 76 articles divided into seven chapters, namely *The Emperor, Rights and Duties of Subjects, Imperial Diet, Ministers of State and the Privy Council, Judicature, Finance, and Supplementary Rules*. The Meiji Constitution document was a constitutional monarchy based jointly on the Prussia (German) and British models (Hein, 2009: 72). It was declared in the constitution that the Japanese Empire must be in the

emperor's hands (The Constitution of Japan: With the laws appertaining to it and the Imperial Oath and Speech [official translation], 1889: 3-4). The emperor led the executive, legislative, and judiciary, besides that the emperor was also given significant rights to issue the *Kinkyu meirei* (special emergency rules), *Dokuritsu meirei* (additional independent rules), and *Inin meirei* (regulations that delegate their authority to their subordinates) (Hein, 2009: 88).

Military affairs were under *Gyoseikan*, one part of the *dojokan* described above. The military field was also a concern in modernisation. Conservative domains, which were initially anti-foreign, had to turn around and recognise the superiority of Western military power. For the defeat, the Satsuma and Choshu domains took the opportunity to practice and study the modern military fields of the Western nations. The Choshu domain left its traditional military and developed a modern army-based military assisted by Prussia (Suradjaja, 1984: 20).

Based on the spirit of capitalism, Western nations in this period were incessantly conducting trade and colonialism throughout the world. The Asian region was a paradise for Western nations to obtain a colony as a source of income. Capitalism and the military were inseparable in this period. Expansion carried out by Western nations such as Britain to India, the Netherlands to Indonesia, France to Indo-China, Spain to the Philippines. The Meiji leaders were aware of this reality that Western nations could exert pressure through a military approach.

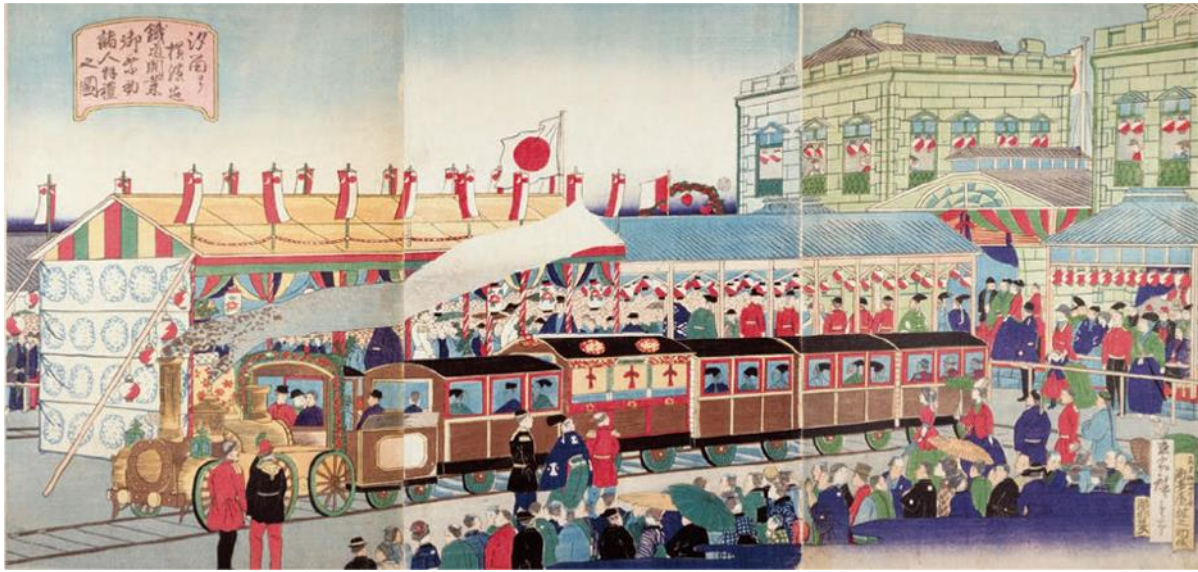
Capitalism was not just an economic system, but more than that, capitalism reflected the way of life. According to the capitalist way of thinking, the personal impetus was the key to successful advances in technology (Ebenstein, 2006: 223-224). Research and development in the industry were essential as a key to competition

(Ebenstein, 2006: 232). Many Japanese intellectuals felt that their country was lagging behind those of Western countries. These scholars were personally encouraged to study Western technology and industry in order to modernise their country. Besides, modernising the country was also one of Japan's initiatives to avoid being colonised by other nations, especially Western nations.

Capitalism created a dichotomy: a giant and a dwarf, in the sense of being a ruler and a controlled one. This case occurred in the incident of China in 1839-1842 that opened the eyes of Japan. Western nations instilled their influence and made an unequal agreement with the occupied nation. This thing made the impression that the Western, with its strength, was a great nation and cannot be defeated. The impression that the Western was a nation that cannot be defeated was the capitalists intentionally made to weaken the people under their control mentally. So, that mental impairment would later have an impact on the absence of efforts to fight.

Based on increasing the capacity and capability of the Japanese armed forces, Yamagata Aritomo was sent off to Europe (France and Prussia) to study the management of modern military organising. Upon returning from Europe, Yamagata Aritomo was given the trust to establish a Japanese imperial army (Handayani & Budiarto, 2014: 102). Its members were from all circles, not only from among the former Samurai. Military service was promoted in 1872, and this was an obligation for all people to guard and defend the Empire.

The Japanese Empire organised the conscription indoctrinated its students that defending the country was the same as defending and securing themselves. Japanese youths over the age of 20 were supposed to join conscription. The time required in conscription was seven years with the division as follows: 3 years was active duty, two years served as a reserve



**Figure 2.** *Ukiyo-e* described the opening ceremony of the railway between Shimbashi Station in Tokyo and Yokohama Station.

Note: *The Origin of Japan's Modernization: Reviewing the Significance of the Meiji Restoration after 150 Years* in *We Are Tomodachi*, Spring 2018, The Government of Japan.

army and the last two years as a second reserve. The Meiji army's first task was to crush the Saigo Takamori rebellion (Nio Joe Lan, 1962: 144).

The existence of military service had a positive impact; young people were introduced to Western weaponry technologies such as mortars and machine guns. Besides, the Japanese armed forces' uniforms and hairstyles also followed Western rules. The sizeable Japanese armed forces added to the confidence of the Meiji empire in overcoming domestic and foreign problems. The Japanese military strength was a valuable provision for Japan towards a nation of capital because the power of capitalism was determined by military power.

### **3.2. Industrial Economy as the Root of Japanese Imperialism in the Meiji Era**

The industrial economy was one crucial factor in supporting the development of a country. The Meiji government was severe in developing the country's industrial economy. It was essential to develop a modern military (army and navy) as a prerequisite to a strong state (Kramer, 1953: 317). To support this development, the

Meiji Government was targeting the development of infrastructure building. Infrastructure had an important role as well as a driving wheel for economic growth, especially in industry. Therefore, the Meiji Government built infrastructures such as communication, transportation, ports, and financial institutions. Meiji's economy also was looked increasingly improved compared to the previous era.

Although the wheels of the economy can be said to increase, the growth rate was prolonged, and this was due to a lack of experience in managing the country's modern economy. One factor that slowed the growth of the Japanese economy in the Meiji Era was the small amount of foreign capital entering Japan. Foreigners in Japan only carried out trading activities but did not invest their capital (Mattulada, 1979: 146-147). As a country that could be said to be newly born, the Meiji Government believed that Japan still had minimal strength and the skills of its people were also still lacking.

Even though Japan was a newly developing country, Japan thought its national economy did not depend on other parties because it was a very risky time

bomb. Japan's limited finances were more utilised to develop and build the industrial sector, and silk was the main export and initial stage of Japan as the country's financial income (Suryohadiprojo, 1987: 29). The industry was one of the three main problems emphasised by the Meiji government. The other two were emphasised, namely, expansion policy and forming a constitutional government (Ohno, 2000: 46). To develop the national economy, Japan had a concept *Fukoku-ron* (the argument to maintain the national prosperity or enriching the country). This concept was Yokoi Shonan's first thesis. He stated that the common good could be met only through a policy of "enriching the country" by opening it up to public discourse and trading. Moreover, to care about economic growth for the benefit of the people as a whole, not just to serve feudal family domain (serving the local domain is a concept that Matsudaira Shungaku put forward) (Nakamura, 2000: 188-189; De Bary et al., 2005: 640).

Yokoi Shonan was born in a samurai clan, but his clan is obscure (low-rank Samurai). He is a Confucian scholar and political thinker. He has an essential role as advisor to the Bakufu following Perry's intervention in Japan 1853-1854. Even though he was a Bakufu's advisor, he also had a role in overthrowing the Bakufu at the end of the shogunate period. In the Meiji period, Yokoi Shonan was one of the important leaders of the Meiji government (Miyachi, 1969: 23; Chang, 1966: 266; Nishioka, 2015: 92).

In 1873, in Vienna, an International Exposition was held, and Japan participated in it. Japan used the international performance event to introduce and promote the country to other countries. Moreover, Japan also received benefits, as the opportunity to study the factory industry in Europe. On this basis, the Meiji Government hired Western experts to come to Japan. These Westerners helped as a team of experts to develop the Japanese industry.

Japan was relatively fast in mastering the skills from the West that were needed in industrial development.

Some British experts were summoned to Japan, such as Thomas Glover, who contributed to the construction of shipyards and also opened mining in the Kyushu region; Richard Henry Button, who contributed to the construction of lighthouses along the Japanese coastline; John Black was involved in the growth of the press and newspaper in Japan; Edmund Morel was a railroad engineer who built the Tokyo-Yokohama railroad. However, in 1871 he died in Japan and was buried in Yokohama. Furthermore, a group of experts from the United Kingdom contributed to the advancement of telegraph communication (Anderson, 2002: 90).

America also participated in donating a team of experts in the world of agriculture. Dr William Clark was *the President of Massachusetts Agriculture College and General Horace Capron from the US. Commission of Agriculture*. For the first time, a Royal Agricultural College had been opened. It was situated on the plain of Komaba, to the northwest of Tokyo. However, this college was established to imitate the English Agricultural College of Cirencester ("The Japan Agricultural College." *The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser*, Saturday, July 20, 1878, Page 95). Besides, France imported textile factory equipment and at the same time brought in a team of experts to teach them how to work the tools. At the same time, German technicians played a role in the steel industry (Mattulada, 1979: 147-148). However, not only them, there were still many expert teams from Europe and America who contributed to Japan's developing industries.

Although many expert teams from Western countries contributed to Japan, the Meiji Government did not want dependence on foreign parties. Therefore, the Meiji Government promoted economic independence by transferring technology.



The technology transfer technique brought equipment or machinery from the West after learning how to run, maintain, repair in case of damage, and disassemble to the machines to be copied and produced by themselves.

The technology transfer technique used by Japan to boost its industry had a long and challenging journey. Initially, Japan conducted the development and imitation trial of a textile factory, but this trial failed. Besides, the locomotive duplication effort brought success. Japan imported locomotives from Western countries such as Britain, the United States, Germany, and Switzerland. Some of the locomotives were used as a means of transportation, while the locomotives were dismantled and studied. It was not until 1893; the Kobe State Railroad Workshop produced the first locomotive made in Japan with Type 860 (Ericson, 1998: 130-131).

Japan's success was not due to mystical or occult things that helped Japan in developing industrial success. However, other major factors in pre-modern times influenced the Japanese work ethic (Bellah, 1992: 3). Before the Meiji or the Tokugawa Era, it had several characteristics that allowed Japan to catch up with Western countries, a vast provision for the Meiji Government. Some of the characteristics of the Tokugawa era that can support the development of Japan in the next era such as stability and political unity under the bakufu administration; agriculture enhancement; development of communication facilities and transportation networks while simultaneously integrating the national economy; trade development and industrial promotion especially at the local government or *han* level; and disseminating education through Bakufu and han schools, private education, and Terakoya (the elementary school for children aged six or seven and continued his education until 10 to 13) (Ohno, 2000: 42; Kobayashi, 1965: 293). The growth of Japanese industry is inextricably linked to

two factors. The first was the establishment of a central value system whose fundamental values had existed since the Tokugawa era. Second, there is an increasing desire to promote the advancement of industrial society. (Bellah, 1992: 244).

The embryo of modernisation in the Meiji era began with the opening of Japan by Perry in 1853. The agreement between Perry and the Tokugawa forced Japan to open several ports and grant concessions to Western countries, especially the United States. Modernisation tended to approach the occurrence of a social change in non-Western societies, the process of modernisation was seen as an aggregate conceptually as industrialisation, economic growth, social mobilisation, political development, and other components. This process represented an operative change at the national level (Tipps, 1973: 200-203). Japan felt the opening agreement between the United States and Japan regarding how strong the capital country forced other weaker countries with the shadow of military power.

The development of an intensive industrial economy was a symptom of social change in society, a form of modernisation. Japan realised the backwardness experienced during the Tokugawa government implementing *Sakoku* politics. Japanese awareness must quickly make changes and adapt to the development of Western countries. However, in this period, the term "modernisation exalted by Japan" seen more like a picture of the form of westernisation.

Two factors influence Japan to be able to transform quickly. First, it could be examined from the Tokugawa era because the Japanese people reached a point of peace, obedience, and unity. The compliance during the Tokugawa era transformed into a national ideal with total loyalty to the emperor and the motherland. This spirit pushed the achievement of the

formation of modern Japan. Second, Japan was a country that was hungry for knowledge and always wanted to learn everything with its jargon "search and find best practices around the world and make improvements to it", so that Japan in the advanced had experienced a major transformation

Japan has transformed from the 17th century to the 20th century in only 50-60 years. Life in the 1840s in Japan was the same as life in England in the 1640s, and approaching 1910, Japan had had extraordinary modernity. It was a horrific historical process, and development usually took centuries. However, this thing did not apply to Japan (Pyle, 1988: 1).

The modernisation of the Japanese industry went hand in hand with the growth of capitalism. It must be noted that capitalism is one of Japan's economic transformation characteristics (Takahashi, 1933: 164). It has been explained above that capitalism in this period could not be separated from military force. Military power was the primary key in the successful plan of the capitalists. The more developing the industry so the more frequent invasions would also be carried out. In the Meiji period, Japan intensified its industrial movement. However, Japan was very poor in natural resources, so the way to do it was to imitate the style of Western countries at that time, namely to become an imperialist state to obtain a colony to support Japan's growing industry.

### **3.3. Japanese Modern Military Technology as a Support of Imperialism**

Japanese weapons production, especially those that were still conventional such as swords and armour, were made long before forming the Tokugawa Shogun government in 1600. Firearms were often seen in Samurai-themed films that were not Japanese-made. However, the Portuguese introduced the firearms that carried out trade in the mid-16th century in Tanegashima, Kyushu. Finally, those

weapons were produced and known as Tanegashima or *Hinawaju* weapons (Waterhouse, 1963: 94). The technology for making firearms produced in Tanegashima spread in the late 16th century, evidenced by civil battles in Japan that had used firearms.

In the Tokugawa era, in the 1780s, Hayashi Shihei was a statesman and scholar who was an expert in the military trying to build artillery. The initial plan that Hayashi would make was to address Japan's backwardness in military technology. This lagging needs to be a major concern for the Tokugawa. The weapons factory was an urgent need for Japan to protect Japan from foreign domination.

The Tokugawa government immediately implemented Hayashi's advice and made a deepening of the weapons factory. In the 1850s, each *han* had begun to produce weapons, even though the level of technological sophistication was very different. The best weapons factories at the time were the Ishikawajima shipyard and the Hyogo iron factory. The weapons factories in the era before Meiji were the most advanced industrial factories. It had started introducing modern equipment, even the largest and most modern weapons factories in Japan were the international standard.

Based on protecting Japan from Western imperialism and at the same time encouraging industrial development, the Meiji government standardised and modernised ammunition factories. The Fukoku kyōhei slogan was very influential in the process of military-technical. The institutional centre of industrial strategy in the early Meiji administration accelerated the development of the national weapons factory. The same thing with the other technologies mentioned above, technology in the weapons industry also involved foreigners imported to Japan. Japan built a military technology intelligence system before completing the military-industrial infrastructure. Japanese engineers who



**Figure 3.** The Combined Exercises of the Meiji Armed Forces (Navy and Army) with new military technology such as ships, firearms, and canon.

Note: *Ukiyo-e* was created by Toyohara Chikanobu in 1890. Original title: *Observance by His Imperial Majesty of the Military Maneuvers of Combined*.

focused on the military went to the West to identify the superiorities of military technology (Samuels, 1991: 48-49). All of the former's weapons, such as bows, spears, and swords used by the Samurai, were displaced by cannon and rifles to form a modern national military. Heavy steel armour was removed and replaced by military uniform with European models (Shigenobu, 1900: 678). The creation of modern military forces depended chiefly on heavy industries, engineering, mining, and shipbuilding (Kramer, 1953: 317).

Another industry that became a significant concern was the shipping industry. Efforts in the development of the shipping industry by adopting Western technology had been carried out in the Tokugawa Era in 1853. Gradually, the wooden steamship was replaced with a steamer made of iron. New technology from iron and steam required a change in design, power, and materials. Besides *Bakufu*, several domains also developed the shipping industry, such as Kanazawa, Satsuma, Mito, and Chosu (Broadbridge, 1977: 601-602). In the Meiji Era, the shipping industry was accelerated by

marking the import of Western technology and how it operated.

The Meiji government decided to follow the British model as a model for establishing the Imperial Japanese Navy. This statement was announced in 1870. Britain became a model of the Imperial Japanese Navy because the British geographical shape was similar to Japan, which was a maritime nation. The Japanese Navy adopted everything from shipping, uniforms, and training of officers of the British Navy. Besides training, the British Navy officer also became an advisor during the late 19th century.

Two British Navy officers who were influential in developing the Japanese navy were Lieutenant Commander L. P. Willan, RN, and Captain John Ingles, RN. Willan was contributory to teaching the use of cannons and navigation techniques. Besides, he also taught new Navy tactics. Meanwhile, Ingles was an instructor at the Imperial Japanese Naval Academy and a general advisor in the modernisation of the Japanese Navy. Ingles thought technology and educate techniques Navy combat techniques (Morette, 2013: 212-213). On

the other hand, the Japanese government also sent eight cadets from the Japanese Naval College that had been selected to be trained on board the German frigate *Vineta* ("Japan." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Monday, March 5 1877, Page 3). In the military and other fields, many students were also sent abroad to study all the fields of modern science (Shigenobu, 1900: 682).

The central government was trying to stimulate shipbuilding that had better endurance than previous ships that have been made. The government carried out direct control of several major shipyards to build new ships in the Meiji period. The ship was very reliable transportation in that period. Besides supporting cross-continental trade, this transportation could also perform as military transportation equipped with heavy weapons such as the Cannon (Broadbridge, 1977: 602).

With the increasing urgency of Japan's domestic needs, the Meiji government was encouraging heavy industry because this was done to suppress the import of goods and avoid heavy dependence on Western countries. The Meiji government announced the planning to control the steel industry in April 1896, and the construction began in June 1897 while *Yamagata works* began operations in November 1901. In 1896, the Meiji government also issued regulations regarding the shipping industry development and shipbuilding (Broadbridge, 1977: 605). The shipping industry and the Imperial Japanese Navy were considered successful even though Japanese ships were still imported from the West. Japan, in the shortest time, could use ships such as *Matsushima*, *Itsukushima*, *Hashidate*, *Chiyoda*, *Fuso*, and others in the 1894 Sino-Japanese Wars and Japanese ships *Mikasa*, *Asahi*, *Azuma*, *Yakumo*, and others in the 1904 Russo-Japanese War (Perry, 1966: 320-321).

*The Japanese won the Sino-Japanese battle in 1894.* Ito Hirobumi, a Japanese representative and Li Hung-

chang, a representative from China, signed the *Shimonoseki* agreement on April 17, 1895, in Shimonoseki, Japan. The Shimonoseki agreement was very burdensome for China as a country that lost a battle. Japan's prestigious battle was the battle against Russia in 1904. In this battle, Japan was also able to defeat Russia. Over the defeat of Russia, finally, on September 5, 1905, was concluded and signed the Portsmouth agreement at the Portsmouth, United States (Martens, 1905: 641-642). Russia was attended by Korostovetz, Nabokov, Plancon, Sergei Yuiyevich Witte (Sergius Witte), and Roman Rosen. Simultaneously, the Japanese were represented by Mineichiro Adachi, Ochiai Kentaro, Yoshimaro Satō, Takahira Kogoro and Komura Jutarō (Komura et al., 1907: 21). The victory of the battle against Russia raised Japan's self-esteem because Japan, as an Asian country, defeated Russia as a solid Western country. Japan's victory influenced the Western anti-imperialist movement in the Asian region.

#### 4. Conclusion

After receiving the power return from Tokugawa, the Meiji government immediately reformed the bureaucracy to stabilise politics. Political stability was the key to Japan's economic and military growth. In his administration, the Meiji Empire had three concepts for building a country: *Shokusan kōgyō*, *fukoku kyōhei*, and *wakon yosai*. *Shokusan kōgyō* was a concept to support modern Japanese infrastructure and industry. *Fukoku kyōhei* was a reform program that wanted a wealthy country with a strong military. At the same time, *wakon yosai* could be interpreted as the spirit of Japan (*Yamato Damashii*) to learn all about the Western countries.

Military affairs of the Meiji Empire were under *gyoseikan*. The military field was one of the main concerns in modernisation. Yamagata Aritomo was

given the trust in handling the problem of modernising the Japanese military. Yamagata was sent to Europe to study the management of modern military organisations. Initially, military duty was given to the Samurai. However, in this period keeping the state was the responsibility of all circles. The holding of military service evidenced this.

The Meiji government was severe in developing its industrial economy because it was aware that the industrial economy was essential in supporting its development. Japan could be said to be a newly developing country from the political isolation adopted by Tokugawa in the previous period. However, this country had thought that Japan's economy would not depend on other countries, especially Western countries.

Two critical factors influenced Japan's rapid transformation. In the Tokugawa era, the Japanese people reached a point of peace, obedience, and unity under one political control. That obedience turned into national ideals and loyalty to the emperor. Second, Japan had always been a country that was hungry for knowledge and continuously learned everything, in line with one of the principles of *The Charter Oath*, namely "knowledge would be sought all over the world for the benefit and glory of the empire". This spirit eventually pushed Japan to become a modern country. Initially, the weapons factory was prioritised. Even the weapons factory was the industry's foremost and started introducing modern equipment. The Meiji government stimulated the growth of military technology by standardising and modernising ammunition factories. Same as with other industries, the weapons industry also involved foreigners in development.

Besides, the Meiji government also paid attention to the shipping industry. Ships made in the Meiji era were better than the previous era. The shipyards received direct control from the government. The ship was very reliable transportation in that

period. Aside from supporting cross-continental trade, this transportation could also function as a military transport equipped with heavy weapons such as cannons. Proof of the Meiji government's seriousness in modernising Japan was Japan's victory in two battles, the battle against China and Russia.

The modernisation of Japan and its victory in the war can be concluded that the Meiji Restoration was the root of Japanese imperialism. A country needs raw materials and workers to support the development of modernisation, especially the fulfilment of industrial-economic. To get all of that, the way to occupy another country should be taken, such as the imperialism practices carried out by Western countries was occupying several Asian countries at the time.

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