Born Soldiers Who March Under the Rising Sun: The Russo-Japanese War, Britain’s Military Observers, and British Impressions Regarding Japanese Martial Capabilities Prior to the First World War

Abstract
This thesis explores how Japan's military triumphs during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-'05 influenced British opinions regarding the ability of the Japanese military as well as the decision to strengthen the military dimensions of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in the spring and summer of 1905. Utilizing reports and assessment from British Army and Royal Navy observers to the Imperial Japanese Army and Navy it is shown how these men, and by extension their superiors in London and New Delhi, were given a new appreciation for the potential role played by Japanese soldiers and sailors should a subsequent conflict have erupted between the Russian Empire and the Anglo-Japanese coalition in the years leading up to the outbreak of the First World War.

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Early in the war, the Japanese soldier's exceptional level of morale played a crucial role in enabling the IJA to oust the Allies from Southeast Asia. By late 1944, the British concluded that when the Japanese were being pushed back on all fronts their fighting spirit was prone to deteriorate when faced with setbacks and prolonged hardships on the battlefield, thus significantly damaging the IJA's capabilities. It then demonstrates the usefulness of this conceptualization by applying it to the cases of British, Indian, and Australian forces fighting the Japanese during the Second World War. Only when scholars are talking about the same concept will our understanding of the conditions under which militaries are effective in battle progress. Japan, which unleashed the war, blockaded and besieged Port Arthur, the main base of Russian naval forces in the Pacific. The defense and the subsequent surrender of the fortress became a tragic symbol of the war. Military setbacks, the largest of which were the overland Battle of Mukden and the Tsushima Naval Battle, the name of which became common, were one of the causes of the revolution of 1905-1907 forcing the Russian part to agree to a compromise and sign a peace treaty. The collection, dedicated to the Russian-Japanese War, includes research works, archival materials, official documents, memoirs, journalistic works, periodicals, albums, postcards, newsreels and other materials (351 units in total). The Russo-Japanese War was a horror: It left 300,000 casualties in its wake, would bring violent convulsions to both powers involved, featured horrific meaningless loss as combatants adjusted to the realities new technologies brought to the battlefield, and perhaps the worst feature of modern war took center stage in that it was a drawn out war. A rich and vivid history of the war, although it is mainly focused on the battles. The author is appreciative of the Japanese war effort and he is surprisingly lenient toward the Russian side. The narrative is chronological, and he does a great job describing the war's origins, course and aftermath.