

2020-01-01

Beyond Perry's Black Ships: The Emergence of United States-Japanese Diplomatic Relations, 1840s-1870s

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BEYOND PERRY'S BLACK SHIPS: THE EMERGENCE OF UNITED STATES-JAPANESE
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, 1840s-1870s

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2020

Dedication

For my parents and grandparents. Thank you for believing in me and supporting this project. I

love you so much.

Para mis padres y abuelos. Gracias por creer en mí y apoyar este proyecto.

Te quiero mucho.

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DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, 1840s-1870s.

by

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THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at El Paso

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of History

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

December 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to my committee. Thank you, Dr. Brian Yothers and Dr. Cartwright, for taking up this project and agreeing to help me see this through to the very end. Thank you, Dr. Cartwright for also sharing diverse knowledge, from how to teach Social Studies to 19th century United States history, for the past five years. Your wisdom and guidance lit up the path for me to follow, especially in these dark times during the Covid-19 pandemic.

I want to thank Dr. Fan for his guidance as well. Thank you for sharing your knowledge in all the Asian history courses I took at the Undergraduate and Graduate levels. Thank you for agreeing to oversee all my undergraduate projects, as crazy as they sounded at the time. Those projects not only expanded my knowledge in Japanese history, but it also helped shaped this project.

Finally, I need to express my sincere thanks to my family, especially my Mom, Dad, and grandparents. Mom, thank you for encouraging me to continue my education, even when I felt like quitting. Thank you for listening to me when I encountered obstacles on this journey. I could not have done this without you. I hope I made you proud being the first female in our family to earn a master's degree. I love you.

Abuela, Abuelo, gracias por impartir tu sabiduría. Me ayudó a superar los obstáculos que tenía. Espero haberte hecho sentir orgullosa de ser la primera mujer de nuestra familia en obtener una maestría. Te quiero mucho.

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INTRODUCTION

In February 1854, Commodore Matthew C. Perry of the United States Navy, re-entered Japan's Edo Bay to demand a finalization of a Treaty of Amity between the United States and Japan. The Japanese *Bakufu* made it a habit to buy time before giving Perry an answer. Finally, in February 1854, the *Bakufu* decided it was in Japan's best interests to negotiate a treaty with the United States. Commodore Perry wrote in his journal about the tactics behind his attitude and behavior towards the Japanese to accomplish his mission:

Finding that I could be induced to change a predetermined intention in one instance, they might rely on prevailing on me by dint of perseverance to waver in true policy to hold out at all hazards, and rather to establish myself a character of unreasonable obstinacy than that of a yielding disposition. I hinge the tenor of our future negotiations, and the sequel will show that I was right in my conclusions . . . For motives of policy, and to give greater [importance] to my own position, I have hitherto studiously kept myself aloof from intercourse with any of the subordinates of the court, making it known that I would communicate with none but the princes of the empire.¹

Commodore Perry was determined to negotiate a treaty with Japan. He refused to leave Edo Bay until the *Bakufu* consented to allow Perry ashore and talk with the Japanese government about how to proceed with establishing friendly relations. In the end, Perry's persistence prevailed because the *Bakufu* signed the Treaty of Kanagawa in March 1854 and friendly diplomatic relations began.

The narrative of Commodore Perry single-handedly opening Japan to the outside world has been accepted as common knowledge. Scholars agree that Perry did not have any assistance whatsoever. When reading about how Perry opened the isolated country, the tactics scholars

¹Matthew C. Perry, "From The Personal Journal of Commodore Matthew C. Perry, 1853-1854." In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 91.

write about include his tough demeanor, violence, and cold persistence that persuaded the Japanese to see reason and open a dialogue with the United States Navy.² Scholars have continued to accept this narrative as fact because of primary sources like Perry's journal that gives details on how he exerted dominance over the Japanese and pressured them into agreeing with him that signing a treaty was the best course of action. In fact, Perry is best known for his role in the opening of Japan in both United States history and Japanese history, making this monumental moment his greatest accomplishment and legacy after his death.

While Perry's participation in the initial opening of Japan is unquestionable, his sole role in the opening of the isolated country should be challenged. There is evidence that two Western-educated Japanese men assisted in the establishment and continuation of United States-Japanese relations throughout Japan's modernization process. These two men were Nakahama Manjiro and Joseph Heco.

Nakahama Manjiro came to the United States in the 1840s after being shipwrecked in 1841. Manjiro was a poor fisherman with four other crew members catching sea bass when they were shipwrecked by the *Kuroshio* in January 1841. The crew safely landed on a deserted island and lived off of the land for six months, while they waited to be rescued. In June, a ship was spotted on the horizon, sailing towards *Torishima* Island. This ship was the *John Howland*, captained by William Whitfield of New Bedford, Massachusetts. The five Japanese men boarded the *John Howland* ending their castaway days. Captain Whitfield saw something special in Manjiro. He asked Manjiro and his companions if it was alright if he took Manjiro with him to Massachusetts to be educated, which Manjiro agreed to. Manjiro was the first known Japanese to

²Tosh Minohara and Kaoru Iokibe, "America Encounters Japan, 1836-1894." In *The History of US-Japan Relations: From Perry to the Present*, ed. Makoto Iokibe and Tosh Minohara (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 7-10.

live in the United States. Throughout the 1840s, Manjiro learned English, navigation, and to be a Cooper. After a decade he decided to return to Japan in 1850.

When Manjiro arrived in Japan, *samurai* officials took him into custody and interrogated him as was the customary process when dealing with foreigners. In his interrogation, Manjiro explained why he illegally left Japanese borders and what he had done for the past decade. He told these officials about the United States, their culture, politics, economic system, military strength, and technological innovation. After hearing these testimonials, the *Bakufu* decided to allow Manjiro entrance into Japan and even granted him the rank of *samurai*. He was commissioned to teach young *samurai* English and navigation. They believed that he would be useful when a Western nation like the United States would appear at their borders. Western nations were colonizing Asia during this time, through commerce. They needed all the information they could get to plan strategies on how to deal with foreign nations who wanted to take away Japan's autonomy through imperialism, as Britain had done in China in the 1840s.

When Perry arrived in 1853, the *Bakufu* knew they made the right decision to make Manjiro a *samurai* because he advised them on how to proceed with Perry's demands. Manjiro was asked to listen in on the conversation between Perry and the Tokugawa *Bakufu* behind the scenes. His knowledge of the United States helped the *Bakufu* come to an agreement that they should compromise with the United States and sign the Treaty of Kanagawa in 1854, allowing them enough concessions to placate the United States while giving the *Bakufu* more time to deliberate on how to continue their isolation policy without starting a war with a stronger nation. Manjiro's role in the Perry negotiations not only opened Japan but established United States-Japanese relations.

Manjiro's participation at the meeting between Perry and the *Bakufu* was not the only way he helped established diplomatic relations. He helped maintain them by teaching young *samurai* English and Western style navigation in a school founded by the *Bakufu*. These *samurai* students were influenced by Manjiro's teachings to participate and even lead the Meiji Restoration in the 1860s. The Meiji Restoration, in theory overthrew the *Bakufu*, however this was not the case. The Meiji government consisted of officials that governed in the *Bakufu*. Yet, the restoration was crucial to the maintenance of relations with the United States because the Imperial Court saw the benefits of adopting Western knowledge and applying it to their way of life, economics, and politics to strengthen Japan as a nation that can hold its own. The Meiji government was able to do this because Manjiro's *samurai* students became government officials. These officials had the knowledge to interact diplomatically with other foreign nations for Japan's best interests into the twentieth century.

The second man that helped establish United States-Japanese relations was Joseph Heco. Heco was shipwrecked in 1850 after traveling to Edo with his father. He was rescued by Captain Jennings of the *Auckland* after fifty-one days of drifting in the Pacific Ocean. Captain Jennings took Heco to San Francisco, California where he stayed for a year while waiting to be returned to Japan as part of the Japanese Expedition that Commodore Perry would lead. The United States government thought it was a good idea to return Japanese castaways to open dialogue with Japan about trade deals. This would show Japan that they were a benevolent country. Heco grew tired of waiting for Perry in China and returned to the United States to be educated.

Heco returned to the United States in 1854 where he was adopted by the Sanders family and educated to be useful for the United States government. Along the way he was Christianized. By the later part of the 1850s, the government believed Heco would be useful as an interpreter in

the newly opened trading port of Kanagawa, Japan. Heco applied for the position and was hired. However, he had to become a naturalized United States citizen to accept the position.

Heco returned to Japan as an interpreter. He used his knowledge of Japanese customs and United States customs to maintain peaceful relations in Kanagawa when civil war was unfolding. Heco would translate foreign newspapers into Japanese so Japanese citizens knew what was going on in the foreign community. He also advised foreign leaders what was taking place domestically as the war started. He advised *Daimyo* (*samurai* leaders) to strengthen their provinces to defend themselves. *Daimyo* believed that Heco was a trustworthy ally of the revolutionary group, the *Ishin Shin*.

Revolutionary leaders of the Satsuma and Choshu provinces contracted him as an agent to negotiate deals between foreign nations and the revolutionaries to gain weapons and ammunition from foreign entities that would help them win the war. Heco partook in a direct role in the war alongside Manjiro's students to help overthrow the Tokugawa *Bakufu* and create the Meiji government. By interpreting in Kanagawa and promoting the restoration, Heco maintained U.S.-Japanese relations. The Meiji government needed these relations to learn enough to defend itself from Imperialist threats from Western nations and to become a superpower greater than the United States and European nations.

Therefore, I argue that Commodore Matthew Perry did not act alone when he successfully negotiated the Treaty of Kanagawa and opened Japan in 1854. I acknowledge that his firm diplomacy was a useful tactic that played a role in gaining an audience with the *Bakufu*, but Manjiro and Heco played indirect and direct roles, that assisted Perry in opening Japan. They helped establish and maintain diplomatic relations throughout the nineteenth century, as Japan transitioned from a feudal country to a modern nation.

The opening of Japan and the ensuing Meiji Restoration are popular topics in both academia and popular culture. Academic scholarship has focused on different aspects of these two related events. Scholars have told the narrative in three different ways: (1) by looking at various groups and individuals especially *samurai* as case studies, (2) through an examination of the diplomacy that Westerners and the *Bakufu* demonstrated in the negotiations in the 1850s, and (3) by analyzing how/why the Tokugawa *Bakufu* fell under foreign pressure. The historiography that I utilize spans from the 1950s to the 2010s.

The case studies I read focused on individuals and groups of *samurai* that took part in the opening of Japan and the Meiji Restoration. In the 1950s two biographies on Nakahama Manjiro were published at the centennial anniversary of the opening of Japan. These were *Manjiro, The Man Who Discovered America* by Hisakazu Kaneko and *Voyager to Destiny* by Emily Warinner.³ Both biographies detail his shipwreck, rescue and education in the United States. They discuss his return to Japan and how he participated in the Meiji Restoration as a *samurai*. These biographies were the only scholarship in English dedicated to Manjiro until the 1980s when Katherine Plummer published *The Shogun's Reluctant Ambassadors: Sea Drifters* in 1984.⁴ Her book is a compilation of individual biographies on Japanese castaways including Nakahama Manjiro and Joseph Heco. Plummer narrates Manjiro's story but falls short on Heco's as she does not discuss his involvement in the Restoration. To my knowledge this is the earliest scholarship on Joseph Heco.

³Hisakazu Kaneko. *Manjiro, The Man Who Discovered America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1956).

Emily Warinner. *Voyager to Destiny: The Amazing Adventures of Manjiro, The Man Who Changed Worlds Twice* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.).

⁴Katherine Plummer. *The Shogun's Reluctant Ambassadors: Sea Drifters* (Tokyo: Lotus Press, 1984).

There were other case studies on individuals written to explain the narrative on the opening of Japan. One of these individuals was Sakamoto Ryoma. In 1961, Marius Jansen wrote a narrative of the Meiji Restoration as Sakamoto Ryoma witnessed it and participated in it.⁵ While Sakamoto was heavily influenced by Manjiro's interrogation and Kawada Shoryo's transcription of the interrogation, Jansen does not go into detail as to why Manjiro was so influential on Sakamoto's ideas on a democratic form of government.

In 1992, George Wilson argued that *samurai* and commoners had a motive to overthrow the Tokugawa *Bakufu*.⁶ Commoners suffered under the *Bakufu*'s systems because they endured the famines and other troubles. Manjiro and Heco are not mentioned in this work.

The other case studies focus on popular *samurai* and groups that participated in this civil war. These include Romulus Hillsborough's case study on the *Shinsengumi* in his *Shinsengumi: The Shogun's Last Samurai Corps* in 2005.⁷ Hillsborough focused on the activities these men participated in to keep the Tokugawa *Bakufu* in power. In his analysis he captured the spirit of the *Shinsengumi* and their purpose for fighting. Even though he discussed the causes that led to civil war, he did not mention Manjiro's role in the Perry negotiations or Heco's role as interpreter between Japanese and foreigners.

However, Hillsborough did mention Manjiro in his 2014 book *Samurai Revolution: The Dawn of Modern Japan Seen Through the Eyes of the Shogun's Last Samurai*.⁸ He gives credit to Manjiro as a translator in the Perry negotiations, but only dedicates a few pages to Manjiro's role

⁵Marius B. Jansen. *Sakamoto Ryoma and the Meiji Restoration* (California: Stanford University Press, 1961).

⁶George M. Wilson. *Patriots and Redeemers in Japan: Motives in the Meiji Restoration* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

⁷Romulus Hillsborough. *Shinsengumi: The Shogun's Last Samurai Corps* (Vermont: Tuttle Publishing, 2005).

⁸Romulus Hillsborough. *Samurai Revolution: The Dawn of Modern Japan Seen Through The Eyes Of the Shogun's Last Samurai* (Vermont: Tuttle Publishing, 2014).

as this book focuses on Katsu Kaishu and his point of view and participation in the Meiji Restoration. There is no mention of Heco. It could be because Heco was not a *samurai* like Manjiro.

Hillsborough's latest book *Samurai Assassins: "Dark Murder" and the Meiji Restoration, 1853-1868* continues his trend to focus on individual *samurai* who were politically assassinated for supporting foreigners' presence in Japan.⁹ Hillsborough decided to write on Ii Naosuke, Takechi Hanpeita, and Sakamoto Ryoma, who all of whom supported revolutionary change. Hillsborough only mentions Manjiro briefly in the section dedicated to Sakamoto because of his influence on Sakamoto regarding democratic government. Heco is not mentioned.

The second type of scholarship in the historiography focuses on the Perry/*Bakufu* negotiations in 1853-1854. The first book that looks at the negotiations is Peter Booth Wiley's *Yankees in the Land of the Gods* published in 1990.¹⁰ Wiley states that the opening of Japan was a result of Imperialist attitudes like Manifest Destiny and commercialism. He argued that Japan opened because Perry's gunboat diplomacy added more stress to an already broken system. He mentions Manjiro's role as translator. Wiley also mentioned in his book that the Russians tried to open Japan. This experience with the Russians and using Manjiro gave the *Bakufu* more of an idea of how to deal with the United States.

In 2006, two books came out about the foreign negotiations. The first was William McOmie's *Opening of Japan, 1853-1855: A Comparative Study of the American, British, Dutch and Russian Naval Expeditions to Compel the Tokugawa Bakufu to Conclude Treaties and Open*

⁹Romulus Hillsborough. *Samurai Assassins: "Dark Murder" and the Meiji Restoration, 1853-1868* (North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2017).

¹⁰Peter Booth Wiley and Korogi Ichiro. *Yankees in the Land of the Gods: Commodore Perry and the Opening of Japan* (New York: Viking, 1992).

Ports to their Ships.¹¹ McOmie chronicles how these foreign nations approached opening Japan, emphasizing their successes and failures. Since he analyzed the United States and their approach, Manjiro is mentioned as a translator for the negotiations between the *Bakufu* and Perry.

The second book was George Feifer's *Breaking Open Japan: Commodore Perry, Lord Abe, and American Imperialism in 1853*.¹² Feifer analyzed how the opening of Japan created hostile relations between the United States and Japan into the twentieth century leading up to the bombing of Pearl Harbor. These hostile relations began when Perry's cold attitude forced Japan to open, making Japanese inferior beings in the eyes of the superior Western nations. Manjiro was included in Feifer's analysis as a translator for the *Bakufu*. He discussed Manjiro in more detail than previous scholarship on the opening of Japan, but certainly not enough like the biographies that were solely dedicated to explaining Manjiro's life story. Feifer did not include Hecor in his analysis.

The latest book on the opening of Japan is *The History of US-Japan Relations* edited by Makoto Iokibe.¹³ This book is a compilation of essays that examines diplomatic relations. For this thesis, I only used the first chapter that covered the relations between the 1830s and 1890s. This chapter examines how the United States wanted to establish friendly relations solely for commercialism. After Perry managed to open a few Japanese ports, Townsend Harris further negotiated with Japan to open more ports, persuading them that the United States only wanted access to markets and did not want to colonize Japan like European nations wanted. Surprisingly,

¹¹William McOmie. *The Opening of Japan, 1853-1855: A Comparative Study of the American, British, Dutch, and Russian Naval Expeditions to Compel the Tokugawa Shogunate to Conclude Treaties and Open Ports to their Ships* (United Kingdom: Global Oriental, 2006).

¹²George Feifer. *Breaking Open Japan: Commodore Perry, Lord Abe, and American Imperialism in 1853* (New York: Smithsonian Books, 2006).

¹³Makoto Iokibe, editor. *The History of US-Japanese Relations: From Perry to the Present*, trans. Tosh Minohara (Japan: Yuhikaku Publishing Co.Ltd., 2017), 3-22.

Manjiro and Heco are not discussed even though they both played roles in the opening of Japan and the maintenance of these relations in this new scholarship.

The third type of scholarship that makes up the historiography deals with the Japanese response to Western pressure and the origins of the Meiji Restoration. Manjiro and Heco were not discussed as important players in this time period in the early scholarship. The first book that argues the Tokugawa *Bakufu* failed in the wake of foreign threats was Paul Akamatsu's *Meiji, 1868* published in 1968.¹⁴ He argued that there was a revolutionary change in Japan despite the lack of change in government officials. The change came about with changing the system of governance to fix the domestic problems the *Bakufu* created and to make Japan strong enough to defend its autonomy. Manjiro and Heco are not mentioned in this analysis.

Conrad Totman makes a similar case in his *The Collapse of the Tokugawa Bakufu, 1862-1868* published in 1980.¹⁵ He argues that the political, economic, and social systems that Tokugawa created were not equipped to handle the threat of Western imperialism. Thus, revolutionaries took advantage of the weak points in these systems to overthrow Tokugawa. Manjiro and Heco were not discussed in this analysis either.

William Beasley took a different approach to discuss why the Tokugawa *Bakufu* fell in his *Japan Encounters the Barbarian: Japanese Travellers in America and Europe*.¹⁶ He argued that the *Bakufu* fell because of foreign pressure. The *Bakufu* realized how weak its systems were and needed to create stronger systems using Western education. To do this the *Bakufu* sent Japanese students on missions and envoys abroad to America and Europe to learn from the West.

¹⁴Paul Akamatsu. *Meiji, 1868: Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Japan*. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968).

¹⁵Conrad Totman. *The Collapse of the Tokugawa Bakufu, 1862-1868*. (Hawaii: The University Press of Hawaii, 1980).

¹⁶W.G Beasley. *Japan Encounters the Barbarian: Japanese Travellers in America and Europe* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1995).

One of these people was Manjiro as he was commissioned to participate in the Japanese Embassy of 1860 and the Iwakura Mission of 1870. Despite Manjiro's role, Beasley does not provide a detailed account of Manjiro's life because he was examining this phenomenon using different actors during this period. More scholarship arguing that the *Bakufu* fell due to Western pressure would not be published until the late 2000s.

In 2009 Dana Kenneth Teasley wrote a thesis analyzing this historiography and how it does not truly paint a comprehensive picture of the opening of Japan and the Meiji Restoration.¹⁷ He argued that the system fell because of the foreign threat, but individual *samurai* and groups took advantage of the failure to create a democratic government to fix domestic issues. Manjiro and Heco are not mentioned in this thesis even though they both supported a democratic government because of what they experienced in the United States and the roles they played in overthrowing the *Bakufu*.

The latest scholarly work was *Toward the Meiji Revolution: The Search for "Civilization" in Nineteenth Century Japan* published in 2019.¹⁸ Karube Tadashi argues that the Meiji Restoration was rooted in social and intellectual ideas that began to spread a long time before Perry arrived. These ideas came about because people of all sectors knew that the systems were flawed and had to change for the *Bakufu* to remain in power.

While my project may overlap with previous scholarship in the historiography, my aim is to tell a narrative of the opening of Japan and the Meiji Restoration from the perspective of two Western educated men. My analysis of Nakahama Manjiro may be repetitive from the biographies and other works, but I hope to add to the scholarship on this lesser-known *samurai*

¹⁷Dana Kenneth Teasley. *The Japanese Revolutionaries: The Architects of the Meiji Restoration 1860-1868*. (El Paso: The University of Texas, 2009).

¹⁸Karube Tadashi. *Toward the Meiji Revolution: The Search for "Civilization" in Nineteenth-Century Japan*. Trans. David Noble. (Japan Library: Japan Publishing Industry Foundation for Culture, 2019).

and his contributions to the modernization of Japan. I also hope to unearth the buried contributions of Joseph Heco, a Japanese American who used his Western education and United States citizenship to maintain peace between Japanese and foreigners in Kanagawa and Yokohama, Japan. His knowledge was useful to the restoration because he used his contacts to get foreign ships and weapons to win the civil war. These two men, though rarely mentioned in the scholarship, deserve recognition for their contributions among other Japanese men such as Sakamoto Ryoma and Katsu Kaishu and American men like Commodore Perry and Townsend Harris.

I would also like to explain why I chose the secondary sources I use to give background knowledge on this topic. I am aware that some of my sources may be outdated and more recent scholarship is available. The Covid-19 Pandemic forced me to choose these sources because of the stay-at-home orders that were implemented. These orders closed libraries and their Inter-Library Loan networks. Therefore, I was not able to request newer scholarship and I had to make do with what the University of Texas at El Paso Library had on its shelves that I could borrow before the stay-at-home orders were put into effect.

To understand the significance of the opening of Japan by any Western nation and the ensuing Meiji Restoration, historical context on both Japan and the United States must be explained. Japan was an isolated country that planned to continue its isolation. Many in the United States thought Japan needed to be opened for trading purposes. The United States needed new markets to expand its commercialism, and as well as its ideology of Manifest Destiny, into the Pacific Ocean to gain more resources to continue its growth as a superpower.

In 1603 Tokugawa Ieyasu, the third and final unifier of Japan became *shogun* and established the Tokugawa *Bakufu* in Edo after winning the century long *Sengoku* Era civil war. It was his goal to maintain the peace in Japan. To do this he instituted political, economic, and social reforms that dictated how the Japanese lived for 250 years. To achieve the safety of his government and his legacy, he needed to do two things: 1) subdue the Imperial Court by keeping them under his rule and 2) to control the *Daimyo* (*samurai* leaders) in a way to ensure that they do not rebel and overthrow his government.

Regarding the Imperial Court, Ieyasu continued to subdue the Emperor and his court. He did this by allowing them to live peacefully in Kyoto. They were allotted an income that they could live by and had very little political power, as was the case since the end of the *Heian* Period in 1185.¹⁹ To further subdue the Emperor and his vassals, Ieyasu sent loyal *samurai* to Kyoto to live among them in the Imperial Palace in order to keep a watchful eye on their daily activities and whereabouts and to make sure the nobles were not plotting against the *Bakufu* to retake their rightful sovereign power.²⁰

Ieyasu needed to control the *samurai*, who fought for the position of *shogun* during the civil war in the *Sengoku* Era. This war demonstrated that every *Daimyo* was out for themselves and their vassals, as they battled against each other. Only a few were loyal to Tokugawa Ieyasu before he won the war. Ieyasu rewarded these *samurai* for their loyalty by promoting them to be his trusted advisors in his government. They were known as the *fudai*. The ones that pledged their loyalty after it was clear that Tokugawa won were known as the *tozama*. They were given

¹⁹The rise of the *Samurai* began in the mid-12th century when Minamoto Yoritomo took military power and created an early version of the *Bakufu*. His goal was not to take away power from the emperor because the emperor was the descendent of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu and therefore had the divine right to rule Japan. Instead, Minamoto made the Imperial Court a puppet-government under the feudalist *Samurai* government.

²⁰Nancy K. Stalker. *Japan: History and Culture from Classical to Cool*. (California: University of California Press, 2017), 147.

land furthest from Edo. To maintain his government, Ieyasu implemented *sankin kotai* or an alternative attendance system. This system forced *Daimyo* to go to and live in Edo as part of their duty to the *shogun* every other year, while their wives lived permanently in Edo as hostages. *Sankin Kotai* was an ingenious way to keep the *Daimyo* under control because if they disobeyed orders, their wives would suffer the consequences. *Sankin Kotai* also subdued *Daimyo* financially because traveling from their provinces to Edo was expensive, deliberately keeping them poor so they could not raise an army and overthrow the government. *Sankin Kotai* was not the only reform put in place that controlled politics and the economy. Reforms were put in place to control ordinary Japanese subjects as well.

By the 1630s, Ieyasu's grandson, Iemitsu declared that Japan should be isolated from the rest of the world and passed *Sakoku*. According to this policy, Japanese were not allowed to leave Japan. If they left, they would not be able to return. Foreigners, with the exception of Chinese, Koreans, and Dutch were not allowed to enter Japan as well. This may seem like a drastic measure that the *Bakufu* took to maintain order, but it was worried that foreigners and their religion were influencing ordinary Japanese into rebelling against the government. The foreign religion was Christianity.

The Portuguese introduced Christianity in the mid-sixteenth century. It was tolerated to an extent by all the unifiers of Japan, but it became a threat by the mid-seventeenth century as civilians plotted to overthrow the government. Essays and memorials were written describing how foreign nations came to Japan's shores looking for products to trade and in return spread the religion as they traveled within Japan, and how Christian missionaries helped the people in need. Foreign nations used Christianity to conquer the world without fighting through the conversion

of souls to Christianity and receiving charity.²¹ At first it was only a threat, until it became reality. In 1637, Christian rebels led the *Shimabara* rebellion in Kyushu to overthrow the local *samurai* government. The *Bakufu* stepped in to suppress the situation and was successful. This event convinced Iemitsu that foreigners and their culture were dangerous to not only his rule, but the safety of Japan. He decided to close Japan to the rest of the world to make sure that foreigners could not make a direct and indirect attack on his legitimate rule.²²

Sakoku stated that no foreigners were allowed within Japan's boundaries. In turn Japanese ships were not allowed to cross political boundaries, Japanese could not travel abroad lest they be forbidden to return, and if they tried to return, they were arrested, interrogated, and possibly executed.²³ There were loopholes to this isolation policy. Japan only traded with China, Korea, and the Netherlands. Each country could do business with Japan in certain areas: China in the *Ryukyu* Islands, Korea in *Tsushima* Island, and the Netherlands on *Dejima* Island in Nagasaki, Kyushu Island. It was important for Japan to maintain contact with a Western nation because it needed to know what was going on in the world. The Dutch provided crucial information that the *Bakufu* would use to make decisions regarding its isolation and how to keep their sovereignty, especially in the 1700s and 1800s when Westerners repeatedly tried to open Japan.²⁴

By the 1700s Japan experienced economic problems that stemmed from the unequal social hierarchy. The social hierarchy constituted with *samurai* at the top, farmers second, artisans third, and merchants at the bottom. Since *samurai* were at the top as a warrior and

²¹Anonymous, "From Kirishitan Monogatari (Tales of the Christians) 1639." In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 45-48.

²²Stalker, 141.

²³ Conrad Totman. *Japan before Perry: A Short History*, 25th Anniversary ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 145-147.

²⁴Stalker, 141.

bureaucratic class, they had to live lavish lifestyles that denoted their prestige in Japanese society, but they did not have to produce those lifestyles for themselves. *Samurai* were given everything they needed: food, clothing, housing, weapons and even income. These items came from the other three classes because they were responsible for producing everything Japan needed; limited foreign trade was not enough to handle the demand for necessities. These financial difficulties worsened as the population grew in the late 1600s and 1700s. Most of the food and supplies produced went to the *samurai*, leaving little for the commoners. This rise in population put an extra burden on farmers, especially since they could not grow enough crops to support both the *samurai*'s lifestyle and a growing population. They could not keep up with the demand when Japan's economic system transformed from an agrarian system to a mercantile system.²⁵

Even though merchants were at the bottom of the social hierarchy, they were the ones that benefitted most economically. Towns surrounding *Daimyo*'s castles grew along with the mercantile economy. *Samurai* had to buy items from merchants for their trips to Edo as a part of their duties for *Sankin Kotai*. The items they bought had to be lavish enough to satisfy the demands of the Tokugawa *Bakufu*, draining *Samurai*'s pocketbooks. *Sankin Kotai* was devised to do this, so *samurai* did not have enough money to raise an army and overthrow the government. Iemitsu's careful deliberation to protect his dynasty led to economic growth in cities and towns, because *samurai* had to buy goods from merchants. However, in the long run, Iemitsu's policy put his country's economy and commoners and *samurai* in danger by creating these financial burdens and their poverty. Farmers were expected to produce enough cash crops to support a mercantile economy, but they could not grow a sufficient amount of crops to sell and pay their

²⁵W.G. Beasley. *The Japanese Experience: A Short History of Japan* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), 159.

taxes. This led to their poverty.²⁶ The country's poverty was a reason why foreigner's demands for trade relationships led to the downfall of Tokugawa and the restoration of the Emperor in the nineteenth century. These classes knew that the systems in place were broken and needed to be fixed by changing the governing system.

If dealing with the domestic problems Tokugawa's reforms created was not enough, threats to the isolation policy posed problems for the government. Western nations tried to gain concessions and start trade relations since the 1700s. The first was Russia who tried to colonize and set up trading stations in Ezo or present-day Hokkaido. The *Bakufu* thought about how it was going to deal with foreigners in a manner that allowed Japan to remain cut off from the world. By the end of the eighteenth century, scholars and *samurai* wrote on these threats and possible strategies to deal with them. They were afraid that if the *Bakufu* did not handle these situations in the best possible manner to pacify the foreigners and maintain their autonomy, the foreigners would colonize Japan. A possible solution Honda Toshiaki proposed dealt with colonizing the territory around Japan such as Ezo to keep foreigners at bay. His suggestion was very frank: colonize or be colonized.²⁷ However, there was no clear answer to these problems as foreigner's encroachment drew closer and closer going into the nineteenth century.

A quarter into the nineteenth century, threats from foreigners came in different varieties. Some nations continued to try to negotiate treaties to open Japan for its markets. Other nations like the United States wanted to open ports for its whaling ships to be able to stop and resupply. These whaling ships, who were a part of a lucrative trade, sailed across the Pacific Ocean catching whales. Sailors were shipwrecked and landed in Japan, where they were arrested under

²⁶Ibid., 163-164.

²⁷ Honda Toshiaki. "From Keisei hisaku (A Secret Strategy for Ruling the Country) 1798." In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 48-50.

the laws of the isolation policy. Thus, Western nations sought relations with Japan to be able to recover their sailors from being imprisoned and as a docking port to rest and resupply their ships to continue their journey catching whales.

Samurai like Aizawa Seishisai, wrote memorials on how the *Bakufu* should deal with foreigners. In his *Shinron* (New Theses) he stated that Japanese should be wary of the foreigners' proposals to diplomatic relations because it could be a motive to spread Christianity through the façade of trading. Christianity was still believed to be dangerous as it could lead to the people rebelling against the Japanese government. It was also believed that foreigners would use trade to learn about a country and eventually conquer it from within.²⁸ Thus, the *Bakufu* needed to strengthen their forces and enforce the law whenever a foreigner was close to Japanese borders. It was during this time that there was a rise in Japanese nationalism that created a sense that Japan needed to be defended against Western encroachment. They issued an edict the same year that Aizawa wrote his theses on how to handle foreign threat. This Expulsion Edict stated that any foreign ships that crossed into Japanese waters would be bombed without any questions to drive them away. If sailors manage to dodge cannon fire and land ashore, *samurai* were authorized to arrest them. This edict created the laws that pushed the need for Western nations to negotiate treaties for the release of their incarcerated sailors.²⁹

By 1840, the foreign problem and their threat had increased exponentially when Japan learned that China lost territory and concessions to England.³⁰ Japan's fear of being colonized through treaties with foreign nations rose as well. Clearly, the *Bakufu's* edicts, policies and laws

²⁸Aizawa Seishisai. "From Shinron (New Theses) 1825." In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 52-56.

²⁹ Japanese *Bakufu*. "A *Bakufu* Expulsion Edict 1825" In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 57-58.

³⁰Patricia Ebrey and Anne Walthaall. *East Asia: A Cultural, Social, and Political History*, Third Ed. (Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2014), 317.

were not enough to keep foreigners at bay. If China lost a war with a “barbarian” nation, what hope did Japan have to retain its autonomy? *Samurai* proposed to issue the *Tempo* Reforms to strengthen the military class and its coastal defenses.³¹ However, the *samurai* had fully transformed from a warrior class to a bureaucratic one. They no longer practiced martial arts to fight in a war; it was a time of peace after all. Instead, they studied to become government officials. Thus, it was time to prepare for war to defend Japan from being colonized, by trying to change the *samurai* into a warrior class again.

Sakuma Shozan proposed a plan for the *samurai* to fortify their defenses on the coast as well as their warrior personnel. He proposed to increase their number of weapons and ships to ensure the safety of the Japanese and necessary supplies and food. He also suggested making Western style warships and practice Western style navigation taught by Dutch scholars. In terms of the people, he wished for everyone to attend school to be educated in the Way of Loyalty and Filial Piety and keep the principles of being Japanese so that foreign ideas like Christianity would not infiltrate Japan through uneducated Japanese. This nationalistic education would hopefully unify the Japanese against the enemy.³² The idea of learning from Westerners to defend Japan from Westerners began to be more prominent in the mind set of many government officials by the 1840s. This is the Japan that Nakahama Manjiro was born into. Manjiro was shipwrecked and rescued during the time that the *Bakufu* passed the *Tempo* Reforms in order to prepare for foreign intrusion. In the next section of this introduction the historical context of the United States needs to be discussed to understand why this nation, like European nations, repeatedly tried to open Japan for trade and diplomatic relations.

³¹Ibid., 338-339.

³²Sakuma Shozan. *Kaibosaku (A Plan for Coastal Defense) 1842*. In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 58-61.

In the early 1800s, the United States were figuring out their new-found democracy. Americans were proud that they were able to win independence from England and establish a democratic government in the 1780s. With their independence, Americans were able to regain control of not only their governing system, but their economic system. They had the ability to move west to gain territory and resources for the benefit of their economy into the nineteenth century.

During the Colonial Era, the economic system was primarily agrarian. People practiced subsistence farming, producing enough to feed their families and trade what was left over for other foodstuffs and supplies. After winning independence, people had more opportunity to settle on new acquired land in the Ohio River Valley, taking advantage of the natural resources. With more resources readily available to Americans, the agrarian economy shifted to a market economy by the 1850s.³³ As more territory was gained, more resources were acquired, until Americans reached the Pacific Ocean.

Americans not only gained territory for economic purposes, but they felt it was their Christian duty to do so, their Manifest Destiny. Manifest Destiny was synonymous with expansionism and imperialism. As they moved west, Americans were creating an empire, supposedly bringing the “benevolence” of the American empire to the people they encountered. Americans reached the Pacific Ocean and their empire spanned from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific coast. This land provided more space for settlers to settle, take advantage of the natural resources, and spread American culture and Christianity. However, gaining control of the entire continental United States was not enough. The United States, along with Europe, saw an

³³Daniel Walker Howe. *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 60-62.

opportunity for economic development and expanding their empire into the Pacific Ocean using Manifest Destiny as a justification. They tried to negotiate trade deals with peoples in this part of the world, as well as harvest the ocean's resources.

The Pacific Ocean offered a lot of commodities that Americans relied on. One of them was whale blubber. During the early to mid-1800s, whaling was a lucrative trade because blubber was used as a fuel for lighting. Whale baleen gave women's corsets their shape. Ambergris was an ingredient for perfume. Spermaceti was used for candle wax.³⁴ Whaling vessels sailed around the Pacific Ocean, and sometimes these vessels would have to make landfall in Japan because of emergencies. When these sailors entered Japanese territory, they were arrested and thrown in jail. Thus, the United States government tried to establish friendly relations with Japan to rescue these sailors. The United States saw an opportunity to negotiate trade relations with Japan, using American sailors to open dialogue. The government wanted resting and refueling stations along the Pacific Ocean for not only whaling vessels, but American naval ships.

Seeing the benefits of trading with Japan, the United States tried to establish friendly relations with Japan beginning in the 1830s through the 1850s. The United States commissioned three different expeditions with the same objective: negotiate a treaty that protected sailors when they wash ashore on Japanese territory and opened new markets for the United States to take advantage of. This was a part of their idea of Manifest Destiny. The first expedition was the *Morrison* Expedition. The second was the Biddle Expedition, followed by the Glynn Expedition.

The *Morrison* expedition was commissioned in 1837. The merchant ship *Morrison* traveled to Japan with missionaries and Japanese castaways to start a dialogue with the Japanese

³⁴Howe, 215-216.

government for trade relations and better treatment for sailors. When the *Morrison* arrived in Japan, they were met with Japanese resistance. *Samurai* fired cannons from the coast, trying to force foreign ships to flee. After several tries of trying to contact *samurai* along the coast, the *Morrison* was forced to abandon its mission and retreat.³⁵ The *Morrison* expedition hoped that by taking Japanese castaways home they would show the Japanese government that the United States was a benevolent country, and they would be more willing to negotiate a treaty with the U.S. This would not be the last attempt to open Japan using Japanese castaways and it certainly was not the last attempt to open Japan.

While the *Morrison* Expedition failed to get a meeting with the *Bakufu*, two other expeditions were commissioned by the United States in the 1840s: The Biddle Expedition and the Glynn Expedition. The Biddle Expedition arrived in Japan in 1846 and the Glynn Expedition in 1849. Both missions were total losses because like the *Morrison* Expedition, *samurai* along the Japanese coastline fired cannons to drive these foreign ships away from their territories.³⁶

The last expedition that the United States commissioned was the Perry Expedition in 1853. It was the last one because it was successful in opening Japan for trade relations. Perry was successful because unbeknownst to him, Nakahama Manjiro, a Western educated *samurai*, convinced the *Bakufu* to concede to Perry's demands to keep their autonomy. With Nakahama Manjiro's help United States-Japanese relations officially began in the 1850s. The opening of their country forced *samurai* to look at their position in a world of "modern" nations and how far behind they were. This chaos provoked the Meiji Restoration because *samurai* could not agree to either close their country again or modernize to compete with other advanced nations. Joseph

³⁵ Samuel Wells Williams. *From "Narrative of a Voyage of the Ship Morrison" 1837*. In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 62-67.

³⁶ W.G. Beasley. *The Rise of Modern Japan: Political, Economic, and Social Change since 1850*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 26-28.

Heco played a role in the Meiji Restoration with Nakahama Manjiro by interpreting between the United States and Japan, which helped continue relations between these two nations.

It is commonly known that Japan ended its isolation policy and re-entered into the world after Commodore Perry's firm negotiations for a treaty of amity. Yet, there is evidence that two Western educated Japanese men, Nakahama Manjiro and Joseph Heco, helped open Japan and played roles in the Meiji Restoration that not only established United States-Japanese relations, but maintained them as Japan modernized in the nineteenth century.

An overview of the structure of this thesis is in order. The following chapters will examine how Manjiro and Heco illegally left Japan and entered the United States and their return home to play important roles in the Meiji Restoration. The first chapter will discuss how both men were shipwrecked and rescued in the 1840s and early 1850s. This chapter will mostly focus on Manjiro because he was rescued and educated in the 1840s. Towards the end of the chapter Heco will be introduced because he was shipwrecked as Manjiro returned to Japan in 1850. Chapter one will also describe how the United States government tried using Heco to force Japan into a dialogue for trade relations by showing that the United States was a benevolent country.

The second chapter will focus on how the two men prepared to play their respective parts in the restoration on both sides of the Pacific Ocean. Manjiro was granted *samurai* status and could teach young *samurai* English and Western style navigation in 1852. His role would grow in prominence because he would sit behind the scenes at the Perry/*Bakufu* discussions on a treaty of amity. At the same time, Heco was being educated in the United States. His education allowed him the opportunity to serve as interpreter for the United States government after Harris gained

more treaty ports for foreign commerce. His diplomatic role maintained peace between Japanese and the foreign community in Kanagawa during the initial stages of the Meiji Restoration.

The third chapter focuses on how the two men played their direct roles in the Restoration throughout the 1860s. Manjiro served as a Naval officer in the Japanese Embassy which helped solidify relations with the United States. Heco interpreted for the Japanese and foreign community and advised *Daimyo* to strengthen their provinces as the war loomed. He imparted Western knowledge on revolutionary leaders. Heco's advice was valuable enough that revolutionaries asked him to act as an agent to negotiate for war supplies with foreign entities that would help win the revolution. Revolutionaries knew how to use these weapons and supplies because Manjiro taught them in the 1850s. The conclusion will describe Manjiro's and Heco's legacies into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

CHAPTER 1 SHIPWRECKED AND RESCUED 1840s

Japan was in turmoil when it learned China lost the Arrow War in the 1840s. As a result, China was forced to sign unequal treaties with England. A provision of these treaties was to give up concessions and extraterritoriality to England. Another provision of the treaty was that other Western nations would benefit from these concessions under a “most-favored-nations” clause. Consequently, China lost territory and jurisdiction over it, slowly becoming a colony for different Western nations.³⁷ Japan feared that Western nations would encroach upon its boundaries and subject it to the same treatment as China. It feared becoming a colony like China. As a response the *Bakufu* decided to strengthen its defenses, both on land and on the sea.³⁸ *Samurai* were ordered to drive away any foreign ship that approached Japanese territory. If sailors managed to dodge the fire and reach the shoreline, they were arrested immediately. This is the Japan that Nakahama Manjiro and Joseph Heco lived in when they were shipwrecked.

Manjiro was born in Nakanohama village in Tosa in 1827. Manjiro was born into a poor family, thus he did not have the privilege of a family name. His family was so poor that Manjiro or his other four siblings could not be educated at the local Buddhist temple because their mother could not afford it. Manjiro fished with other fishermen of the area to help his widowed mother and family survive, as was his filial duty.³⁹ These are the only details scholars know about Manjiro’s early life.⁴⁰ Nothing is said about his other siblings except that he had an older brother that should have taken the main responsibility of working to provide for the family. For some

³⁷Ebrey, et. al., et al., 317-318.

³⁸Ibid., 338-339.

³⁹Hisakazu Kaneko. *Manjiro, The Man Who Discovered America*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1956), 1.

⁴⁰Manjiro’s early life was largely left out in biographies because there are few primary sources that Manjiro discusses his early childhood. There are few public records that mentions Manjiro’s early life because it was not customary to record the histories of poor families, like Manjiro’s. The main primary source that scholars use is the interrogation that *samurai* conducted in 1851 and 1852 when Manjiro returned to Japan.

reason Manjiro's older brother never took the responsibility. Instead Manjiro took it.⁴¹ Thus, Manjiro spent days on the sea catching fish with other villagers to help his mother make ends meet.

On January 5, 1841 Manjiro and four other fishermen: Fudenojo, Jusuke, Goemon, and Toraemon set sail to catch sea bass. They loaded their ship with enough supplies for a few days to make their time out on sea worth it. By midday, a storm brewed with howling winds that threatened to overturn their vessel. The junk was caught in the *Kuroshio*, a wind current that blows in a northeastern direction from the coasts of Japan to the continental United States. Many Japanese sailors have been shipwrecked because of the *Kuroshio*, which is strongest at the beginning of the year.⁴² The crew tried to keep the ship afloat for a few days. By January 8th, the ship was unnavigable as the oarlock for the sculling oar broke off from the ship. The crew lost the oars as well and could not guide the ship towards land. All the crew could do was let the junk drift further into the Pacific Ocean. Eventually, they came across a deserted island called *Torishima* or Hurricane Island on January 14, 1841.⁴³

With no other choice, the five men decided to stay on the island and wait for a ship to rescue them. They found a cave to take shelter in. They lived off the resources the island offered for about one hundred days. Albatross were abundant on the island along with edible plants. The only lacking resource was water. There was no rainfall for most of the time they lived on the island. When there was no fresh water to drink, they resorted to drinking their own urine to

⁴¹Emily Warinner. *Voyager to Destiny: The Amazing Adventures of Manjiro, the Man Who Changed Worlds Twice* (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1956), 29-30.

⁴²Katherine Plummer. *The Shogun's Reluctant Ambassadors: Sea Drifters*. (Tokyo: Lotus Press, 1984), 44-45.

⁴³John Manjiro. *Drifting Towards the Southeast: The Story of Five Japanese Castaways told in 1852 by John Manjiro*. (Massachusetts: Spinner Publications Inc., 2003), 25-27.

satisfy their thirst, the little their bodies were able to produce after not being able to drink water.⁴⁴ They lived like this for months, while they patiently waited for a ship to rescue them.

They were finally saved in June 1841. One morning, Manjiro spotted a ship on the horizon while he was collecting shellfish. He alerted the others to run to the shoreline to help him flag down the boats that were entering the harbor. Foreign crew members loaded into boats and began rowing to the shoreline. Manjiro, Toreamon, and Goemon swam towards the boats and climbed into them, signaling that there were two more people on the island. Foreign crew members went ashore, found Fudenojo and Jusuke, and helped them out of the cave into the safety of the ship with the other Japanese men. The ship that saved them was the *John Howland* of New Bedford, Massachusetts captained by William Whitfield. Captain Whitfield's crew stopped at the island to resupply their stores of fish and did not think they would come across castaways on the island.⁴⁵ The *John Howland* was a whaling vessel crossing the Pacific Ocean in search of whales. This is the point in time when United States-Japanese relations unofficially began because Manjiro met the benefactor that would pay for him to receive a Western education that would later be beneficial for the negotiations between Perry and the *Bakufu* in 1853 and the Meiji Restoration in the 1860s.

Captain Whitfield decided to sail to Hawaii and see if he could set up arrangements for the five Japanese men. Along the way, they caught whales. Manjiro and the other four Japanese witnessed the skills it took for these Americans to successfully kill a whale, cut it into pieces, and extract the blubber and anything else that was useful.⁴⁶ The *John Howland* made port in Hawaii in November 1841. The Japanese men were taken to Dr. Judd, a physician and

⁴⁴Ibid., 27-28.

⁴⁵Ibid., 30-32.

⁴⁶Ibid., 40-42.

missionary, to set up lodging on the island until passage to Japan could be figured out. Once the five men were settled, Captain Whitfield asked Fudenojo if he could take Manjiro to Massachusetts to be educated, since he was a quick learner and showed promise. With Manjiro's approval and Fudenojo's blessing, Manjiro boarded the *John Howland* with Captain Whitfield and sailed to Massachusetts in December 1841.⁴⁷

On their way to Massachusetts, Manjiro learned how to whale. The crew welcomed him aboard and named him John Mung. The crew hunted whales throughout their journey to the United States. Manjiro was expected to help on the ship and perform duties as one of the crew members.⁴⁸ During this voyage to New Bedford, Massachusetts, Manjiro started to learn the basics of English from one of the crew members. He learned the language to understand what was going on to capture whales. In between performing duties and hunting whales, he practiced the English alphabet and learned to spell simple words. Soon he was able to speak simple phrases as well.⁴⁹ The *John Howland's* journey to New Bedford took a year and half. Thus, Manjiro practiced his whaling and his English throughout this time. The *John Howland* sailed near Japanese waters, but Captain Whitfield gave no orders to sail into Japanese territory. He explained to Manjiro that it was dangerous for Japanese to return to Japan if they left their country. *Samurai* would arrest him, interrogate him, and possibly execute him if he turned up on their shores according to Japanese law. Thus, Captain Whitfield continued with his original plan and took Manjiro to the United States to be educated.

The *John Howland* made landfall in New Bedford in May 1843. Captain Whitfield took him to his home in Fairhaven, Massachusetts. By this time, Captain Whitfield regarded Manjiro

⁴⁷Ibid., 52.

⁴⁸Ibid., 76.

⁴⁹ Kaneko, 31.

as an adopted son and Manjiro in return regarded Captain Whitfield as an adopted father. Captain Whitfield allowed Manjiro get situated in his new home with James Allen, a neighbor, while Whitfield traveled to New York to arrange his affairs and to buy land in Sconticut Neck outside of Fairhaven. While he was away, Allen's daughter Jane, taught Manjiro how to write and bought him a copy book to practice his penmanship.⁵⁰ Whitfield brought home his new wife and took Manjiro to their new house to begin a new life.

In Sconticut Neck, Manjiro was treated like a son by the Whitfields while he lived with them. He performed chores around the farm as a part of the family. In between his duties on the farm, he practiced his penmanship. After about a year of living on the farm, Captain Whitfield asked Manjiro if he would like to continue his education and learn reading, writing, arithmetic, and surveying from the nearby schoolmaster Louis L. Bartlett in 1844.⁵¹ Manjiro agreed to take this opportunity and further his education; an opportunity that did not present itself in Japan since his mother did not have the means of paying the tuition. For two years, Manjiro would attend school and learn not only a basic education that included reading, writing, and arithmetic, but he learned skills that would be useful later in his life. He learned how to navigate ships which he could do to hunt whales for a living. Manjiro would use his navigation skills to sail to Japan in the 1850s and participate in embassies commissioned by the Japanese government. It was during this time that he became an apprentice to learn how to be a cooper and repair barrels that would be needed to store whale oil.

Manjiro was given the chance to put what he learned to use in navigation school when he was offered employment on board a whaling vessel, the *Franklin* in 1846. Ira Davis, who worked on the *John Howland*, captained the *Franklin*. He asked Manjiro to join him on a whaling

⁵⁰John Manjiro, 85-86.

⁵¹ Ibid., 88.

voyage. Manjiro agreed to work on the *Franklin*, and wrote to Captain Whitfield, who was on another whaling vessel, about his decision. During this voyage, Manjiro worked as a crewman as they sailed across the Pacific Ocean. The *Franklin* neared Japanese territory. Manjiro contacted two Japanese fishermen from Sendai Province. He asked which way was Tosa province, but these fishermen did not know. This chance meeting left Manjiro feeling homesick. He decided that he had spent enough time in the United States and wanted to return home.⁵²

By October 1846, the *Franklin* landed in Hawaii. There Manjiro met Fudenojo, who decided to change his name to Denzo, Goemon, and Toraemon. Denzo and Goemon told Manjiro how they tried to return to Japan on their own but failed. They had no choice but to return to Hawaii and resume the lives they settled into. After hearing their story, Manjiro knew that it was time to return to Japan with his companions. However, he decided to continue working in the United States because he did not have the necessary money and supplies needed to cross the Pacific Ocean.⁵³

After forty months on the sea catching whales, the *Franklin* made landfall in New Bedford, Massachusetts. He returned to live with the Whitfields in Sconticut Neck. By this point in his life, he greatly desired to return home to Japan and see his mother before she died. He decided to travel to California and participate in the California Gold Rush at the end of the 1840s. He reasoned that if he dug for gold, he could earn enough money to pay for supplies and passage to Japan. Manjiro mined for gold and other precious metals for seventy days, earning six hundred dollars. In August 1850, he decided to quit his job as a miner, book a passage to Hawaii and reconnect with his companions.⁵⁴

⁵²Ibid., 88

⁵³Ibid., 88-99.

⁵⁴Ibid., 101-107.

Manjiro arrived in Hawaii in December 1850. He found Denzo, Goemon, and Toraemon and began persuading them to return to Japan with him. At first Denzo and Goemon were reluctant to attempt going home because they failed to return home five years before. They believed that their second attempt would result in failure. Eventually he convinced Denzo and Goemon that this time would be a success. Toraemon decided that living in Hawaii was safer than returning to Japan and facing a possible execution. Manjiro planned to enter Japan through the Ryukyu Islands, as that was the easiest place to make landfall. With his savings from working in the gold mines, he bought a small used boat, that was easily navigable. He planned for all of the men to buy passage on board a ship that was going to China to trade its goods. He surmised that the captain could let Manjiro and his companions off the ship with their small boat outside of the *Ryukyu* Islands and Manjiro could navigate the boat to the Islands. From there they could go through the process of being interrogated and hopefully be granted access into the isolated country.⁵⁵ Manjiro bought the small boat and waited for a ship bound for China to dock in Hawaii.

Luckily, the *Sarah Boyd* docked in Hawaii on her way to China. Manjiro talked with the captain of the ship, Captain Whitmore, and secured passage for himself and his companions. At first Captain Whitmore was reluctant to follow through with Manjiro's plan, however Manjiro convinced him by offering his services as a crew member until they reached the Ryukyu Island's political boundaries. Captain Whitmore agreed to give the three men passage to the Ryukyu Islands. Manjiro had to arrange his affairs in the United States before the *Sarah Boyd* left Hawaii.

⁵⁵Ibid., 110-112.

Manjiro prepared to make his voyage home with his companions. His story of how he became shipwrecked a decade before and his attempt to return home was a popular topic in the Hawaiian Islands. *The Honolulu Times* published a story in December 1850 recounting Manjiro's rescue and education in the United States. It also predicted the usefulness of his education to both the Japanese government and the United States government, especially when the United States had attempted to establish trade relations with Japan.

Several shipwrecked Japanese being in Honolulu, we requested one of them who has acquired an excellent knowledge of our [language] to make us a visit, accompanied by one of his countrymen, lately brought hither. We shall first [introduce] our readers to the interpreter, John Mung . . . John Mung was taken by Capt. W. to the United States, where he learned the cooper's trade, and enjoyed a good opportunity for going to school. His education is highly respectable. He has been one whaling voyage, and then with the multitude went to California. There not succeeding to his [expectations], he came to the islands, indulging the long [cherished] hope that he might obtain passage to his native shores. It is his ambition to command a junk, and [navigate] her with compass and quadrant, and show his [Japanese] countrymen that the "outside barbarians" [understand] navigation; which science he has acquired sufficient for all practicable purposes. On Mr. Mung's arrival in Honolulu, he learned that there was a fresh arrival of shipwrecked countrymen, and for whom he is prepared to act as interpreter.⁵⁶

There is a prediction that Manjiro's Western education would help the United States open Japan because he would tell the Japanese about the West and the benefits of Western technology. He would help the *Bakufu* understand that Western nations are not as "barbarious" as they believe, as they have more sophisticated technology in the nineteenth century. He would also convince that Western nations and negotiating with them was a safe choice, especially with the United States since they were benevolent enough to allow him to live in the United States and receive an education. The fact that Manjiro acted as an interpreter for castaway Japanese on the Hawaiian Islands further proves that Manjiro would help the United States government open Japan for trade because he could speak Japanese and English. Traditionally, the Japanese communicated

⁵⁶An Hour with the Japanese. *Honolulu Times*, December 14, 1850.

with Westerners by translating the Japanese message into Chinese then into Dutch. In the case for English speaking people the message would be translated from Dutch into English. When the English speaker wanted to respond, the message would be translated into Dutch, Chinese, and finally Japanese. Thus, with Manjiro behind the scenes at the meeting, translating from Japanese to English and vice versa would be faster and more efficient than the traditional way, making the negotiations easier.

Manjiro, Denzo, and Goemon, reached the Ryukyu Islands by January 1851. The three men lowered the small boat into the sea and jumped down into it. They sailed towards the shore and made landfall. They found a safe place to dock and rested until they encountered inhabitants of the islands. The natives of the Ryukyu Islands offered them food and shelter, while they waited for an official to interrogate who they were and where they came from. They related their story of being shipwrecked in 1841 and how they were rescued and taken to Hawaii. Manjiro told them how he was taken from Hawaii to Massachusetts to be educated. They also told the officials of their attempt to return home after being away for a decade. The official advised they should be taken to the capital of the Ryukyu Islands, where they met Satsuma officials. Manjiro and his companions repeated their story again to the Satsuma officials.

These officials took Manjiro, Denzo, and Goemon to the province of Satsuma as they were now prisoners because they broke the laws under the isolation policy. They reached Kagoshima, Satsuma's capital city, on August 1, 1851. They were put into prison and were carefully watched everyday by *samurai*, yet they were treated with dignity and respect, as if they were honored guests. By September, Satsuma officials received orders to send the prisoners to Nagasaki for further questioning.

They arrived in Nagasaki by October 1851 and were put into prison again. While in prison, they were questioned everyday about their shipwreck and time abroad. They also had to step on an image of the Christian Holy Trinity to prove that they did not convert to Christianity while they were overseas. Christianity was still banned in Japan during the mid-nineteenth century. They were asked about items that Manjiro had brought with him such as a world map. He explained what these Western items were to the best of his ability. *Samurai* realized that Manjiro's knowledge was useful when dealing with Westerners. Everyday *samurai* asked Manjiro and the others the same questions to make sure that they would tell the same story. If there was any variation of the story, then *samurai* would be suspicious as to whether they were really telling the truth. They stuck to the true story. *Samurai* officials concluded that Manjiro and the others were not spying on Japanese affairs and that it was safe for them to be able to return to Tosa Province. They could keep the items they brought from the United States and they had to swear not to leave Japan without the *Bakufu*'s permission. Officials in Nagasaki sent word to Tosa officials to send *samurai* to escort Manjiro and the others home, which took a year to accomplish. They finally returned to Tosa in October 1852.⁵⁷ While Manjiro finally returned to his homeland, the thirteen-year-old Japanese castaway, Joseph Heco was in San Francisco, California. During this point in time, these two Japanese men were on opposite sides of the Pacific Ocean. Manjiro was back home with his family in Japan and Joseph Heco was in San Francisco, California waiting to be repatriated with the Japan Expedition in 1852. The following section will discuss Joseph Heco's early life and the circumstances he found himself in when he was shipwrecked, rescued, and taken to the United States.

⁵⁷John Manjiro, 112-122.

Joseph Heco was born Hamada Hekozo in Komiya Village in the province of Harima in 1837. Unlike Nakahama Manjiro, there are more details about Heco's early life. It is known that Heco's parents were well-to-do farmers. Scholars know that he was born into a financially well-off family because he had a family name. Only financially well-off families were allowed by custom to have family names. Heco's father passed way a few months after he was born. His mother raised her two sons on her own for a few years before remarrying a sailor in Hamada, a neighboring town. Heco lived a quiet life in Hamada with his parents and older brother. His parents sent him to the local Buddhist temple to be educated throughout his early childhood. His education is another signal that his family is well-off because they could afford the added expense of paying Buddhist monks to teach their children.⁵⁸ However, Heco was not interested in continuing his education because he wanted to follow in his stepfather's and brother's footsteps and live a life on the sea.

His stepfather and older brother were seafaring men. They traveled by sea transporting cargo between Edo and Osaka. Whenever they came home from their journey, they told Heco about their travels and the wonders they encountered. This made Heco want to live life on the sea just like his relatives. He repeatedly asked his mother if he could go out to sea with his father and brother, to which she told him no every time. She thought it was a better idea for her youngest son to remain in school and apprentice in a commercial house in Hyogo, that way he and his brother could go into business with each other. Heco could run the commercial house while his older brother shipped cargo through the sea.⁵⁹ Thus, Heco remained in school, but his life changed when his mother suddenly died in 1850. Since his stepfather was away on a shipping

⁵⁸Joseph Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese; what he has seen and the people he has met in the course of the last forty years volume 1*, ed. by James Murdoch (Tokyo: Yokohama Printing &Publishing Co., 1895), 1-2.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 2-5.

voyage, Heco was alone with his aunt when his mother became ill and died of her illness. He became the man of the house when she died at the tender age of thirteen. When his stepfather learn that his wife died, they mourned for one hundred days as was customary in the Buddhist tradition.

After the mourning period, Heco's stepfather asked him if he wanted to continue his education at the local temple or begin his life as a seafarer. Heco chose the latter and joined his stepfather on a shipping trip to Edo at the end of 1850. Heco described his journey to Edo in his narrative. He described in detail about the wonders that he saw traveling on the *Sumiyoshi-maru* from Hyogo. On the voyage, the *Sumiyoshi-maru* stopped in Kuki to wait out a bad storm before continuing their journey. While in Kuki, they met the *Eiriki-maru*, a junk belonging to a friend of Heco's stepfather. The crew of the *Eiriki-maru* took a liking of Heco and invited him to sail with them to Edo, which his father agreed to, on the condition that Heco be returned to him safely in Hyogo.⁶⁰ The *Eiriki-maru* safely arrived in Edo and stayed for a month and a half. During this time, Heco described the city as it was before Japan came into with foreign contact. Finally, it was time to return to Hyogo, so the crew could safely deliver Heco back to his family. However, the *Eiriki-maru* never made it to Hyogo because they were caught in the *Kuroshio* and shipwrecked due to the changing wind patterns.

The *Eiriki-maru* drifted for fifty days in the Pacific Ocean before they were rescued by a United States vessel, the *Auckland*. The *Auckland* came alongside the *Eiriki-maru* so Heco and the other crew members could climb on board the ship. They gladly did so and gave their rescuers thanks for saving them. On board, the American crew gave them Western clothing to wear and they offered to cut Heco's hair, introducing the Japanese men to Western culture for

⁶⁰Ibid., 26-27.

the first time. The captain told the Japanese that the *Auckland* was bound for California by writing the *kanji* for “gold mountain”. He notified them that they would make landfall in forty-two days. This is significant because Heco was introduced to Western customs and clothing for the first time. After being out at sea for one hundred days, the Japanese men set foot on land on a different continent in San Francisco, California.⁶¹

Thus, both Japanese men are on opposite sides of the Pacific Ocean in 1851. These men would play their respective roles in the opening of Japan and the ensuing Meiji Restoration. Manjiro’s significance to the opening of Japan is that he was the only Japanese castaway to receive a Western education and successfully return to Japan when the isolation policy was still in effect. Manjiro and the four other castaways were not the only Japanese castaways to reach America.⁶² To my knowledge, Manjiro was the only Western educated Japanese castaway to successfully return to his homeland.

Manjiro’s education was beneficial to the *Bakufu* because Manjiro could give more precise details of the domestic affairs of the United States. The *Bakufu* had a source of

⁶¹Ibid., 33-87.

⁶²Frederik L. Schodt. *Native American in the Land of the Shogun: Ranald MacDonald and the Opening of Japan: The True Story of a half-Chinook, Half-Scot Adventurer Who Entered Feudal Japan in 1848 and Helped pave the Way for its Modernization*. (Berkley: Stone Bridge Press, 2003), 53-57.

There were a few who did reach the Western coast of the United States. Some of these few were children and were enrolled in school in the Hudson Bay Company in the Oregon Territory. These Japanese learned English and received a basic Western education of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Therefore, there were Japanese who did receive an education in the United States, but most of them were never successful in their attempts to return to Japan. The three Japanese castaways who were taught by the Hudson Bay Company went with the *Morrison* Expedition in 1837. This attempt to open Japan and begin trade dealings failed even though American merchants and missionaries tried repatriating these castaways. These castaways ended up living the rest of their lives in Canton. There is no information, to my knowledge, if they tried to return to Japan after the isolation policy was lifted or after the Emperor was restored in the 1860s.

Japan. *The Richmond Palladium*. June 11, 1851.

These three Japanese castaways have been mentioned in newspaper article in the 1850s when the United States prepared another expedition to Japan in the 1850s. The article discusses how the *Morrison* was not allowed to land in Japan and was forced to return to Canton, where the three castaways stayed.

information from the Dutch in *Dejima* Island, Nagasaki, but it was not as comprehensive as the information from someone who lived day-to-day in the United States. This information was vital to the *Bakufu* when Perry arrived in Edo Bay in July 1853 demanding a treaty with Japan. Manjiro's information benefitted the *Bakufu* because they had a better understanding of the United States and their capacity to declare war on Japan if they received an unfavorable answer. Manjiro's education in navigation came in handy in the 1850s because Japan tried adopting Western technology to prepare themselves to "expel the barbarian"⁶³. Japanese knew how to navigate their own ships, but they did not know how to navigate steamships; he was commissioned by the *Bakufu* to teach other *samurai* how to operate steamships. This helped Japan to modernize their defenses and be able to withstand a superpower.

Manjiro was also commissioned to teach *samurai* English. There were a few *samurai* who learned English from an American prisoner of war, Ranald MacDonald.⁶⁴ These English-speaking *samurai* were present in the negotiations between Perry and the *Bakufu*. However, it was Manjiro's duty to better prepare *samurai* to communicate with Americans to continue learning about the West.

Manjiro's knowledge of the United States and English would be beneficial in the 1850s as the *Bakufu* prepared *samurai* to deal with Westerners in the 1850s and 1860s. Heco would stay in the United States and be educated in the United States and would be sponsored by a senator because the government thought Heco would help the United States open Japan and maintain relations with Japan in the late 1850s and 1860s. The second chapter of this thesis will examine in more detail the roles these two men played during the 1850s when Commodore Perry

⁶³W.G. Beasley. *The Japanese Experience: A Short History of Japan*, 274.

⁶⁴Schodt, 281-284.

arrived in Edo and opened Japan and the years of chaos the *Bakufu* went through as a result of letting foreigners within Japanese territory.

CHAPTER 2: JAPANESE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE PACIFIC

Samurai allowed Nakahama Manjiro into Japan after about a year of interrogation in Nagasaki. He and his friends were questioned various times about their time outside of Japan and why they left it in the first place. After repeating the same story multiple times without any new variations and proving that they were not Christians by stepping on a Christian idol, they were granted access to their homeland. *Samurai* thought that Manjiro's experience in the United States and his education would be useful to the *Bakufu*, especially since there is growing concern over the Western nations encroaching on Asian countries for colonization like China. The *Bakufu* believed that Western nations would try to colonize Japan and take away its autonomy like it had done with China. Manjiro's knowledge would give the Japanese an advantage of how to respond and negotiate with Western nations using Manjiro's advice.⁶⁵

Heco on the other hand, was in the United States waiting to be repatriated in 1851. The United States government thought it would be a good idea to take back Heco and the other castaways to Japan to open a discussion with the *Bakufu*. By taking them back, the United States wanted to show that they were a benevolent country. It was decided that Heco would travel with the Perry Expedition in 1853, however, this did not come to pass. Heco decided to receive a Western education in the United States instead. This gave him a better chance of making a living in Japan, when it was fully open to foreign commerce. Thus, this chapter analyzes the roles these two men had in the opening of Japan during the 1850s. Manjiro played his role in Japan, while Heco played his in the United States.

Heco's arrival in San Francisco, California caused quite the commotion in 1851. Newspapers were reporting the story of Heco's and his crewmates' shipwreck and how they

⁶⁵John Manjiro, 126-127.

were saved by Captain Jennings of the *Auckland*. The *Auckland* made landfall in March 1851, but popular opinion believed that their rescue was another sign that the United States government should use these castaways to open a dialogue with Japan. The *New York Daily Tribune* wrote a month after their arrival:

We learned from Capt. Jennings, of the bark *Auckland*, which arrived in this port yesterday, in 70 days from China, that about 500 miles off the coast of Japan he fell in with a Japanese Junk, which was completely water-logged. The crew, consisting of 17 persons, were taken off by Capt. Jennings, and are now on board his vessel. They had been 50 days on the wreck and were in great distress, having exhausted their provisions. No [communication], of course, has been had with them, beyond what could be accomplished by signs, but they appear [exceedingly] grateful for the assistance and kind treatment received from the Captain. On approaching land, they exhibited striking evidences of joy and devotion. This would seem to afford a good opportunity for attempting to open an intercourse with Japan. These [persons] should be well trained, and sent back in one of our ships-of-war, the commander of which should be authorized to make overtures to the Japanese Government.

The United States government tried to open Japan before in the 1830s and 1840s, however they were unsuccessful. The government felt that this was a good opportunity to go to Japan and repatriate these Japanese men. They felt that the *Bakufu* would allow their ships to land and let the Japanese men off the ship, unlike the *Morrison*. Since the *Morrison* was a merchant ship, Japan successfully forced it to retreat, but the ship-of-war that the government was sending would not face the same treatment as before, or so the government believed. Heco, would stay in San Francisco for a year while the United States government arranged for a squadron.

As the squadron was being prepared, public opinion on the opening of Japan became more prominent, as more newspapers were reporting how vital it was to establish trade relations with Japan because of the benefits for the market economy and Manifest Destiny. Newspapers reported on the urgency of opening Japan because of the lucrative items that would boost the United States economy. Other European nations wanted to participate in trading relations as well because it was believed that Japan had luxury goods.

Possessing in great abundance, gold, silver, copper, pearls, agates, jaspers, and other [substances], which have for ages been the object of the keenest desire to, and have stimulated to the utmost acquisitiveness of, the people of other nations . . . to acquire which, they have [negotiated] and fought, and conquered, and civilized and Christianized-in spite of all of this, the Japanese have succeeded in maintaining their [non-intercourse], and retiring within themselves, have kept themselves in a great measure unknown to the world. The eyes of the commercial world have long been turned towards that country as a very promising field for mercantile adventure, and it is hardly doubtful that, with the increased vigor and daring which is continually displayed by its votaries, there will be some way found by which to obtain access to its favored, highly cultivated and populous islands. The chief question which agitates the minds of these who reflect on it is, by whom is the commerce of Japan to be opened to the world? Will it be by the British or by the Americans?⁶⁶

The United States believed that having access to Japanese markets would open more opportunities to enter more markets in East Asia. The lucrative items Japan offered would be highly profitable not only to the United States, but for European countries like England as well.

American businessmen agreed that opening Japanese markets would benefit American consumers. One such businessman was Aaron Haight Palmer. He believed in establishing trade relations with Japan to the point where he sent petitions to the President and Congress to send expeditions to Japan.

The Japanese are a vigorous energetic people, and assimilate in their bodily and mental powers much nearer to European than Asiatics. They are eager of novelty; open to strangers, extremely curious and inquisitive concerning the manners and habits of other countries; take great interest in learning the course of events and progress of the [useful] arts and sciences among the Western nations . . . In this untoward state of things our Government should address, [without] delay, a national missive to the Siogoon (shogun) of Japan, specially commending to the protection of his Imperial Majesty's Government and provincial authorities such of our mariners . . . ⁶⁷

He believed that Japan truly wanted to be opened by Western nations and would then begin to modernize. It was the duty of the United States to open Japan, force the *Bakufu* to begin the

⁶⁶The Japanese. *The Southern Press*. May 16, 1851.

⁶⁷Aaron Haight Palmer. "An American Businessman's View of Japan 1849," In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 67-70.

modernization process, and begin trading with other nations. He suggested that if Japan did not peacefully agree to signing a treaty then the United States should use force to do so. This went against the ideology of Manifest Destiny because it was a justification for the United States to conquer more land and resources. Manifest Destiny was a guise for territorial expansion. It was believed that the best way to expand into Japan was through peaceful means.⁶⁸ It was for these reasons why the Perry Expedition needed to take Heco and the others to Japan, to peacefully begin negotiations for a treaty.

By 1852, the expedition was underway. Heco and the other Japanese men climbed aboard the ship *St. Mary* and sailed to Canton to await the *Sasquehanna* and Commodore Perry. While they were waiting in Canton, the American crew bullied Heco and the other Japanese. Heco decided that returning to the United States was a better idea than staying in Canton and being mistreated.

While lying there, our friend the interpreter Thomas got tired of waiting for Commodore Perry's squadron. He wished to go back to California before the gold fever was over, to make money. One day he explained his purpose to me and asked me to accompany him, offering to pay all my [expenses]. He said that if I went with him I could learn the English language, and that in a few years Japan would surely be opened and then I could go back without any fear. He pointed out that it was for my own interest as well as for the interest of the Government of Japan that I should return with a full knowledge of the foreigners' language.⁶⁹

He and Thomas Troy bought tickets for the first voyage to the United States they could find.

Thus, Heco was not repatriated with the other crew members.⁷⁰

As Thomas Troy foretold, Heco would be beneficial for both the United States and Japan because of his language skills. His fluency in Japanese and English qualified him for a job with the State Department as an interpreter at Kanagawa in the late 1850s and throughout the 1860s.

⁶⁸National Rights and Duties. *The New York Daily Tribune*. February 3, 1852.

⁶⁹Joseph Heco, 120-123.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 100-124.

He would help maintain peace between foreigners and Japanese officials simply through crucial dialogue.

It is important to point out the irony of Heco's situation. The entire idea of repatriating Heco under the guise of benevolence was false. The United States government wanted to present themselves as a caring nation that took care of citizens of other nations, such as with Heco. However, Heco and the others faced racist criticism even though the American crew knew that they should have been treated with respect. This was an example of the irony of Manifest Destiny. It proclaimed that anyone under the protection of the United States would be cared for, however, this promise rarely came to pass for minorities. Since Heco was mistreated, the promise of Manifest Destiny never came true. By 1853, Heco returned to San Francisco California and tried to find employment so he could support himself financially.

While Heco was waiting for Commodore Perry in Canton, Nakahama Manjiro returned to his hometown in Tosa, Japan. He reunited with his mother and other relatives, but he was summoned to the Lord of Tosa's castle just days after his arrival. The *Daimyo* of Tosa, Lord Yamauchi Yodo, thought it was interesting that Manjiro had returned from the United States with a Western education. Manjiro told his interrogators in Nagasaki about the United States. The *Bakufu* determined that it was a great idea to promote Manjiro to *samurai* status because of the valuable information he could provide the *Bakufu*. Besides explaining how the domestic conditions of the United States, Manjiro tried to convince the *Bakufu* of their true intentions when the United States government sent expeditions throughout the 1830s and 1840s.

The large vessels that arrived earlier at Uraga were not warships but ships that came to carry out surveys and so forth. They [came to survey] Japanese territory or they were whaling ships blown off course. They came only to request the provision of water and firewood. When the Japanese turned down their requests even though the

Americans said that they were willing to leave hostages, the Americans were taken aback that the Japanese made such an outrageous fuss . . . The Americans are not only kind and benevolent, but since their country still is in the midst of [development], they do not plot to spy on other countries . . . ⁷¹

This information was valuable to Japan because there were rumors circulating around the country that the United States was preparing to send another expedition in the near future. The *Bakufu* used Manjiro's advice to make decisions on how to proceed with Perry's negotiations in 1853.

It is interesting to note that Manjiro believed the United States to be "kind and benevolent," which was the opposite of Heco's experience. It could be that their differences in opinion could be tied to how they were treated during their time in the United States. Manjiro was treated like a family member by the Whitfields because they considered him as an adopted son. He was treated fairly by the community of Fairhaven, Massachusetts as well. There was one instance where Manjiro faced racism by church members as he was told to sit in the colored section due to his ethnicity. However, Captain Whitfield tried to shield him from the racist attitudes some people of the Fairhaven community held.⁷² With this protection, Manjiro's experience in the United States was a little more positive which explains why he thought the United States was "kind and benevolent." Manjiro's experience and positive attitude towards the United States probably helped the *Bakufu* make their decision to negotiate a treaty in 1854. Whereas Heco experienced racism in San Francisco, California. When he arrived in San Francisco in 1851, he was paraded and observed by audiences around town because he was Japanese.⁷³ Even though Heco experienced this racism he still returned to the United States.

⁷¹ Nakahama Manjiro. "The Interrogation of a Castaway ca. 1851," In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 81.

⁷² Hisakazu Kaneko, 36-37.

⁷³ Katherine Plummer, 225.

Manjiro's education and insight into the United States was a reason why Manjiro was promoted to *samurai* status. He was commissioned to teach *samurai* English and Western style navigation. The *Bakufu* thought it would be wise to teach young *samurai* these skills to be better prepared if an American expedition arrived on their shores. By knowing English and Western navigation, they would have an advantage over the United States. This idea was the precedent for the popular slogan *sonno joi* "honor the emperor, expel the barbarian."⁷⁴ Eventually, Perry's squadron did arrive in Edo and Manjiro was needed in Tokugawa's castle to be present at the negotiations.

Commodore Perry's squadron arrived in Edo Bay in July 1853 and Perry used force to get the *samurai's* attention by bombing Edo Bay. *Samurai* sailed in boats towards Perry's squadron to acknowledge his arrival as was customary for the Japanese to do. Perry told the *samurai* that he was on a mission to deliver a letter from the President of the United States to the Emperor of Japan.⁷⁵ The letter that the President wrote to the Emperor was published in newspapers before the squadron left the United States.

[As the elected] and solemnly inaugurated President of the United States of America, I have great satisfaction in transmitting to your Imperial Majesty the enclosed copy of my recent [inaugural] message to our two Houses of Congress, which I pray Your Imperial Majesty will receive as a mark of my respect, and I avail of this occasion to intimate my desire to open friendly relations and commercial intercourse with [Japan], upon such a basis as shall be considered mutually beneficial to the interests of both [nations]. We have no desire for conquest or [colonization]. In seeking a peaceful commercial [intercourse] with Japan, we ask for neither lands, forts, factories, nor exclusive privileges with Your Imperial Majesty's Dominions.⁷⁶

⁷⁴W.G. Beasley. *The Japanese Experience: A Short History of Japan*, 274.

⁷⁵Commodore Perry did not know that Japan was governed by the *Bakufu* and the Emperor and Imperial Court were merely puppet heads and have been since the Middle Ages.

⁷⁶Plan for Opening Japan. *The National Era*. September 18, 1851.

The President stated that the United States solely wanted to open Japan for friendly relations. The President promised that they would allow Japan to continue its sovereign rule and would not colonize Japan. All the United States wanted was peaceful commercial relations because it would be beneficial for both the United States and Japan. However, Japan was wary of the true intentions of the United States. They were not confident in the simple request of friendly relations because of the actions that other Western nations took in other parts of East Asia. They saw how China lost the Arrow War and had to give up territory and extraterritoriality to England. It was because of these doubts that Manjiro acted as an interpreter at the Perry/*Bakufu* negotiations.

Manjiro's role went unknown by the American public until about fifty years afterwards. By the 1900s, newspapers credited Manjiro as the reason why Commodore Perry was successful in negotiating a treaty with Japan.

Commodore Perry in his strange fire ships, has already appeared off the coast demanding the [opening] of negotiations for a treaty of [commercial] interchange. The Japanese needed an interpreter, and in John Mung they recognized their opportunity. Never did Perry suspect that every one of those carefully drawn [communications] he sent ashore was placed immediately before the Japanese lad who was a [naturalized] citizen of Fairhaven, Mass., that it was translated to the Imperial emissaries directly, rather than by the low and [uncertain] process of translation into Dutch, then Chinese, and finally Japanese. Yet John Mung was an important factor in shaping the way and puzzling Japanese mind into the tractable and friendly attitude which Perry found at the crucial moment.⁷⁷

However, it should be noted that Manjiro was not in same room as the Perry/*Bakufu* negotiations. The Lord of Mito had his suspicions that Manjiro was a spy for the United States. He never fully trusted Manjiro when he returned from the United States because he believed that the United States groomed him to be able to reenter the country despite the isolation policy. Instead of being in the same room as the negotiations, Manjiro sat behind a screen and listened to

⁷⁷Japan's Debt to New Bedford. *The Sun*. November 6, 1904.

the conversation.⁷⁸ After the meeting took place, the *Bakufu* asked for time to give Perry an answer. Perry told them he would be back in the spring of 1854 for a favorable answer. The arrival of a United States squadron created more of a crisis in Japan because the *Bakufu* was presented a deadline to give an answer that both avoids war with the United States and allows the Japanese to retain sovereignty. Manjiro's advice on how to proceed became even more vital to the survival of the Japanese *Bakufu* and nation.

At this point, the *Bakufu* was divided in two factions: *samurai* who opposed foreigners and those who were in favor of the foreigners. Tokugawa Nariaki did not want Japan to deal with foreigners. He suggested that Japan declare war with the United States to be able to retain its autonomy and "expel the barbarian."

It is my belief that the first and most urgent of our tasks is for the Bakufu to make its choice between peace and war . . . When we consider the [respective] advantages and disadvantages of war and peace, we find that if we put our trust in war the whole country's morale will be increased and even if we sustain an initial defeat we will in the end expel the foreigner; while if we put our trust in peace, even though things may seem tranquil for a time, the morale of the country will be greatly lowered and we will come in the end to complete collapse . . . Should it happen not only that the Bakufu fails to expel them but also that it concludes an agreement in accordance with their requests, then I fear it would be impossible to maintain our national prestige [*kokutai*]. That is the first reason why we must never choose the policy of peace . . . But if the Bakufu . . . shows itself resolute for expulsion, the immediate effect will be to increase ten-fold the morale of the country and to bring about the completion of military preparations without even the necessity for issuing orders. Hesitant as I am to say so, only by so doing will the Shogun be able to fulfill his 'barbarian-expelling' duty and unite the men of every province in carrying out their proper military functions.⁷⁹

Tokugawa Nariaki proposed that starting a war with the United States was a better idea than accepting peaceful negotiations because he feared that through peace, the United States and other Western nations would try to conquer and colonize Japan through trade and spreading religion.

⁷⁸Katherine Plummer, 201.

⁷⁹ Tokugawa Nariaki. "Memorial on the American Demand for a Treaty 1853," In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 103-104.

Japanese still believed Christianity was used to colonize other nations. Thus, it was better to never give into peaceful relations. However, Tokugawa advised the *Bakufu* to conclude a treaty with the United States to buy time to strengthen their military defenses and “expel the barbarian.”⁸⁰

On the other side of the argument were the *samurai* who believed in pro-foreign sentiments. They believed that Japan should not declare war with the United States and instead sign the treaty.

We must revive the licensed trading vessels [system] . . . ordering the rich merchants of such places as Osaka, Hyogo, and Sakai to take shares in the enterprise. We must construct new steamships, especially powerful warships, and these will load with goods not needed in Japan. For a time we will have to employ Dutchmen as masters and mariners, but we will put on board with them Japanese of ability and integrity who must study the use of large guns, the handling of ships, and the rules of navigation. Openly these will be called merchant vessels, but they will in fact have the secret purpose of training a navy. As we increase the [number] of ships and our mastery of technique, Japanese will be able to sail the oceans freely and gain direct knowledge of conditions abroad [without] relying on the secret reports of the Dutch . . . Forestalling the foreigners in this way, I believe, is the best method of ensuring that the Bakufu will at some future time find opportunity to reimpose its ban and forbid foreigners to come to Japan, as was done in the Kan'ei period [1624-44].

And since I understand that the Americans and Russians themselves have only recently become skilled in navigation, I do not see how the people of our country, who are clever and quick-witted, should prove inferior to Westerners if we begin training at once.⁸¹

Ii Naosuke thought it was a better idea to sign the treaty and trade with foreign nations.

However, the *samurai* were only trying to buy time to allow the navy to strengthen itself by building steamships and learning new navigation skills. This is where Manjiro comes into play as he had been commissioned to teach *samurai* navigation in the *Bakufu* sponsored schools. By stalling, the *Bakufu* could have time to strengthen their military defenses and defend its

⁸⁰W.G. Beasley, *The Japanese Experience: A Short History of Japan*, 274.

⁸¹Ii Naosuke. Memorial on the American Demand for a Treaty 1853. In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 101-102.

sovereignty. While both factions disagreed on how to proceed, they both agreed that signing a treaty would buy them time to strengthen their forces to repel the foreigners and resume with the isolation policy. They wanted to continue their isolation after they dealt with the foreigners.

Using this reasoning of giving the United States some concessions because Manjiro advised them that they were not like other nations, the *Bakufu* agreed to sign the Treaty of Kanagawa in 1854. At first the *Bakufu* was reluctant to sign when Perry returned in February, but they eventually chose to sign the treaty. By signing this treaty, Japan was opened for diplomatic and commercial relations. The treaty stipulated that Shimoda and Hakodate should be opened for American ships to restock their provisions. American sailors should also be cared for if they made landfall on Japanese shores. The final provision was that it allowed an American consular agent to reside in Shimoda. The treaty did not establish trade relations. The Treaty of Kanagawa caused a domino effect because European nations began to demand treaties with Japan.⁸²

The opening of Japan to Westerners left many *samurai* with resentment. They resented foreigners who stepped foot on their shores because they were wary that Westerners would try to colonize them from within, just as they believed Christianity had tried to in the seventeenth century. There was some agreement between the antiforeign and pro-foreign *samurai* that Japan should give some concessions, but the differences in opinion dealt with how it should be done, through war or peace. At this point in time, it did not matter as Japan lost more of its autonomy every time it signed a treaty with a Western nation, further angering the *samurai* who favored keeping Japan isolated. They tried to take matters into their own hands and tried to expel the barbarians through assassinations in the late 1850s and through the 1860s. Thus, Manjiro, through his advice on the temperament of the United States and his role as interpreter helped

⁸²W.G. Beasley. *The Japanese Experience: A Short History of Japan*, 192.

Perry open Japan and establish United States-Japanese Relations. These new diplomatic relations helped start the Meiji Restoration which started in the late 1850s and 1860s.

Meanwhile, Heco arrived in the United States in December 1852. Heco lived on the ship *Argus* captained by Captain Pease because Troy had a hard time finding Heco employment with high wages. One day Captain Pease introduced a shipwrecked Japanese and asked Heco if he would translate what the Japanese man said into broken English. Pease thought it was a good idea to go to San Francisco to report the Japanese man's situation to B.C. Sanders, the Collector of the Port. In San Francisco, Heco acted as an interpreter again retelling this man's story.⁸³ Sanders thought it was a good idea to take Heco in as a part of his family and educate him in Baltimore, Maryland because he would be useful to the United States as the Perry Expedition was underway. Within a few years, Heco would have a Western education and have a mastery of the English language to work for the government as an interpreter in Japan.

In Baltimore, Heco was enrolled in a Catholic school in January 1854. He was seventeen years old when he began his primary education. He learned reading, writing, and basic math skills during his two years enrolled in school. Sanders had to unenroll him in 1856 because he could no longer afford the tuition.⁸⁴ However, the two years in school were enough for Heco because he was fully fluent in English by then. It was then decided that Heco should interview for employment with the State Department by the mid- 1850s because he had a Japanese education as well. His mother paid the local Buddhist temple to teach her son for a few years before she died in 1850, making him even more qualified for the position.

⁸³Joseph Heco. 130-133.

⁸⁴Ibid., 144-145.

Not only was Heco educated in Baltimore, but he was also Christianized. The Sanders family took him to church every Sunday in the hope of instilling the Catholic faith in him. Eventually, Heco agreed to be baptized and be given a Christian name. Up until this point, Heco was called by his Japanese name Hamada Hekozo. At the time of his baptism, the priest presented a book of names from which Heco could choose from. “. . . At length, he . . . read out the name of “Joseph.” That [sounded] so pleasant to my ears that I at once said ‘that name will do for me.’”⁸⁵ Heco was baptized with Holy Water becoming Joseph Heco. This was the beginning of Heco’s transformation into a “civilized” person, as the Christian civilizing mission declared. After his baptism, Sanders announced that they had to return to San Francisco, California.

In San Francisco, Heco found employment with Macondry & Co., a commission house. During his time with this company, he met Senator William Gwinn. Senator Gwinn thought Heco was the perfect candidate for the vacant position of interpreter in Kanagawa, Japan for the State Department, because of his fluency in both languages. Senator Gwinn wrote Heco a letter to Sanders and Mr. Cary (Heco’s employer) to explain why he was accompanying Heco to Washington D.C.

San Francisco, August 3rd, 1857.

Dear Sir,

In answer to your note of this date, I will state that I propose to take Heco, the Japanese boy, with me to Washington to act in the capacity of a clerk, and also if it could be accomplished to have him employed in the State Department preparatory to his being sent to his native country with such knowledge of our Government and such endorsement as will be of service to him whom he arrives in Japan.

It will be sometime before I can get him a place in the State Department and some difficulties may result from his not being an American citizen, but I do not anticipate that they will be of such a character that they cannot be overcome.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

⁸⁵Ibid., 146-147.

Wm. M. Gwin.⁸⁶

Gwin recognized that Heco's fluency in both languages would help the United States fully open Japan to commercial trade relations. If Heco was hired by the State Department, then he could be of service to the foreign community that would be allowed to reside in Kanagawa. His knowledge of not only the languages, but of the culture and customs of both countries would resolve conflicts between the foreign community and the Japanese during a time when the political and social climate in Japan was in turmoil due to the antforeign sentiments some *samurai* felt.

Even though Senator Gwinn saw the potential of Heco's situation, Heco was not hired when he applied in 1857. The State Department declared that Heco was not qualified to work as an interpreter despite his education and language skills because he was not a naturalized United States citizen. Heco decided to continue pursuing this line of work and applied for citizenship. His application was granted in 1858, making him the first Japanese American citizen in United States history. Thus, Heco spent his formative years in the United States receiving a Western education because both his benefactor B.C. Sanders and Senator Gwinn believed that he would help fully open Japan to commercial relations between the United States and Japan. He would also help maintain these relations as United States citizens moved to Kanagawa to open their businesses because he could remediate problems that arose between foreigners and Japanese.

While Heco was receiving his education in the United States, Manjiro was teaching *samurai* English and Western style navigation during the mid-1850s. In the early 1850s before Commodore Perry's arrival, Manjiro was commissioned to teach at a school in Kochi, the capital

⁸⁶Ibid., 148-149.

of Tosa. Young *samurai* enrolled in this school to learn *Bushido* (the way of the warrior). However, it was Manjiro's duty to teach them English, navigation, and foreign affairs. Manjiro taught them about the United States Constitution and democracy and how everyone had a right to participate in government. After the Treaty of Kanagawa was signed the *Bakufu* thought it was crucial to promote him to a teaching position in the *Shogunal* school in Edo, which was the precedent of the present-day Tokyo Imperial University.⁸⁷

His influence on these young *samurai* was so great that some of them took the pledge to participate in the Meiji Restoration in the 1860s. They saw the errors of the *Bakufu*'s political, economic, and social policies and wanted to reform Japan so that they could help Japan rise and modernize to compete with other Western nations. Two of the notable *samurai* that participated in the Meiji Restoration he influenced was Fukuzawa Yukichi and Sakamoto Ryoma.

Fukuzawa Yukichi was Manjiro's pupil. Fukuzawa learned English and about democracy. He believed in democracy and started promoting the idea that Japan should become democratic. He translated the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution into Japanese, to help promote his belief that Japan should adopt a democratic government.⁸⁸ He championed the idea of modernizing Japan so they could move from the stage of being "semi-civilized" to fully "civilized" as the theory of civilization taught.⁸⁹ By improving their "civilization status" Japan would be better able to defend its sovereignty from foreign invaders.

The second *samurai* that Manjiro inspired to take part in the Meiji Restoration was Sakamoto Ryoma. Sakamoto read *Hyoson Kiryaku* or the transcript of Manjiro's interrogation in

⁸⁷John Manjiro., 125-130.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 130.

⁸⁹Fukuzawa Yukichi. "From Bunmei no gairyaku (An Outline of a Theory of Civilization) 1875," In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 187-190.

1851-1852. When the Treaty of Kanagawa was signed, Sakamoto held antiforeign sentiments and wanted to expel the “barbarians” from Japan to remain in isolation. However, the *Hyoson Kiryaku* inspired Sakamoto to switch his beliefs and he favored opening Japan for foreign relations. He championed that Japan adopt a democratic government with a national assembly after reading Manjiro’s description of how American democracy functioned in the United States. With this goal in mind, he participated in the Meiji Restoration and played roles that helped overthrow the *Bakufu* and restore the Emperor to his rightful place of reign. However, Sakamoto did not live long enough to see the day the *Bakufu* step down from power in 1868 because he was assassinated the year before.⁹⁰

Fukuzawa Yukichi and Sakamoto Ryoma became active in promoting their ideologies and started working towards their goals in the mid-1850s when tensions between foreigners and *samurai* began to increase. The ordinary Japanese civilians were caught in between the back and forth fighting between antiforeign *samurai* and the United States. These sentiments from all three parties were depicted in a Japanese political cartoon published in 1855. The political cartoon showed how Japanese insisted that they did not need to open their country and have foreign relations with other nations, while the United States continued to open Japan for the markets it offered. The United States needed more markets because there was an increase in population and the supply of food to feed this growing population was lacking. The United States insisted that all it wanted was access to these markets and that it was a good and benevolent nation, which is why Japan should not fear trading with them. However, Japan persisted in believing that America was not the benevolent nation it claimed to be because Americans used piracy to gain extra food. And in between these banters were the ordinary Japanese civilians who were caught

⁹⁰ John Manjiro, 130.

in the middle, trying to live their daily lives as best as they can despite the growing tensions and the ensuing violence *samurai* would cause by assassinating foreigners.⁹¹ These tensions would increase even more by the end of the 1850s when another commercial treaty was negotiated with the United States.

Townshend Harris accomplished his mission to open Japan fully by negotiating a second commercial treaty with the *Bakufu* in 1858. Harris arrived in Japan in 1857 and repeatedly requested an audience with the *Shogun*, to which the *Bakufu* denied several times. They denied Harris's request because they were trying to figure out how they should respond without causing a war or losing more of its autonomy. Just as with Perry's arrival, there was division among the *Bakufu* about signing a new treaty with Harris.

The antforeign sentiments still existed within the *Bakufu*. *Samurai* like Yoshida Shoin did not want to sign any new treaties with the United States because he believed that by doing so the little amount of autonomy they had left would be given up, leaving Japan as the United States' colony.

At the moment, the downfall of our country has reached a critical stage . . . It is said that the plan of the Americans is to open up trading houses manned by their officials in Kyoto and Osaka as well as Kanagawa, Niigata, Nagasaki, and Hirado with the consul general [Townsend Harris] in charge of them all; and following their commercial laws, trade would be carried on freely between domestic merchants and foreign merchants with no government interference . . . Let me make various conjectures [about what will happen]. There are many [beggars] in our country, so [the Americans] will certainly set up poorhouses for them; there are also many abandoned children, so they will establish children's homes; and again, there are in our country many who are old and decrepit, crippled or unable to get medical care; they will probably build apothecaries and hospitals. If [the Americans] turn their hands in earnest to these projects, it will be easy enough to win the hearts of the ignorant people by such means . . . Next, they will recruit a gang of people who can read and write their [alphabet], and they will employ those who are erudite and expert in technology. If that happens, rascals who think only of profit but know nothing of [righteousness] and who know nothing of the Way, even though the

⁹¹Anonymus, "A Comic Dialogue ca. 1865," In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 110-112.

command all kinds of knowledge, will follow along blindly, swarming like ants and flies. By then the hearts of deeply ambitious bakufu officials will already be in America's clutches . . . If worse comes to worst, however, overthrowing the Daimyo will not be all that difficult [for the Americans].⁹²

Yoshida Shoin believed that the Americans' goal was to strip Japan of its autonomy through trading. Americans would come into Japan and see the political, economic, and social conditions that Japanese civilians faced because of the reforms and laws the Tokugawa *Bakufu* put in place two centuries before. Once Americans saw the conditions, they would try to help civilians through their kindness and benevolence. Through this benevolence, civilians would in a way be brainwashed and fall into the American's trap, which is to gain their hearts and have these civilians turn their back on the traditional laws of Japanese society that have been in place since the beginning of the state with Emperor Jinmu, or so the Japanese thought. He goes on to say that if civilians' hearts are swayed there was no telling what would happen if *Daimyo*'s heart were as well. They would not listen nor follow the *Shogun* and instead plan with the Americans to overthrow the *Bakufu* altogether. Thus, it was best if Japan refused to sign a treaty with Harris to avoid what Yoshida Shoin refers to as a calamity- the fall of the Japanese state.

On the other hand, there were *samurai* who did approve of signing a new treaty with Townsend Harris. One of the *samurai* who held these sentiments was Hotta Masayoshi, the *Bakufu*'s chief minister in 1855. He wrote:

According to the first, the peace our country has enjoyed for almost three hundred years has accustomed both high and low to indolence; what is more, our national strength has declined, our military preparations are inadequate, and we are in no position to eject the [foreigners] by means of war. Even if we were to open hostilities resolutely and without fear of the consequences, we have neither the warships nor the cannon adequate to match the foreigners if large numbers of their warships infest our coasts and begin to burn and plunder. The feudal lords and all their followers would be exhausted in ceaseless activity; resentment would grow

⁹²Yoshida Shoin. "From Kyofu no gen (Testimony of a Madman) Protest against Harris Treaty 1858," In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 125-128.

among the whole people; and once our strength was exhausted we would have to sue for peace. We would then have no choice but to pay indemnity, to cede coastal territories, and to consent to all the hundred other demands that they would make . . . For the time being our duty lies in acting in accordance with their wishes in trade and other matters, postponing conflict year by year and meanwhile completing our military preparations so that the foreigners cannot use us with contempt.⁹³

Hotta Masayoshi reasoned that if Japan signed the new treaty with Townsend Harris, then it would avoid going to war with the United States; it would buy more time to strengthen the military defenses in order to “expel the barbarian.”⁹⁴ If the *Bakufu* followed the plan that the antiforeign *samurai* proposed, an unending war would ensue that would only hurt Japanese civilians and *samurai* in the long run. Therefore, it was better to sign Harris’s treaty than to start a war that Japan knew it could not win.

Hotta Masayoshi signed the Harris Treaty in 1858, which cost him his position in the *Bakufu*. This treaty stipulated that more ports like Kanagawa, Nagasaki, Niigata, and Hyogo would open for trading. Foreigners could live in Edo and Osaka, custom duties had fixed rates, Americans had extraterritorial privileges.⁹⁵ The signing of the Harris Treaty increased antiforeign *samurai* resentment towards foreigners. *Ronin*, began to wander the streets and assassinate foreigners or any Japanese who sympathized with foreigners. Many *samurai* broke their vow to follow their *Daimyo* to become masterless swordsmen, or *ronin*, to take it upon themselves to vanquish the foreign presence in Japan.⁹⁶ Therefore, there was a need for someone who could mediate peace in the foreign settlement between foreigners and Japanese. Joseph Heco would be the person who proved he was up to the challenge.

⁹³Hotta Masayoshi. “Memorial on the Harris Proposal 1857,” In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 1997), 122-125.

⁹⁴W.G. Beasley. *The Japanese Experience: A Short History of Japan*, 274.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 194.

⁹⁶*Ronin* were masterless *samurai* who decided to participate in political assassinations to “honor the emperor” and “expel the barbarian” (*Sonno joi*) to help Japan keep its autonomy.

After spending a decade in the United States, Heco decided to return to Japan in 1859. He traveled to Washington D.C. to personally apply for the position of interpreter. There he met Lieutenant John M. Brooke who was leading a survey expedition to Japan. Lt. Brooke invited Heco on his expedition. On the voyage, Heco grew impatient because the *Fennimore Cooper* made too many stops in the Pacific Ocean to collect data. Heco asked Lt. Brooke to leave the expedition and find a vessel that was sailing directly to Japan. He was let off the *Fennimore Cooper* in China, where he met Townshend Harris. Harris was fascinated with Heco's story of being shipwrecked and how he spent a decade in the United States. Harris was so impressed with Heco that he offered him employment as an interpreter for General E.M. Dorr, the United States Consul at Kanagawa. Heco accepted the position in May 1859.⁹⁷

Heco, Harris, and Dorr arrived in Kanagawa by the end of June, in time for the Harris Commercial Treaty to take effect on July 4th. This treaty allowed English, Dutch, and Americans to settle in Kanagawa. The settlement grew as trade increased. Soon land disputes emerged. Foreigners operated businesses in Yokohama (an adjacent port to Kanagawa), against the wishes of the Foreign Consuls, who believed businesses should stay in Kanagawa. Merchants defied their consuls' wishes because the water level at Yokohama's port made shipping easier.⁹⁸ This land dispute was reported in the *New York Herald*, which explained that Japanese authorities were giving merchants land, buildings, and anything else they needed to support a trading firm, to the dismay of the Foreign Consulates.⁹⁹ Heco became an active participant in these disputes because he translated between the Americans and Japanese officials. Heco, with the help of Dr.

⁹⁷Joseph Heco. 157-191

⁹⁸Ibid., 214-215.

⁹⁹Interesting from Japan, *The New York Herald*, August 24, 1860.

Francis Hall, proposed an agreement that Americans could stay in Yokohama and use the gifts that Japanese officials gave them, if *samurai* would protect them from political assassination by *ronin*. The Japanese agreed to protect foreigners to maintain United States-Japanese relations.¹⁰⁰ Regardless of their reassurances, the Japanese could not fully control *ronin* who decided to take matters into their own hands by openly killing foreigners.

Thus, political assassinations increased in Kanagawa and Yokohama due to the rise in the foreign population. A Russian sailor was killed by a *ronin* on August 21, 1859. Japanese authorities ordered the *ronin*'s arrest but were unsuccessful. Since the Russian was killed on Japanese soil, *samurai* had to meet with Russian authorities to discuss how to proceed with the arrest and trial. Heco mediated peace between these two nations by acting as a translator. However, American newspapers distorted the situation by stating that Russia threatened to attack Edo since there was no justice for the fallen authority. Newspapers reported that Heco stepped into the discussions and was able to resolve the conflict and restore peace.¹⁰¹ Heco proved that he was qualified to maintain peaceful relations between not only the United States and Japan, but between other nations and Japanese officials. His influence would help strengthen the bonds between the United States and Japan into the turbulent 1860s when the Meiji Restoration took place. This peace allowed relations with Japan to stabilize and increase over time, despite the antiforeign sentiment that many *samurai* felt when Japan fully opened its borders to not only trade with other foreign nations, but to allowing foreigners to reside on their shores.

After the *Bakufu* reluctantly decided to sign the Harris Treaty, *ronin* decided to take matters into their own hands. These political assassinations steadily grew in number throughout the 1850s and reached a peak after the Harris Commercial Treaty was signed. The *Bakufu* did not

¹⁰⁰ Joseph Heco, 215-217.

¹⁰¹Interesting from Japan, *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, January 17, 1860.

have the power to control the actions of these *ronin*, despite trying to bring them to justice, as with the case of the assassination of a Russian authority that Heco served as intermediary between the Japanese and Russian officials.

This dissident of the *ronin* caused major problems for the *Bakufu* who was already in distress with trying to keep the country united and Japan's autonomy in the face of this crisis. Some were championing the idea that the Tokugawa *Bakufu* should be overthrown because it was clear that it could not handle ruling the country under the Westerners' pressures. They instead wanted the Emperor to regain his rightful duty to reign over Japan because of his divine ancestry. They believed that his divinity would unify the *samurai*, "expel the barbarians,"¹⁰² and modernize Japan to be able to stand with other nations on equal ground or even higher because of their divine heritage.

During the 1850s, both Manjiro and Heco played roles in the opening of Japan from opposite sides of the Pacific Ocean. Manjiro was elevated to *samurai* status and served the *Bakufu* in more ways than one. His Western education, proficiency in English and Western navigation skills were an advantage for the *Bakufu* when Commodore Perry arrived in Edo Bay in 1853. He was commissioned to teach at the *Shogunal* school in Kochi, Tosa province in 1852. Here he taught young *samurai* English, navigation, and foreign affairs such as democracy.

When Perry arrived, he was called to Edo to serve as an interpreter behind the scenes during the discussion between Perry and the *Bakufu*. His knowledge on the United States was valuable because it served as a basis for the decision-making process. Should the *Bakufu* concede to Perry's demands or not? Using his advice, they decided to sign the Treaty of Kanagawa

¹⁰²W.G. Beasley. *The Japanese Experience: A Short History of Japan*, 274.

because they knew they would not win a war with the level of military strength the United States possessed. They did this to buy time and figure out how to rid themselves of the foreign problem. Manjiro's education and Western style navigation skills served to strengthen the *samurai*, because Japan acquired Western weapons and ships, which Manjiro taught them to use. He also taught them English so they could converse with Westerners in diplomatic settings.

His teachings influenced young *samurai* in consequential ways. Not only did these *samurai* learn about the West in order to serve the *Bakufu*, but they started thinking of applying Western concepts, like democracy to Japanese society. Fukuzawa Yukichi and Sakamoto Ryoma were two of the *samurai* that Manjiro influenced. They championed the idea that the Japanese government be a democratic one. Sakamoto Ryoma went so far as to write his Eight Point Program which models the Japanese government based on the United States form of government with three branches. Fukuzawa Yukichi and Sakamoto Ryoma became active participants in the plans to overthrow the *Bakufu* and restore the emperor in the 1860s in the hopes that the Japanese government would become modernized and Westernized through democracy.

Heco remained in the United States after a failed attempt to be repatriated to his home country in 1852. He lived in San Francisco, California where his fluency in Japanese put him on the map for the United States government. B.C. Sanders became his benefactor and paid for his education because he thought Heco would qualify to serve as an interpreter for the United States consul in Japan when it fully opened. Therefore, Heco went to primary school in his late teenage years in Baltimore, Maryland. While living with the Sanders family, he was converted to the Christian faith as Joseph Heco.

After finishing primary school, Heco returned to California where he met Senator Gwinn in 1855. Senator Gwinn heard Heco's story of being shipwrecked, rescued, and educated in the

United States. Gwinn felt that Heco would be the perfect candidate for the position of interpreter in Japan. He took Heco with him to Washington D.C. to apply for the position but was denied employment because he was not a naturalized United States citizen. Thus, he decided to apply to become naturalized, making him the first Japanese American citizen in United States history.

Heco returned to Japan where he met Townsend Harris, who was so impressed with his Western education and language proficiency that he hired Heco to be Consul E.M. Dorr's interpreter in Kanagawa, Japan. Heco served as an interpreter between Japanese officials and foreigners. His role as mediator resulted in peace between Japanese officials and multiple foreign nations including the United States, especially during the assassinations *ronin* committed. Thus, his position helped the United States maintain its relations with Japan through peaceful times and turbulent times. During the 1860s, both men would play crucial roles in the Meiji Restoration. By helping overthrow the *Bakufu* and restoring the Emperor as ruler, they helped maintain United States-Japanese relations.

CHAPTER 3: REVOLUTION BEGINS! 1860-1870s

By the 1860s, both Manjiro and Heco were in Japan representing their respective countries. During the 1860s, Manjiro was promoted from being a professor at these *shogunal* schools, to participating in *Bakufu*- sponsored embassies to conclude treaties with the United States and other European nations. Heco, on the other hand, was in Kanagawa, Japan acting as an interpreter for the United States Department, but he was performing more duties than just translating between the United States community and Japanese officials; he was mediating peace between the two entities.

The times grew turbulent during the 1850s after the *Bakufu* had no choice but to sign the Treaty of Kanagawa in 1854 and give up some concessions to stall the foreigners while they searched for a way to diplomatically deal with them. Antiforeign sentiments grew throughout the 1850s, leaving the foreign community vulnerable after Americans and people from other nationalities could settle in Kanagawa and Yokohama as the Harris Treaty stipulated in 1858. *Ronin* targeted these foreigners and any Japanese that sympathized with them for political assassination. Foreigners from diverse nationalities were assassinated, and one of the ways that Heco became involved in these events was by translating and mediating peace between the foreign and Japanese parties. He stopped further damages that foreign countries could have waged on the Japanese *Bakufu*, such as war, because foreign officials were killed on Japanese soil. Unfortunately, the Japanese political climate did not improve in the 1860s. In fact, things worsened at the start of the decade leading to an all-out civil war by the middle of the 1860s, ending in a change of government by the end of the 1860s. The majority of this chapter will focus on Heco because there is more information as his contributions during the 1860s.

It was clear that the *Bakufu* was incapable of running the country in times of crisis; due to external pressures and internal pressures both relating to the foreign presence. Due to the *Bakufu*'s inability to deal with foreigners, two provinces, Satsuma and Choshu, came into play, each trying to find a solution to drive the foreigners away. A union of court and *Bakufu* was proposed.

The Imperial Court and *Bakufu* made an alliance to try to rid the foreign presence in Japan. This alliance implemented reforms that were designed to strengthen the *samurai* forces and "promote the study of Western technology."¹⁰³ *Ronin* from Choshu and other provinces began to develop a Pro-Imperialist program. This program was influenced by "Mitoism" a term coined by Romulus Hillsborough. Mitoism was a school of thought that combined mythology, religion, government, and politics. Mitoism was the main vehicle for the Pro-Imperialist program to get underway during the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁴ Using the slogan of *sonno joi* (revere the emperor, expel the barbarian), these *samurai* were responsible for the assassinations of foreigners and Japanese who sympathized with them, creating chaos in Kyoto and eventually all over Japan, including Kanagawa and Yokohama. Choshu, tried to carry out its plan of expelling the barbarians from Japan on its own in 1863 with the Battle of Shimonoseki, the first battle in the civil war that led to the restoration of the Emperor by the end of the decade.

During all of this chaos, the *Bakufu* could not really do anything to stop the renegade *samurai* from causing more trouble, nor the influx of foreign immigrants arriving on their shores. Like in the years before all it could do was sign more treaties and give away more concessions to buy time and strengthen its military power. However, Choshu *samurai* thought the *Bakufu* went

¹⁰³Ebrey, et. al, 342.

¹⁰⁴Romulus Hillsborough. *Samurai Assassins: "Dark Murder" and the Meiji Restoration, 1853-1868*. (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2017), 8-9.

too far in 1860 when it allowed an embassy to travel to the United States to conclude the Harris Treaty in Washington D.C. This only spurred a further reaction from the Pro-Imperialist *samurai* creating more chaos. Manjiro and Heco played their individual roles in the Japanese Embassy of 1860, which helped create more turbulent times in Japan because *ronin* did not like the fact that emissaries broke the laws of the isolation policy.

In 1860 the *Bakufu* gave its consent to allow a Japanese Embassy to travel to the United States and conclude the Harris Commercial Treaty. However, it took a lot of effort from Townsend Harris to persuade the *Bakufu* to agree to do this. American newspapers reported on the *Bakufu*'s reluctance.

The Japanese lions that were expected at the Federal Capital, will not make their interesting debut, as our able diplomatic manager in East Asia, MR. TOWNSEND HARRIS, at one time confidently expected . . . Liberalism in Japan has been subjected to a retrograde movement. The "Frog in the Well" party are again in the ascendant, and, moreover, it has been discovered that to send Commissioners to a foreign country, would violate a fundamental law of the Empire . . . The Mikado, or spiritual Emperor, would not give the Embassy his sanction.¹⁰⁵

The *Bakufu* did not want to give its permission to allow a Japanese Embassy to travel to the United States. There were two reasons that suggest why the *Bakufu* was reluctant to do so. The first is an obvious one: it did not want to finalize the Harris Commercial Treaty because that would mean that more concessions would be given away. Japan tried to avoid giving more concessions to Western nations by stalling as long as possible while trying to figure out what to do. However, everyone in the *Bakufu* was not in agreement. Some held antiforeign sentiments that promoted the idea that Japan should remain closed off from the world forever. These

¹⁰⁵Fashionable Society, *The Daily Exchange*, July 20, 1859.

antiforeign sentiments led to an increase in political assassinations that targeted not only the foreign community but Japanese who sympathized with foreigners.

The second reason why the *Bakufu* was reluctant to give its permission for an embassy was that it was against the isolation policy to let Japanese travel outside of its political boundaries. This policy tried forbidding Japanese from leaving and reentering the country because Tokugawa knew that if people left, they would be influenced by new ideas that could threaten Japanese autonomy. That is why Japanese who returned to their homeland were arrested and interrogated. *Samurai* were ordered to check to see if returning Japanese had adopted any new ideas, like Christianity, that could be used to influence the masses and overthrow the government. For these reasons, the *Bakufu* was reluctant to give its permission to allow an embassy to leave its political territory.

Eventually, Townsend Harris convinced the *Bakufu* to give its consent to allow an embassy to travel to the United States, as was reported in American newspapers.

Mr. Harris, the American Consul at [Simonda], writes as follows, Oct. 4th:
The Japanese have applied to me for one of our steamers to forward their Embassy to the United States, by way of Panama, and I expect to select the vessel by which they will go and the date of their departure as soon as Commodore Tatnall arrives here. Our [country] is to be the first that is to receive an [embassy] from this country. I have written to the Department, giving full details and [making] some suggestions. The Russians, English, French, and Dutch have all made treaties with the Japanese since the date of ours, and it gives me great satisfaction to state that they are identical in their substance with the treaty of Edo, signed by me.¹⁰⁶

Gaining the *Bakufu*'s consent to send an embassy to the United States, this proved that Townsend Harris had gained Japan's trust. It may not have been complete trust, but it was enough to let its guard down and let Japanese officials go to the United States. This also proves that the *Bakufu* no longer has the authority to rule Japan because it could not reject the idea or

¹⁰⁶*Saint Paul Weekly Minnesotian*, Townsend Harris' Negotiations in Japan- A Letter from Him, July 9, 1859.

the persuasion for the embassy. It was completely overrun by Harris's argument that this would help Japan. Thus, the *Bakufu* was slowly losing control over the *Daimyo*, which helped spur the Meiji Restoration, because Pro-Imperialists thought the Emperor would do a better job of governing Japan and expelling the foreign presence from their shores.

Heco and Manjiro participated in the 1860 embassy in their own way. Heco arranged for a United States captain to steer the Japanese ship the *Kanrin-maru*. He was able to contract Lieutenant Brooke of the *Fennimore Cooper* to do the job. On February 13, 1860, the *Kanrin-maru* was scheduled to leave port for the United States. Heco went on board to translate between American and Japanese sailors. It was here that he met Nakahama Manjiro, who was commissioned to sail with the Embassy, as he wrote in his memoir.¹⁰⁷ Even though Manjiro and Heco studied in the United States and worked with *samurai* officials, they did not know each other before 1860. It should be noted that Heco was not given credit for his efforts to find a captain that would guide the *Kanrin-maru*. The credit largely went to Harris because he was the one who persuaded the *Bakufu* to give its consent to let Japanese officials leave Japanese territory to a Western nation.

Manjiro's official role in the embassy was to be a translator between the *samurai* and the American crew, at least according to Heco's narrative. American newspapers reported heavily on the Japanese Embassy in 1860, but they did not discuss Manjiro's role extensively. All that is mentioned about the translators is that there were three of them, but they are not named. Their nationality is uncertain as well since the newspapers do not name who these translators were.¹⁰⁸ They mainly focused on how this was the first time in centuries that the *Bakufu* allowed Japanese to leave the political boundaries without any consequences. Once such newspaper article even

¹⁰⁷Joseph Heco, 236-240.

¹⁰⁸ Notes of the Week, *The Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, March 8, 1860.

went so far as to explain the significance of the embassy in a paternalistic point of view. The *Polynesian* reported:

. . . [The] the Japanese Empire has rescinded its policy of seclusion and entered once more into the family of [nations], is one of the peaceful achievements that will redound more lasting glory, more solid profit to the United States, more widespread benefits to the world in general . . .¹⁰⁹

The United States took full credit for opening Japan and establishing trade, even though Manjiro helped Commodore Perry negotiate the Treaty of Kanagawa from behind the scenes. Omitting Manjiro's role in the embassy only further obscured Manjiro from United States history, which is why Manjiro has not been widely mentioned for his contributions to the opening of Japan and establishing and maintaining diplomatic relations between the two countries. Thus, both men have not been in the historical limelight as much as other counterparts who did participate in the opening of Japan. This is largely a result of American newspapers neglecting their contributions. The embassy was scheduled to set sail on February 13, 1860 and the trip would last most of the year. However, the permission to send an embassy to the United States caused more tension between Pro-Imperialist *samurai* and Pro-Bakufu *samurai*, leading to the assassination of a well-known Japanese official while Heco left his employment with the U.S. State Department and started his business.

At the end of February, Heco decided to quit his job as an interpreter. He made this decision because the position was temporary. The position was designed to last a few years at a time. Heco's contract was on the verge of expiring and he wanted to find permanent employment. He decided to open a business in Yokohama with a friend from California. However, he continued to offer his services to the United States consulate by acting as a

¹⁰⁹The Japanese Embassy, *The Polynesian*, March 10, 1860

translator between the foreign community and Japanese officials.¹¹⁰ While Heco was running his business, news of Ii Naosuke's, the Prince Regent of Japan, assassination spread throughout the country.

Political assassinations grew rampant after the allowance of the Japanese Embassy to travel to the United States. Political assassinations not only took place to protest ordinary foreigners or lowly *samurai* who sympathized with opening Japan. These political assassinations targeted high ranking officials like the Prince Regent Ii Naosuke. He was responsible for signing more concessions away to the United States through the Harris Commercial Treaty. Ii did not have the necessary permission to sign the treaty from both the Imperial Court and the *Bakufu*. The conclusion of the Harris Treaty in 1858 angered *samurai* who held antiforeign views and *samurai* who supported the emperor. This anger heightened further after the *Bakufu* gave its permission to allow Japanese officials to break the laws of the isolation policy. The *Bakufu* no longer held control over Japan.

In frustration with how things were going, *samurai* decided to take matters in their own hands and target Ii Naosuke. If it was not for him and his decision to sign the Harris Treaty, then the Japanese Embassy would have never come to pass. As a result, he was assassinated by beheading on his way to Tokugawa's castle in Edo.¹¹¹ News of Ii's assassination reached the foreign community in Yokohama. Heco discussed the violent event as the public heard it in his memoir. *Ronin* were becoming more active with their slogan of *sonno joi* (expel the barbarian, revere the emperor). These *ronin* were anti-*Bakufu* because the *Bakufu* did not have the authority to continue ruling the nation as it kept giving away its autonomy through concessions. These

¹¹⁰Joseph Heco, 240.

¹¹¹W.G. Beasley. The Japanese Experience: A Short History of Japan., 197-198.

ronin decided to kill any supporter of foreign contact as well as foreigners themselves.¹¹² The violence increased into the 1860s because of these two different points of view.

With the assassination of the Ii Naosuke, the flood gates opened leading to more assassinations all around, including officials from Western nations. Mr. Heuskens, who was an interpreter for the United States Consulate was one of the *ronin*'s victims. He was struck down during the night as he rode alone from the Prussian Consulate to the United States Consulate.¹¹³ Heuskens's sudden death sparked a reaction from the foreign community. They began to be more cautious as anyone could become the next target.

The next target was Heco himself.¹¹⁴ He was targeted because he was running a business in Yokohama and he was a United States citizen. Because of this, *samurai* felt that Heco betrayed their country. He was actively helping the foreign community by translating and remediating peace between Japanese and foreigners. He was also running a business with a foreigner which also angered the *samurai*. He was part of the plan that allowed foreigners into the country and resulted in Japanese autonomy being taken away. The final strike against Heco that made him a target was that he was a United States citizen. *Samurai* felt betrayed that Heco not only turned his back on Japan by helping the foreign community but by turning his back on his nationalistic pride of being a Japanese subject by becoming a United States citizen.¹¹⁵ Feeling that his life was in danger, Heco decided to return to the United States after dissolving his business to escape persecution.

¹¹²Joseph Heco, 267-278.

¹¹³Ibid., 273-277.

¹¹⁴Ibid., 278.

¹¹⁵ Japan was proud that their nation was ruled by the descendants of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu and thought that this made them superior to Westerners who were viewed as barbarians. As cited in Aizawa Seishisai's "Shinron (New Theses) 1825". In *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 52-53.

Heco arrived in San Francisco, California in October 1861. He learned that there was an opening for the Naval storekeeper position in Kanagawa. Mr. T.G. Cary, Heco's former employer, urged him to apply for the position. Heco received a recommendation letter signed by all of the bankers and merchants of San Francisco that personally knew him. They recommended him for the position because of his fluency in both languages and his naturalization.¹¹⁶ With this letter he traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with the Secretary of State William Seward in the winter of 1860. Seward was impressed with Heco's abilities and decided to hire him on the spot. He left for Japan to begin his new job as a naval storekeeper in Kanagawa in October 1861.

While working with the Navy, Heco created a business circular that translated Japanese news into English. He hoped that by translating Japanese news he would better protect the foreign community. They would know what was going on domestically and how to protect themselves especially from *ronin*.¹¹⁷ Heco was vital to the continuation of healthy relations between the United States and Japan because he understood the governmental dynamics of both countries and the best way to achieve remediation if misunderstandings should occur. By publishing a circular, he let the foreign community know what their role was in Japanese domestic affairs and how they should protect themselves from becoming *ronin*'s targets. Heco understood the danger of being a target for political assassination because he was one in 1861 and he became one again in 1863 after the Battle of Shimonoseki.

Ronin from Choshu made plans in the early 1860s to expel the foreigners on their own without the permission of the *Bakufu*. The *Bakufu* tried to stop Chohsu's extreme actions, but it was too weak to be effective. Choshu set June 25, 1863 as the date to attack foreign ships along

¹¹⁶Joseph Heco., 278-291.

¹¹⁷Ibid., 310-315.

the coast of this province, starting the Battle of Shimonoseki and the civil war overall. Choshu batteries fired upon American ships in late June 1863. This caused the American ships to fire back and create even more conflict between the *samurai* and Westerners. The *Bakufu* could not do anything to stop Choshu's attack and now it had an even greater problems on its hands: stopping a potential war between Western nations and Japan and a civil war between the *Bakufu* and Pro-Imperialists.¹¹⁸ Heco witnessed the chaos of the Battle of Shimonoseki because he was on board the American ship that Choshu fired upon.

Heco details how the rising tensions between the foreigners and the Japanese and how these tensions led to a civil war between the *Bakufu* and Pro-Imperialists. Heco wrote in his memoir about how the *Bakufu* conveyed a message to the foreign ministers in Japan.

. . . The Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs gave notice to all of the Foreign Representatives that the Japanese Ministers at Edo had received orders from Kyoto to expel all foreigners from the country. With this notice came a note to the following effect:-

“With this communication I beg to inform you that the feeling of the people of Japan is that they do not desire to have any further intercourse with foreign people, and that consequently their wish is to expel all foreigners from the open ports and to close the same.

“The above notice has been received by me from Kyoto with instructions to see you in person and to explain the matter more fully, but that before I did so, to intimate you briefly in writing the intention of the Mikado and of the Shogun, and to request that you will convey the above to your Government.

Signed with respect

OGASAWARA DZUSHO NO KAMI

(Edo, June 1863)¹¹⁹

The Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs let the consulates of the foreign community know that both the Imperial Court and the *Bakufu* no longer tolerated their presence. This had been the case dating back to beginning in the 1840s. However, unlike twenty years ago when both the Imperial Court and the *Bakufu* did not have the military strength nor the morale to drive away the

¹¹⁸W.G. Beasley. The Japanese Experience: A Short History, 199-200.

¹¹⁹Joseph Heco, 327-328.

foreigners, they were making up for lost time by doing so in the 1860s. The Imperial Court was acting out its will using the help of Choshu because it thought the *Bakufu* was too powerless to take care of these diplomatic matters. Yet, the *Bakufu* continued to try to peacefully arrange for the foreign nations to leave Japanese territory. Despite the warnings, the foreign ministers did not take anything seriously. They thought that there was nothing to worry about, despite the growing tensions between the *Bakufu*, Pro-Imperialists, and the foreign community.¹²⁰

The Battle of Shimonoseki took place because Choshu *samurai* tried to “expel the barbarian” on their own.¹²¹ The Choshu battery fired upon an American vessel, the *Pembroke*, to which the vessel returned fire. This started a battle between the foreigners and Choshu *samurai*. After the battle had ended, the United States tried to find a resolution with the *Bakufu* on behalf of Choshu. Heco acted as an interpreter between the Japanese Minister and the United States Consulate after word had been received that the *Pembroke* was fired upon in June. The United States offered to capture one of Choshu’s ships as a form of punishment for the province, but the Japanese official decided against that idea. Despite being advised that the plan was unwise, the United States decided to proceed with its plan.

They sent the *Wyoming* to the Straits of Shimonoseki to capture one of Choshu’s vessels. Heco, who was now employed with the United States Navy, was ordered to board the *Wyoming*, and participate in this mission. Heco described the scene of being attacked by Choshu in defiance. He does not mention what his role was, but it could be inferred that he was ordered to be on the *Wyoming* to translate between Choshu officials and the United States.¹²² Therefore, Heco continued to be an active role in the maintenance of United States-Japanese relations,

¹²⁰Ibid., 328.

¹²¹W.G. Beasley. *The Japanese Experience: A Short History of Japan*, 274.

¹²²Ibid., 333-346.

because even though the United States tried using force to retaliate for what happened to the *Pembroke*, they still hoped that some dialogue would ensue between Choshu officials and Americans.

As a result of Heco being on board the *Wyoming*, he became a political target again. *Ronin* targeted Heco because he was on board the *Wyoming* so he could act as mediator between the Japanese and Americans. Heco wrote in his memoir how he was notified that he was targeted.

August 10th. To-day, I was specially warned by the native authorities of Yokohama to be [careful] not to leave the town for any distance, and not to venture out on the Kanagawa side at all, inasmuch as there were several Choshu men wandering about in the neighbourhood, with intent to slay six marked men, of who I was one. They went on to tell me how two days before the Kanagawa authorities had discovered a gory, clotted human head in a wayside privy on the Tokaido, with the following notice attached to it: - "*This is the head of one of the Pilots who went on the American Ship-of-war to Shimonoseki on the 13th July and fought against his own countrymen on the 16th of the same month. There are five more men at large who are to be served in the same fashion.*" ¹²³

Ronin felt betrayed because Heco, a Japanese man, had turned his back on his homeland. Heco was a threat to Japanese autonomy even moreso now than in the late 1850s. In the 1850s, all Heco did was negotiate between Japanese officials and Americans to set up a foreign community that could function in peace amidst the chaos of the antforeign sentiments. Now in the 1860s, Heco's role was more than just negotiating on the foreign community's behalf, his role was now to actively engage in war with Japan, deepening his betrayal.

After the Battle of Shimonoseki, the violent actions of *ronin* continued to worsen. Merchants in Kyoto were being targeted because these merchants took advantage of the treaties to make a profit, and their actions hurt Japanese socio-economically. Merchants were in violation because the Emperor did not grant the *Bakufu* permission to sign these treaties, therefore, the

¹²³Joseph Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese; what he has seen and the people he has met in the course of the last forty years volume 2*, ed. by James Murdoch (Tokyo: Yokohama Printing & Publishing Co., 1895), 1-2.

ronin must assassinate them as punishment for their wicked deeds.¹²⁴ The foreign community and any Japanese who openly dealt with foreigners continued to be targeted by *ronin*.

Despite the increase in the violence, Heco decided to leave his employment with the United States Navy to open a new business in Yokohama. He decided to continue to offer his services and translate for the foreign community and Japanese officials.¹²⁵ It is unclear why Heco decided to leave his employment. It could be reasoned that he did not want to become a target again because of his association with the United States Navy or because he opened a new business. Either way, he was going to be targeted no matter what actions he took because of the employment he chose to do and simply because he was a United States citizen. Even though Heco was in constant danger, he still played a role in the maintenance of United States-Japanese relations to help keep merchants, Japanese and foreign, safe.

While running his business, Heco established the first Japanese newspaper, the *Kaigai Shimbun* in 1864. The purpose of the *Kaigai Shimbun* was to translate foreign news into Japanese, to help the Japanese officials know what was going on in the United States and how United States policies might have impacted Japan through the foreign community in Kanagawa and Yokohama. Heco would own his business and publish his newspaper for two years in Yokohama until he was asked to move to Nagasaki to take over a friend's business in 1866.

The *Bakufu* tried to punish Choshu several times for allowing *ronin* to lead attacks against foreigners. The *Bakufu*'s decision resulted in an alliance between the Satsuma and Choshu provinces. Even though both Satsuma and Choshu were rivals, they both held the same antiforeign attitudes towards Westerners. The same goal helped these two rivals become allies in

¹²⁴Ibid., 13-16.

¹²⁵Ibid., 16.

the quest to overthrow the Tokugawa *Bakufu*. The first step in following through with this plan was to unite Satsuma and Choshu.¹²⁶ Sakamoto Ryoma was responsible for this alliance.

Sakamoto Ryoma was a Pro-Imperialist *samurai* from Tosa. His views on democracy and Japan being governed by a democratic government were influenced by Manjiro's interrogation, *Hyson Kirayaku*. The interrogation was published and widely read in the 1850s, which helped influence others on these ideas. Sakamoto wanted to overthrow the *Bakufu* and restore the emperor. He convinced the two provinces to set aside their traditional hostilities towards one another for the time being in 1866. Sakamoto was also responsible for organizing the *Kaientai*, an organization responsible for purchasing illicit weapons from Western nations, largely from the English firm Glover and Company.¹²⁷ This coalition would need all of the help it could get if it was to succeed in its quest of restoring the Emperor to full power. This included taking advantage of interviewing Heco, who had taken over a friend's business in Nagasaki in 1866.¹²⁸

When Heco arrived in Nagasaki in January 1867, *Daimyo* were preparing their military for war. He wrote in his memoir:

The various neighboring Daimio were now all eager to adapt themselves to the new order of things and to acquire steamers, sailing ships, guns and munitions of war generally. For this purpose, as well as to acquire Western knowledge, their agents and officials were literally flocking into the town. The largest traders in the place were their agents. When any of their special officials came to [Nagasaki], they would lodge with these agents during their stay . . . They made a point of inviting the officials in question to tiffin or dinner at their employers' houses. . .¹²⁹

¹²⁶Ebrey, et. al, 344-345.

¹²⁷Marius Jansen. *Sakamoto Ryoma and the Meiji Restoration*. (California: Stanford University Press, 1961), 211-222.

¹²⁸Joseph Heco, Volume 2, 81-82.

¹²⁹*Ibid.*, 82-83.

Nagasaki was always the epicenter for foreign contact during the Edo period. Thus, it made sense that *Daimyo* would send their *samurai* subordinates to Nagasaki to learn Western knowledge and to gain Western military weapons and ships. This also proves that by 1867 it was clear that the Emperor had a chance of being restored and *Daimyo* needed to be prepared for a transition. Besides, the foreign presence was not likely to go away. *Daimyo* needed information to be able to live in harmony with the foreigners and survive the new era, either under the *Bakufu* or the Imperial Court.

Other provinces took advantage to ask Heco about the West and foreign matters to help transition from feudalism to modernity. The Prince of Hizen sent emissaries to interview Heco to learn from his knowledge.

January 22nd. A stranger called upon me and introduced himself as Mr. Motono Shuzo, an officer of the Prince of Hizen . . . [he] said that he was sent by his Prince to ask me to visit him in his capital of Saga . . . He told me that the Prince's desire to see me was inspired by the fact that he wished to learn all he could about foreign countries and their institutions, for it was absolutely [necessary] for all Daimio to be accurately informed about them in these transition times and in the present unsettled state of the country. He went on to say that Satsuma, Choshu, and Tosa had combined for some occult purpose- most likely for the overthrow of the Shogun's power, while the Shogun had various Daimio in his service all intently watching to see what course would be adopted by Hizen, Higo, Aki, and Kaga, the largest Daimio, who meanwhile were neutral. Under these [circumstances] the Prince of Hizen was very eager to learn all he could about foreign progress in arms, ships, warfare and civilization generally. I at once accepted the invitation, saying that I should be most glad to give his Prince all the information I could.¹³⁰

Daimyo needed all of the information they could get to live peacefully after the civil war ended. This signified a change in the Imperial Court's ideology. They wanted to rid Japan of the foreign presence, but now they knew they would have to adopt Western technology and ideas to be able to do it. To learn about these matters, the Emperor had to be able to maintain its connections with

¹³⁰Ibid., 83-84.

Western nations, including the United States. Heco played a vital role in the final years of the Meiji Restoration and in the transition from a feudal government to a democratic one.

Choshu and Satsuma wanted to learn about the West from Heco as well because they were active participants in the Meiji Restoration. Two Choshu *samurai*, who pretended to be from Satsuma called on Heco in June 1867.

June. One morning this month two officers called at my house. They gave their names as Kido Junichiro and Ito Shunsuke and said they were officials from Satsuma. I received them as such, and they at once fell to asking me questions about foreign matters- more especially about the history of England and America, their institutions, Governments and so forth. I answered their queries to the best of my ability. The elder (Kido) expressed himself as very much interested in the Constitution of the United States . . . ¹³¹

The two *samurai* that called on Heco were Katsura Ko-go-ro and Ito Hirobumi. ¹³² Their purpose was not only to obtain information on Western institutions, but to explain Satsuma/Choshu's plan for overthrowing the *Bakufu*. With the emperor in power, Choshu believed that peace would be restored and relations with foreigners would be more liberal. After this explanation, they invited Heco to support their cause and act as their agent in Hyogo. Heco agreed to work with them. ¹³³ Heco did not specify what his job was as an agent. He only mentioned how he was supposed to arrange a meeting with an English captain so the *samurai* could go on board to learn how to navigate a Western ship. He also mentioned how it was his job to let the foreign community know that Satsuma and Choshu were not targeting the foreign community through their violent actions. Instead, they were fighting the *Bakufu* to restore the emperor to continue peaceful relations with the foreign community. ¹³⁴ Heco helped maintain United States-Japanese

¹³¹Ibid., 90-91.

¹³² Ito Hirobumi would be elected as the first Japanese Prime Minister in 1885 and is credited in facilitating Japan's modernization using Heco's information.

¹³³Ibid., 91-94.

¹³⁴Ibid., 94-99.

relations because he played a role in the Meiji Restoration. The foreign community would be safer in Japan if there was a change in government from one that was heavily antforeign to one that saw diplomatic interactions as beneficial to the nation.

By Satsuma and Choshu combining their forces to overthrow the *Bakufu* and restoring the Emperor, they declared that it was better to let the rightful sovereign rule Japan. It could be inferred that the Imperial Court changed their minds about the foreign presence, since it wanted the foreigners to stay in Japan. They saw the benefits that the foreign community offered when modernizing and strengthening Japan. The country would be able to stand alongside other foreign nations, without facing the problems that isolation brought. It could also withstand being colonized by foreign nations as well.

The *Bakufu* fell in early 1868. Tokugawa Keiki was made the new *Shogun* after his father suddenly died in 1867. It was up to Keiki to continue the fight against the Pro-Imperialists who wanted to overthrow his reign and restore the Emperor. Satsuma and Choshu with the help of Tosa had gathered enough military strength and weapons to be able to march to Kyoto. Here the Pro-Imperialists and the *Bakufu* fought for four days until the *Bakufu* surrendered.¹³⁵ Their goal was to seize the Imperial Palace. Keiki acknowledged that his forces were no match for the Pro-Imperialists. He ended up surrendering in January 1868, but the Meiji Restoration did not officially end until May 1869 because extreme Tokugawa loyalists refused to accept that the *Bakufu* had fallen and the Emperor was restored.¹³⁶ Both Manjiro and Heco helped modernize Japan and through modernization, maintained United States-Japanese diplomatic relations.

¹³⁵Ebrey, et. al, 345.

¹³⁶Stalker, 215.

Even though the Emperor was restored in the late 1860s, there was no change in the government, at least not at first. There were new councils and offices that were created but Japanese were not used to being ruled by a single entity. They were used to being ruled by two entities, in this case the *samurai* class and Imperial Court, for a thousand years. It was then decided that Japan would implement Western government institutions to create a new Japanese government that would include the Emperor, but still be modern. Emperor Meiji passed the Five Articles Oath of 1868 that implemented changes that Manjiro and Heco participated in to facilitate the eradication of feudalism and establishment of a democratic governing system.

The officials in the *Bakufu* remained in the Meiji government, thus the *samurai* class still ruled even though the goal was to eradicate feudalism completely. The Imperial Court thought it was best to eliminate feudalism in small steps. The first step to creating a modern government was to institute a charter oath called the Five Articles Oath of 1868. This oath was the first attempt to creating a more modern nation. The *samurai* who drafted this document wanted Japan to become united since *Daimyo* were split in the civil war. It also attempted to form a democratic government, but it was difficult to establish one since Japanese had little experience with one.¹³⁷ This is an example of Manjiro's influence on democratic ideas in Japan because he taught *samurai* about democracy in the *Shogunal* schools since the 1850s. Other *samurai* had knowledge of democracy because they learned from Dutch scholars in Nagasaki; nevertheless, Manjiro contributed to this idea of Japan being governed through democracy.

The Meiji government tried creating various forms of government using the United States government as a model. The first attempt at centralizing the government using federalism was

¹³⁷Ebrey, et. all, 348-349.

known as the “three offices” government. It included a General Director, occupied by an imperial prince, a group of Conferees, which was made up by Imperial Court members and *Daimyo*, and a group of Councilors, which included young *samurai*. However, this form of government still did not embody the Japanese tradition of having an emperor. The plan of government would be revised several times before it represented elements of democracy and the tradition of having an emperor. By 1871, the government was organized with three branches. The Council of State had three chambers and was responsible for writing laws with the supervision of the Imperial Court. They created an executive branch known as the Department of Administration, and six supporting departments.¹³⁸ However, redistributing power into a democratic system was not the only challenge the Meiji government faced.

The Meiji government was facing many financial problems that the *Bakufu* created with their socio-economic systems. The Bakufu collected taxes based on the value of the crops each province produced, which did not make the same amount of money throughout all of the provinces, every year. To fix this problem, the Meiji government implemented a new tax law that would generate revenue and stabilize the economy in 1873. Taxes were now uniform; everyone had to pay the same amount in property taxes.¹³⁹ This transformed the economic system, to which Heco played a role in. In 1872, Heco was invited by Mr. Motono of the Finance Ministry to work with the ministry in Tokyo.¹⁴⁰ It is unclear what Heco’s role in the finance ministry was since he offered no insight as to what he did in his memoir. It could be inferred that his knowledge of the United States banking system was consulted since he worked with different commission companies in the United States during the 1850s and ran businesses in Yokohama

¹³⁸Ibid., 349.

¹³⁹Ebrey, et. al, 351-352.

¹⁴⁰Joseph Heco. Volume 2, 163.

throughout the 1860s. By using this knowledge of the banking systems and economic systems, he would have been able to maintain United States-Japanese diplomatic relations because Japan had to work with the United States to rebuild its economic system.

Heco worked with the finance ministry until 1874 when he was asked to work with the Bureau of Currency. In the Bureau of Currency, he was responsible for helping set up a national banking system based on the American model. Part of the job was to help stabilize the economic system to pay the *samurai*'s commissions since they were still active government officials.¹⁴¹ Of course, it was a problem finding the money to pay the *samurai*, since the *Bakufu* was in debt. This debt carried over to the Meiji government. Again, Heco's memoir offered little details as to exactly how he helped set up a banking system.

The final provision that the Five Articles Oath allowed was that Japanese could travel abroad to learn from Western nations. This included the Iwakura Mission in 1871-1873. There were three goals that this mission had to accomplish. The first was to make "goodwill" visits with countries that Japan had diplomatic relations with. The second was to travel to the United States and several European countries to try to change the unequal stipulations that the treaties allowed through the most-favored-clause. The third was to allow Japanese students to travel abroad to learn from the West. These students learned about political, economic, education systems, that Japan could implement to further modernize Japan.¹⁴² With more Western educated students in Japan, it would be easier to modernize the country. Plus, the Meiji government did not fully trust Western nations because of the effects of being under the isolation policy for so long. But members of the government recognized that it needed to maintain those relations with Western nations to be able to learn from them to be able to retain its autonomy.

¹⁴¹Ibid., 172.

¹⁴²Stalker, 221.

Though Manjiro was a part of this mission, American newspapers rarely reported on the Iwakura Mission as it was taking place. It was not until the 1910s that Manjiro was given some credit for his participation in the mission.

Manjiro Nakahama grew steadily in the official service of Japan, and during the Franco-Prussian War was one of the seven Japanese official observers chosen to accompany the armies in their maneuvers with a view to adapting the latest military science to the needs of the growing Japanese Army. He was this time a Post [Captain] of the Japanese Navy.¹⁴³

In their quest to change the treaties, the Japanese men on the mission failed to convince other governments to change the stipulations of the unequal treaties. Manjiro's role was to help maintain United States-Japanese relations while renegotiating these treaties, to ensure that Japan became an equal power instead remaining a second-class nation compared to the West. But this mission failed to do so. This mission was also charged with learning new military tactics that the Japanese Army could use to defend their autonomy if Western nations decided to take advantage of the unequal treaties and wage war on them. Manjiro was commissioned to learn these new tactics from observing the Franco-Prussian War, however, it is not clear exactly how he was supposed to accomplish this task.¹⁴⁴

In the mid-1870s Manjiro and Heco decided to retire from the Meiji government. Manjiro made this decision after suffering a mild stroke during the Iwakura Mission. When the Iwakura Mission returned to Japan in 1873, Manjiro declined a position in public office or any job for that

¹⁴³Modern Japan's Debt to a New Bedford Whaler: Ambassador Ishii's Presentation of a Samurai Sword to the Skipper's Grandson recalls an Adventure in Kindliness which Bore International Fruitage, *New York Times*, July 14, 1918.

¹⁴⁴Nakahama Manjiro. 134.

matter. Instead, he chose to live the remainder of his life peacefully in his home in Tokyo until he died in 1898.¹⁴⁵

Heco decided to move to Hyogo and open a branch house for the export of tea after leaving his employment with the Japanese Finance Ministry. He and a friend opened this business in Hyogo because it was becoming a prominent trading port, as the Harris Treaty promised it would. He managed the business until 1881 when he became ill with neuralgia.¹⁴⁶ Heco's health continued to decline throughout the 1880s. His physician advised him to move to Tokyo because the climate would be good for his health.¹⁴⁷ He lived in Tokyo until he died in 1897.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., 134.

¹⁴⁶Joseph Heco. Volume 2, 197.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., 243.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I argue in this thesis that Nakahama Manjiro and Joseph Heco helped open Japan by playing roles both indirectly and directly from the 1850s to the 1870s. Their participation helped their respective nations maintain relatively peaceful diplomatic relations.

Nakahama Manjiro was shipwrecked, rescued and educated in the United States during the 1840s. By 1850 he decided to return to Japan because he missed his homeland. When he arrived in Japan, he was arrested and interrogated by *samurai*, as was customary under the laws of the isolation policy. *Samurai* thought he was an asset to the *Bakufu* because he knew so much about the United States at a time when Western Imperialism was taking place in Asia and encroaching on Japan's doorstep. Therefore, he could reenter the country and was given *samurai* status to serve the *Bakufu*.

Manjiro assisted the *samurai* by giving them advice on how to proceed with the American's demands, not only those given by Commodore Perry, but also those from Townsend Harris as well. His advice implored the *Bakufu* to open Japan just enough to stall America as the Japanese tried to figure out the best plan of action to ensure that they retained their autonomy. Manjiro was also commissioned to share his Western education with young *samurai* in the event should they need to fight a war with the United States or any other European nation. His teachings helped the Pro-Imperialist *samurai* learn how to use Western technology in order to help win the civil war in the 1860s. By the 1860s and 1870s, his role included participating in embassies to solidify United States-Japanese relations. In 1860 he traveled to the United States to finalize the Harris Commercial Treaty to fully open Japan for diplomatic relations. In 1871, he again was commissioned to travel to the United States to see if he and other *samurai* could convince Western nations to revise the treaties they had with Japan. The goal was to delete the

most-favor-clause in the treaties which made these treaties unequal. In the end, the mission failed as the Western nations refused to change the treaties. Nevertheless, through his actions, Japan maintained their diplomatic relations with the United States as a tactic to learn from the West to retain their autonomy. He lived in Tokyo during his retirement with his family until he died in 1898.

Joseph Heco lived a similar life to Manjiro. He was shipwrecked, rescued, and educated in the United States in the 1850s just as Manjiro was in the 1840s. His arrival in the United States coincided with Commodore Perry's expedition. The United States government planned to take Heco back to Japan with the expedition to force Japan into a discussion about a treaty to open Japan to foreign commerce and diplomatic relations in general. Heco went as far as Canton in 1852 but decided to return to the United States to be educated. He thought that if he waited for Japan to open its doors, then his Western education would help him establish a stable life back home.

Thus, he was educated for two years before being hired by the U.S. State Department in 1857. He then became the interpreter for Consul E.M. Dorr in Kanagawa, Japan. Through his employment and time spent in Japan, he helped establish and sustain relations because he kept the peace between Japanese officials and the foreign community, especially through the turbulent 1850s and 1860s when the *samurai's* antiforeign sentiments were prominent. Heco's education was useful to Pro-Imperialist *samurai* because Choshu contracted him to be their agent in Nagasaki. His job was to arrange for weapons, ships, and to maintain peace in the foreign community as the civil war continued throughout the late 1860s. After the Meiji Restoration, Heco was hired to work with the finance ministry to help establish a Japanese banking system and to stabilize the finance system used to pay *samurai* after the Imperial Restoration. After

giving his services to the United States government and Japanese government, he moved to Hyogo where he opened a branch house for the export of tea. He worked at the branch house until he became too ill and had to move to Tokyo for his health. He died in 1897.

Both men left legacies when they passed away. Since they played important roles in diplomatic relations between the United States and Japan, their deaths were reported in American newspapers. American newspapers credited Joseph Heco with Japan's transition from feudalism to modern nation. *The Orleans County Monitor* reported on October 5, 1896:

A vast body of conservatism has [steadily] opposed the liberal leaders. Among the most intelligent of the latter was the Marquis Ito, the late prime [minister], who has resigned in [consequence] of the dogged opposition to his government. Above any other men of the empire Premier Ito and Field Marshal Yamagato have been identified with the renaissance and the material and intellectual [development] of Japan. The ex-Premier was one of the first to advocate the [opening] of the country to foreign [intercourse]; and through Joseph Heco, who had ventured to visit our country, he learned to admire American [institutions]. When the shoguns fell, young Ito came to the front and effected a peaceful transition from the feudal to imperial rule. From that day he occupied a foremost place in the [advancing] column of the new civilization.¹⁴⁸

Heco received some credit for his contributions to the upkeep of United States-Japanese relations. His knowledge of Western institutions helped Ito Hirobumi and his Pro-Imperial forces go through a transition from feudalism to modernization. When Heco passed away the consulate in Kanagawa informed the United States about his death. American newspapers published an obituary that described his contributions to United States-Japanese diplomatic relations.

The State Department has been informed through Consul General Govey at [Kanagawa], Japan, of the death at that place of the interpreter to the consulate, a man who has held the position since 1859. His name was Joseph Heco, and although a [Japanese] by birth, he was a naturalized citizen of the United States and had had an [adventurous] career. He is credited with the publication of the first newspaper in Japan. Heco when a boy in the latter part of the fifties, while returning in a junk to [Yokohama] from a visit to Tokio, he was blown away to sea. The junk

¹⁴⁸ *The Orleans County Monitor*, Reaction in Japan, October 5, 1896.

drifted along across the Pacific for over fifty days, when the Japanese were taken off by the bark [Auckland] and brought to San Francisco. There Heco was taken in charge by the collector of the port and was afterward made the protégé of a Baltimorean named Sanders, who placed him in school. A subsequent patron was Senator Gwin of California. Heco was naturalized in the Baltimore [district] court, and afterward became clerk to the captain of the U.S.S. Fenimore Cooper. In 1859, when the United States consulate general was opened at [Kanagawa], Heco became the first interpreter and held the place to the time of his death.¹⁴⁹

The newspaper article focused on how he was shipwrecked and came to the United States in the 1850s. It discussed how he was educated and eventually hired to be an interpreter at Kanagawa, Japan. It does not describe his life or his contributions to the modernization of Japan in the 1860s by helping the Pro-Imperialists win the civil war. Nor did it talk about how his knowledge of United States institutions was beneficial to the creation and establishment of Japan's national banking system in the 1870s. The news media diminished his great accomplishments to a sentence-long description of his job as interpreter.

Nakahama Manjiro passed away in 1898. American newspapers reported his death by publishing his obituary containing his accomplishments and contributions to the United States opening Japan. The *Hawaiian Star* reported on December 5, 1898:

A notable man has just passed away in Japan, Manjiro Nakahama . . . Nakahama was the son of a fisherman. He was blown out to sea and just managed to save his life on an uninhibited island . . . After sixty days he was rescued by an American [whaler] and taken to the States, via Hawaii. He thus acquired the use of English. He returned to Japan just before [Commodore] Perry's celebrated expedition, and was invaluable as a means of communication. Later Mr. Nakahama became an instructor of English to his countrymen, until the Japanese organized their school system. But it is odd to think that the casting away of the boy in 1837 upon an [uninhibited] island, led to his being [advanced] from the position of a poor fisherman to one which was of [considerable] honor and influence in his state.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹*Evening Star*, An Adventurous Career, January 27, 1898.

¹⁵⁰*The Hawaiian Star*, December 5, 1898.

Just as it was with Heco's obituary, Manjiro's specific contributions to the opening of Japan and the maintenance of these diplomatic relations was largely ignored. The newspaper even misunderstood when Manjiro was shipwrecked. The newspaper thought it was 1837, but that was the year of the failed *Morrison* expedition. Even so, more details were given compared to Heco's obituary. The newspaper made sure to mention how he taught English to the Japanese, but again his contributions to the *samurai* are left out. It was not mentioned how he helped Perry open Japan from behind the scenes or how he taught *samurai* Western style navigation or the basic principles of Western democracy to help spur the Pro-Imperialist mission to overthrow the *Bakufu* and restore the emperor. However, this was not the end of his legacy.

Unlike Heco, Manjiro had three sons who oversaw carrying out his legacy into the twentieth and twenty-first century. Part of his legacy was to continue having a familial relationship with the Whitfields. Captain Whitfield's first-born son and Manjiro's third-born son organized an event that would gather both families in a reunion in 1898.¹⁵¹ These relations continued to exist between the two families through the twentieth century during World War II and the United States Occupation of Japan during the 1950s. The descendants are still charged to continue the relationship. As of 2008, the sixth generation of both families are still in contact with each other, continuing the Whitfield-Nakahama relationship.¹⁵² Thus Manjiro's family feels obligated to maintain the relationship that Japan has with the United States, just as Manjiro did when he was alive in the nineteenth century. Both men deserve the proper credit for helping Japan open to the Western world and become a "modern nation." However, as could be seen

¹⁵¹ A Story of Romance on the Japan Sea: Story of the Rescue of a Japanese Sailor by a Fairhaven Shipmaster, *The Morning News*, December 26, 1898.

¹⁵² Kyo Nakahama. *John Manjiro: The Starting Point of Friendship between Japan and the United States*. (Japan, 2008), 72-74.

through the obituaries, public memory forgot their most important legacies. Regardless, their memory deserves to live on through the twenty-first century.

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