



SINO-JAPANESE STUDIES

Volume 26 (2019-2020), Article 3

<http://chinajapan.org/articles/26/3>

Seok-Won Lee “Mao’s China and the Specter of Asian Victimhood: Hirano Yoshitarō and The Institute of Chinese Affairs in Early Postwar Japan” *Sino-Japanese Studies* 26 (2019-2020), article 3.

Abstract: This article critically revisits the writings of Hirano Yoshitarō, one of most influential wartime and postwar Japanese Marxist social scientists, and his ICA (Institute of Chinese Affairs) group intellectuals. By tracing their interpretation and endorsement of Mao’s notion of anti-imperial Asian communist revolution and modernization in the late 1940s and 1950s, this study examines the question of how these Japanese Marxist intellectuals appropriated communist China to rationalize their “radical” interpretation of postwar Japan as the victim of American imperialism. It thus reveals the continuity and discontinuity between these Marxist intellectuals’ anti-Western imperial discourses during the war and their postwar visions of a new Asian order.

**Mao's China and the Specter of Asian Victimhood:
Hirano Yoshitarō and The Institute of Chinese Affairs in Early Postwar Japan**

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Revisiting China Studies in Early Postwar Japan

In the early 1950s, a small but very controversial scholarly debate captured the attention of a number of China specialists in Japan. In 1952, the *Asahi Newspaper* awarded its prestigious Asahi Prize to a 5-volume book entitled *Rural Customs and Practices of China* (中国農村慣行調査). The Asahi Prize had been awarded annually to only two or three scholarly works in the fields of the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences, and this indicated that the contribution of *Rural Customs and Practices of China* to China studies in Japan was greatly recognized publicly.¹ This seemingly honorable chapter in Japan's China studies, however, was followed by a series of academic debates that became intrinsically tied to the question of how knowledge on China was produced in wartime and postwar Japan. Critiques of *Rural Customs and Practices of China* were centered on the politics of knowledge production on China under which Japanese intellectuals, social scientists in particular, were mobilized to rationalize Japan's imperial expansion in China and accordingly government-funded massive field research resulted in the production of highly biased knowledge about China such as this book. On the contrary, there was a group of scholars who vehemently argued that *Rural Customs and Practices of China*, in spite of the controversial timing of its research and publication, should be considered a non-politicized scholarly approach to China.²

In this way, concepts of Chinese society and culture were sharply divided among Japanese intellectuals during the early postwar period and it appeared that wartime approaches to China – the notion that a stubborn, isolated and thus stagnated Chinese culture and politics should be

¹ *Rural Customs and Practices of China* was first published by Mantetsu Hokushi Keizai Chōsajo Kankōhan 滿鐵北支經濟調査所慣行班 under a slightly different title between 1941 and 1944 during the Asia-Pacific War. It was reprinted between 1952 and 1958 by Iwanami. Niida Noboru 仁井田陞 (1904-1966) became the chief editor of the Iwanami publication.

² It was the short book review by Furushima Toshio 古島敏雄 (1912-1995), a renowned scholar of the history of Japan, that sparked intellectual debates over the acclamation of *Rural Customs and Practices of China*. Furushima Toshio 古島敏雄, “Chūgoku nōson kankō chōsa dai ichiken wo yonde,” 中国農村慣行調査第一巻をよんで (Reading the first volume of *Rural Customs and Practices of China*) *Rekishigaku kenkyū* 歴史学研究 (Historical Studies) 166 (1953): pp. 50-53.

dismantled by more advanced Japan- did not completely disappear in the methodological framework of China studies in postwar Japan. On the surface, the failure of Japan's wartime project of building an East Asian empire did not seem to have had a strong impact on Japanese intellectuals' initial postwar approaches to China. More aggressive and negative attitudes toward China were widely shared as America's early postwar democratization projects in Japan were openly hostile to Mao's communist party which was prevailing in the Chinese Civil War during 1945-1949.

For instance, three months before Mao's declaration of the establishment of the People's Republic of China, Kanda Masao 神田正雄 (1879-1961), a former China correspondent for the *Ōsaka Asahi Newspaper* 大阪朝日新聞, offered his cool-headed impression of China. While still hesitant to predict who would eventually prevail in the Chinese Civil War, Kanda was convinced that the communist revolution in China would end in an anticlimax.³ For him, the two-thousand-year-old Chinese culture represented by Confucius and Mencius was something that had penetrated the minds of the Chinese people more than any revolutionary changes in Chinese history, certainly including Mao's communist revolution.⁴ Kanda's postwar writings might represent one major conservative perspective on China that is characterized by its determinism-oriented approach. In other words, the concept of China was naturally linked to a series of negative connotations such as stagnation and an unchanging hierarchal social order. On the other hand, a group of Marxist social scientists emerged as strong advocates of Mao's revolutionary China as early as the late 1940s. To be sure, their academic freedom was provided by the short "honeymoon" between GHQ and progressive Japanese intellectuals right after America's occupation of Japan, which gradually generated a schism as America's anti-communist campaigns became intensified in the late 1940s. These postwar Japanese Marxist social scientists who now became critical of America's hegemony in Japan and Asia tended to find an alternative ideological role model in Mao's competition with western superpowers, often including the Soviet Union. However, it is important to note that Mao's communist China was never rejected by the Japanese elite group in a clear-cut manner until the early 1950s. Businessmen and conservative politicians meticulously calculated the pros and cons of disconnecting Japan's economic channels from China as Japan's exported-oriented postwar economy became more vital. All in all, Mao's China came as an academic and political challenge as well as an opportunity while the former empire of Asia was reshaping its Asian discourses and political approaches. Under these circumstances, a group of early postwar

³ Kanda Masao 神田正雄, *Chūgoku shakai to minzokusei* 中国社会と民族性 (The Ethnicity of Chinese Society) (Tokyo: Bokuretsu bunka kenkyujō, 1949), p.108.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116.

Japanese Marxist social scientists and their highly politicized search for a new revolutionary China provide an important clue to examining how China studies was produced and more importantly, how the writings of these Japanese Marxists on China should be contextualized in America's continuous hegemonic presence in Japan and northeast Asia. As Baba Kimihiko has argued, an anti-American, independent and strong China was a role model for Japanese radicals who prioritized the victimized status of postwar Japan.⁵

This study will raise several questions about the reemergence of wartime Marxist social scientists and their forward-looking approaches to China. First, how different were their postwar writings on Mao's China from their wartime works on China, as *Research on Chinese Rural Customs* epitomized imperial Japan's wartime China studies? Many of the leading figures who were involved in wartime China projects became ardent advocates of Mao's China in the early 1950s. If their wartime Japan-centered Asianist mentality was now converted to a China-centered Asian unity by Mao, can we make the argument that Asianism continued to influence the mindset of some postwar Japanese intellectuals? Or, did their seemingly rosy picture of China's future show the seed of left-wing Japanese nationalism that strategically appropriated Chinese communism to resist American dominance over postwar Japan? In order to investigate these questions, one might need to carefully examine how these China specialists in early postwar Japan grappled with the question of (anti)communism, Americanization, modernization, and most importantly Japan's own colonial past that changed the lives of the Chinese people.

Based on these observations, this article consists of three parts. First, it briefly traces the notion of the stagnation theory by Karl Wittfogel (1893-1961), virtually the pioneer of early 20th century socio-economic research on China. Unquestionably, Wittfogel's stagnation theory heavily influenced wartime Japanese Marxist intellectuals' endorsement of Japan-centered developmentalist and East Asian discourses on China. Second, this study will focus on how these former imperial social scientists found Mao's communist revolution to be an ideological opportunity to reshape the postwar Asian order and possibly promote Japan's position. In order to make this point, this article will pay special attention to Hirano Yoshitarō 平野義太郎 (1897-

⁵ Baba Kimihiko 馬場公彦, "Sengo nihonjin ni yote no Chūgoku kakumei, bunkadaikakumei, senanmon jiken" 戦後日本人によつての中国革命、文化大革命、天安門事件 (The Chinese Revolution, the Cultural Revolution and the Tiananmen Square Incident in Postwar Japan), *ICCS gendai chūgoku gaku janaru* (ICCS Journal of Modern Chinese Studies) Vol 7 No.2 (2014): p.59, also see *Sengo nihonjin no Chūgoku-zō :Nihon haisen kara bunka daikakumei nitchū fukkō made* 戦後日本人の中国像 : 日本敗戦から文化大革命・日中復交まで (Perceptions of China in Postwar Japan: From Japan's defeat to the Cultural Revolution and the normalization of Japanese-Chinese diplomatic relations) (Tokyo: Shinyōsha, 2010).

1980), arguably the champion of the wartime Japanese *Kōza-ha* (講座派, The Lecturer's School) Marxist group, and his *Institute of Chinese Affairs* (hereafter ICA) 中国研究所 which was at the forefront in introducing real-time political changes in China and providing scholarly works on China to the Japanese audience. Hirano's wartime writings have received attention as the question of knowledge production in wartime Japan emerged as an important topic in the field of colonial studies.⁶ Only Suehiro's study traces the genealogy of wartime and postwar Asian studies by Japanese social scientists.⁷ However, Hirano and his ICA group have not been primary object of critical research by scholars in the field of postwar Japanese intellectual history.

Finally, this study traces how Mao's communist nationalism and modernization projects in the early 1950s shaped the anti-American Asian perceptions of Hirano and like-minded Japanese left-wing intellectuals. In doing so, this article aims to raise an important question from the perspective of modern Japanese intellectual history: how different were these postwar radical intellectuals' seemingly anti-western writings and activism from overt anti-American and even ultra-nationalistic drives by postwar Japanese conservatives?

Politics of Knowledge Production on China in Wartime Japan

Japan's imperial expansion in northeast China in the early 1930s and the emergence of Pan-Asianist discourses placed Japanese intellectuals in the position of having to reshape their China perceptions. As long as an Asian unity was put forward as an ideological goal to be achieved, what needed to be overcome was a determinist attitude toward China. Clear-cut determinist perceptions of China, for example, included the vision of the Orient by the renowned philosopher Tsuda Sōkichi 津田左右吉 (1873-1961), who had no reservation about his conviction that there was no one Asian cultural unity, and therefore argued that Japan had little cultural and political

⁶ Nagaoka Shinkichi 長岡新吉 “Kōzaha riron no tenkai to ajia ninshiki – hirano yoshitarō no baai,” 講座派理論転回とアジア認識 - 平野義太郎の場合 (The Evolution of *kōza-ha* theories and Asian consciousness: the case of Hirano Yoshitarō) *Keizaigaku kenkyū* 経済学研究 (Study of Economics) Vol.34 No.4 (Mar 1985), pp.455-465; Masao Oka, “Yoshitaro Hirano, Eiichiro Ishida and their negotiations with the situation,” in Akitoshi Shimizu and Jan van Bremen eds, *Wartime Japanese anthropology in Asia and the Pacific* (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2003).

⁷ Suehiro Akira, “Ajia chōsa nokeihu: Mantetsu chōsabu kara ajia keizai Kenkyūjo e.” アジア調査の系譜満鉄調査部からアジア経済研究所(The genealogy of research on Asia- From the Research Bureau at the Manchurian Railway Company to the Asian Economic Research Institute), *Iwanami kōza Teikoku Nihon" no gakuchi* 岩波講座「帝国」日本の学知 6 (Iwanami Lecture Series: Knowledge production in imperial Japan) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2006), pp.21-66.

ties with China.⁸ On the other hand, a group of Japanese Marxists were preoccupied with the specter of the Asiatic Mode of Production in the mid-1930s. The notion of “Asiatic society” was a Marxist version of determinism that probed the stagnant nature and the non-European patterns of development that was particularly relevant to China. Accepting the notion of China as stagnated might have provided for Japanese Marxist social scientists an intellectual clue to demonstrating Japan’s superiority. However, this convenient developmental inferiority-superiority binary between Japan and the rest of Asia would not be corresponding to the logic of an Asian unity based on shared values.

It was under these circumstances that the renowned socioeconomic historian of China Karl Wittfogel rapidly gained momentum among Japanese Marxist intellectuals. The German social scientist attempted to examine the internal governmental patterns of the Chinese economy and introduced his highly controversial theory of hydraulic society. Agriculture in China, Wittfogel argued, had been greatly influenced by water resources. Since floods and drought frequently take place in China, this geographical condition necessitated massive state-sponsored irrigation projects.⁹ Thus, explained Wittfogel, the state directly intervened in the process of agricultural production, which was characterized by the state’s dominant ownership of arable lands. This observation by Wittfogel led him to conclude that these geographical and structural conditions were not conducive to the Western form of a landlord-peasant relationship. Instead, the peasants were directly bound to the state and this unique production relationship lasted until external powers arrived in China.¹⁰

To be sure, Wittfogel’s sophisticated empirical research on China was considered by Japanese intellectuals to be a new paradigm in China studies in the 1930s. Hirano Yoshitarō and several Marxist social scientists were at the forefront of translating and introducing Wittfogel’s works to the Japanese audience.¹¹ What differentiated Wittfogel from Soviet social scientists’

⁸ Tsuda Sōkichi 津田左右吉, *Shina shisō to Nihon* 支那思想と日本 (Chinese thought and Japan) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1934).

⁹ Karl Wittfogel, trans., Hirano Yoshitarō 平野義太郎, *Kaitai katei ni aru shina no keizai to shakai*. 解体過程にある支那のの経済と社会 (The economy and society of China in the midst of dismantling) (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1934), pp.238-471.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Wittfogel’s works started to appear in the Japanese language in 1929. The publications of his major works in the early 1930s were as follows: Karl Wittfogel, trans., Eiichi Tsutsui 英一筒井, *Son issen to shina kakumei* 孫逸仙と支那革命 (Tokyo: Nagata shoten, 1929); Hermann Duncker, Alfons Goldschmidt, Karl August Wittfogel eds., trans., Buhei Kitajima 武平北島, *Marukusu shugi rōdōsha kyōtei: Kokusai rōdōsha undōshi* マルクス主義労働者教程。国際労働者運動史(*Marxistische Arbeiter Schulung. Geschichte der Internationalen Arbeiterbewegung*) (Tokyo: Chugai shobo, 1931), 2

somewhat civilizational gaze at China and Asia was his structural approach to China that aimed to explain China's peculiar despotic ruling system. In that respect, Wittfogel was opposed to any geographical determinism embedded in Soviet Marxist social scientists' discussion of Asiatic society, that is, that the geographically rice agriculture-centered structure of the Asian economy resulted in the delay of industrialization.¹² In this respect, Wittfogel's China studies certainly provided Japanese Marxist intellectuals with the possibility to imagine a new China developed through structural and agricultural reforms that would overcome the specter of the stagnated nature of Asia. However, the haunting feudalistic reality of Chinese agriculture in the mid-1930s seemed to be ironically proving the unchanging, despotic nature of traditional Chinese society as portrayed in Wittfogel's writings.¹³ In other words, the binary formation of "stagnated China" and "advanced Japan" influenced the mindset of a number of Japanese Marxist social scientists, and their Asianist perceptions in many cases was linked to their own version of Japan's Orient, that is, staring at China and Asia as an object of Japan's civilization.

Including Hirano Yoshitarō, a number of Japanese radical intellectuals joined the political trend of conversion in the mid-1930s. Although they were now serving imperial Japan's empire building project, the question of how to incorporate China into a Japan-led East Asian empire was not easily answered at the theoretical level. Adhering to the notion of stagnated China, again, could have proven Japan's developmental superiority over the rest of Asia. However, they

Vols; Karl Wittfogel, trans., Kawanishi Seikan 川西正鑑, *Chirigaku hihan* 地理学批判 (Critiques of geography) (Kyoto: Yukosha, 1933); Karl Wittfogel, trans., Mizuno Tsutomu 水野力, Niijima Shigeru 新島繁, Kume Makoto 誠久米, *Jinrui shakai hattatsushi gaiyō* 人類社会発達史概要 (An introduction to the development of human society) (Tokyo: Ōhata shoten, 1934).

¹² It appears that Wittfogel's perspective was not that much different from Marx's concept of nature, but Wittfogel's view was that Marx's notion of nature focused more on how nature determined human social behavior than on how it provides different *possibilities* for revolution. For this reason, Wittfogel never denied the validity of nature's impacts on human activity, but he also tried to avoid the somewhat hasty conclusion that natural restrictions would eventually give reasons for the different stages of economies, as Marx conceptualized in his theory of the Asiatic Mode of Production. About Wittfogel's concept of geography, see Karl Wittfogel, trans., Sakada Yoshio 坂田吉雄抄, "Marukusushugini okeru fūdo tekikeikino igi" マルクス主義における風土的契機の意義 (The significance of natural characteristics in Marxism)," *Shisō* 思想 103 (Dec 1930): pp. 110-123.

¹³ It is important to note that Wittfogel hardly expressed the concept of "stagnation" in his China studies in the 1930s, although his concept of despotic ruling system in China was interpreted as relevant to China's economic underdevelopment. However, Wittfogel's work reemerged during the Cold War period to theoretically relate Mao's authoritarian communist government to traditional Chinese despotism. Karl Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957). For a detailed study on Karl Wittfogel's scholarship in the context of the Cold War, see Ishii Tomoaki 石井知章, *K.A. Wittfogel no Tōyō-teki shakairon*, K.A. ウィットフォーゲルの東洋的社会論 (Karl Wittfogel's Asiatic Society) (Tokyo: Shakai hyōronsha, 2008).

were clearly aware that emphasizing China's inferior economic status would not help imperial Japan incorporate Chinese subjects. For this reason, the overt civilization and barbarity binary was only applied to certain Asian regions including Southeast Asia and the Southern Seas. The "rationalist" economist Yahaiara Tadao's call for the mobilization of the "uncivilized subjects" in Southeast Asia vividly shows how widely the Japanized version of a civilization-barbarity gaze was shared by Japanese intellectuals, even among liberal and once progressive ones.¹⁴

Hirano and like-minded Japanese intellectuals seemed unable to resolve this intellectual conundrum during the wartime period, although he was vocal in his involvement in a massive government-funded fieldwork research project in China in 1941: *Rural Customs and Practices of China* (中国農村慣行調査). Hirano reconfirmed his intellectual zeal as he wrote the introduction of this collective imperial research project and argued that existing bias-driven China perspectives must be overcome through it. Rather than a display of emotional passion, the research project simply showed the divided reality of imperial Japan's gazes at China. The overarching structure of Chinese village communities directly under the control of the feudal government once again challenged Japanese intellectuals who were now searching for developmentalist dynamics in China for Japan's empire building projects.

Hirano's answer to this dilemma was to point to ethical and moral values, not institutionalized or organized economic forces, in the Chinese traditional village system. Based on his fieldwork research, he intended to link this question to critiques of the modern legal system in the West, and to theorize moral codes in the Chinese village community as non-institutional but rather a highly effective self-sufficient lay system. He first vehemently argued that the modern legal system in the West was characterized by its non-involvement in an individual's economic life in the name of liberalism, utilitarianism, individualism and self-responsibility. He pointed out, however, that unless equality before the law was guaranteed, or if there was anything undefined by the law in one's life, the principle of nonintervention in an individual's private life was not respected.¹⁵ According to Hirano, the colony was where this vacuum space in the Western legal system emerged. For example, the majority of the population in the Dutch East Indies was still under the control of its own indigenous law system. Precisely for this reason, even if a brutal assimilation policy were not enforced and indigenous cultures

¹⁴ Yanaiara Tadao 矢内原忠雄 "Nanpō rōdō seisaku no kichō" 南方労働政策の基礎 (The basis of labor policies in the Southern Seas)," *Shakai seisaku jihō* 社会政策時報 260 (May 1942): pp.148-161.

¹⁵ Hirano Yoshitarō 平野義太郎, "Ranryo higashiindo no tōchi-gyōsei no kihon seisaku," 蘭領東印度の統治行政の基本政策 (The basic principles of governance and administration in Dutch East Indies) *Hōritujihō* 法律時報 14 No.1 (Jan 1942): p.27.

were recognized to some degree, Hirano asserted that the fundamental discrepancy between Western law and what he called the “primitive law system” in Asian village communities would preclude the relationship of metropole and colony from being transformed into a co-prosperity community.¹⁶ He wrote:

National policy is based on the ideology of co-prosperity - autonomism and cooperativism - and recognizes and acknowledges the life and tradition of indigenous society. Since it [cooperativism] aims to develop indigenous society toward its own direction, it is opposed to the lopsidedness of assimilation policy and takes the form of the individual and the particular. The national policy (民族政策) of Japan, a member of the co-prosperity sphere, that has led and protected national groups in East Asia is a cooperativism that has gone beyond *Europe's cooperativism originating from the aspect of economic profit*.¹⁷ (Emphasis added)

Putting forward the effectiveness of communal village life as a new governing rule to be shared by Asian subjects, Hirano strove to link existing Chinese Confucian value systems to imperial Japan's notion of an East Asian community. For him, the concept of national morality (民族道德) was one of the most functioning self-governing ideas in Chinese villages. He was convinced that traditional China's national morality would be the key to linking Chinese villages to the cooperative life of a unified Asia.¹⁸ While Europe's legal system tended to regulate the community through institutionalized laws, national morality, Hirano stressed, created a space for an autonomous law that enabled townspeople to mediate and integrate socio-economic activities within village communities. Hirano made the point that the Chinese tradition of keeping moral ledgers (功過格: *Gong guo Ge*), for example, had served to provide everyday life manuals that recorded every deed – good and bad- and also provided village people with a way to compensate for one's misbehavior by doing good-will oriented activities. Hirano found it this kind of indigenous legal system of *Gong guo Ge* positively contributing to the general order of Chinese village communities, since every community member was provided the autonomy for evaluating his or her own individual activities.¹⁹ For this reason, Hirano believed that the Chinese village (郷黨) created a space of community politics in which economic conflicts are mitigated by

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Hirano Yoshitarō 平野義太郎 and Kiyono Kenji 清野謙次, *Taiheyō no minzoku=seijigaku* 太平洋の民族=政治学 (Nations in the Pacific Ocean= political science) (Tokyo: Nihonhyōronsha, 1942), p. 234.

¹⁸ Hirano Yoshitarō 平野義太郎, “Shina ni okeru kyōto no shakaiseikatu wo kiritsusuru minzoku dōtoku,” 志那における郷黨の社会協同生活を規律する民族道德 (Ethnic ethics that regulates the life of social cooperation in Chinese village communities) *Hōritujihō* 法律時報 15 No.11 (Nov 1943): pp. 7-14.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 10-13.

elderly people and therefore the village communities maintained their autonomy.²⁰ Hirano was convinced that the ways in which the Chinese village communities created its own decision-making process, although it has shown its political limits, made it possible for Chinese peasants to experience relatively less class conflicts.²¹

A New Asian Solidarity: Mao's China and Postwar Japanese Marxism

By the time Japan was defeated by the United States, it appears that Hirano was preoccupied with the moral potential of the traditional Chinese village system. Although his Pan-Asianist approaches to China were frustrated, Hirano and wartime Japanese Marxists faced the new reality of their home country under the control of the new world superpower. As Germaine Hoston and Victor Koschmann have persuasively argued, Japanese Marxists enjoyed a short honeymoon period with the American occupation forces. Nosaka's notion of a pacifist revolution in 1945 illuminates Japanese Marxist intellectuals' endorsement of the American rhetoric of democratic revolution that would replace the remnants of Japanese totalitarianism that had certainly been a counter-force to many Japanese radicals, including Nosaka himself.²² He diagnosed Japan's crisis (危機) as stemming from the absolute absence of democracy and called for a united front to create a democratic system.²³ Nosaka's zeal for democracy was followed by a number of prominent Japanese Marxist intellectuals such as Yamakawa Hiroshi. It appeared that postwar Japanese politics experienced few major splits for at least the first couple of years during the American occupation period, when democracy, in spite of its nature of being forcibly "given" to the Japanese by the United States, dominated nearly all Japanese intellectuals' mindsets. Andrew Barshay's extensive writings on postwar Japanese *Kōza -ha* Marxist intellectuals also show the conundrum of these radical intellectuals as they faced the new reality of a forced developmental capitalist path and eventually the whole question of civil society in

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ See Chapter 2 in Hirano Yoshitarō 平野義太郎, *Dai ajia shugi no rekishiteki kiso* 大アジア主義の歴史的基础 (Historical bases of greater Asianism) (Tokyo: Nihonhyōronsha, 1945), pp.135-168.

²² Germaine Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis of Development in Prewar Japan* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp.266-273; J. Victor Koschmann, "Intellectuals and Politics," in Andrew Gordon ed., *Posar Japan as History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp.396-403.

²³ Nosaka Sanzo 野坂参三, "Minshu ensen ni yote sokoku no kiki wo sukue," 民主戦線によって祖国の危機を救え (Rescuing the crisis of one's homeland in democratic fronts) in Hidaka Rokurō 日高六郎, *Sengo shisō no shuppatsu* 戦後思想の出発 (The beginning of postwar thought) (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1968), pp. 247-258.

postwar Japan.²⁴ Hein further argues that some progressive postwar Japanese intellectuals, including Marxist social scientists, chose to associate their passion for a progressive Japan with an American vision of a new postwar Japan, both intellectuals and the American Occupation Forces had different dreams.²⁵

Here, it is important to note that postwar Japanese Marxists' attitudes toward American-born democratization projects were not monolithic. It was one particular group of Japanese Marxist intellectuals, the *Rōnō-ha* 労農派 (the Peasant-Worker School), who became much more passionate about American democracy. The *Rōnō-ha* Marxist social scientists, unlike the Lectures faction (講座派, *Kōza -ha*), basically held that the Japanese economy had already matured to the stage of bourgeois-democratic revolution as early as the 1930s. For this reason, the wartime period was considered by these Marxists to be a regressive form of universal historical development. Although the irreversible wind of *tenkō* also penetrated the *Rōnō-ha* group, most converted *Rōnō-ha* Marxist social scientists showed little interest in a wartime Pan-Asian empire project due to their intellectual focus on the developmental stage of the *Japan proper*.

On the other hand, radical Marxists in the Lectures faction (*Kōza -ha*) showed a wait- and - see attitude toward the arrival of American occupational forces. Many of these *Kōza -ha* Marxists, including Hirano Yoshitarō, were deeply involved in Japan's wartime Pan-Asianist discourses. Although most of these wartime Marxists once again converted to become authentic Marxist social scientists starting in 1945, their postwar radicalism gave rise to several questions in critically revisiting the writings and activism of Japanese intellectuals between the late 1940s and the early 1960s. First, Hirano and like-minded wartime *Kōza -ha* Marxists showed a certain pattern in their early postwar writings. Without any personal or collective reflection on their wartime collaboration with the Japanese empire, they began vehemently criticizing Japanese imperialism in the early postwar period. For this reason, their early postwar radicalism must be

²⁴ See chapter 6 "Social Science and Ethics," in Andrew Barshay, *The Social Sciences in Modern Japan: The Marxian and Modernist Traditions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). However, Barshay's sophisticated work on Uno Kōzō 宇野弘藏 (1897-1977), Uchida Yoshihiko 内田義彦 (1913-1989) and a group of wartime and postwar Japanese Marxists does not closely examine the question of how wartime and postwar Marxism was always reconceptualized through these intellectuals' approaches to Asianist thinking.

²⁵ Laura Hein, *Reasonable Men, Powerful Words: Political Culture and Expertise in Twentieth Century Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). The group of Japanese social scientists Hein's work explores is often called the "Ōuchi school" led by a renowned social scientist Ōuchi, Hyōe 大内兵衛 (1888-1980).

interrogated seriously as to how much they fundamentally questioned the nature of Japan's colonial past and, more importantly, their own involvement in it. Second, these *Kōza -ha* Marxists hardly endorsed America's notion of "democratic revolution" in late 1940s and early 1950s Japan. Precisely for this reason, Hirano and like-minded postwar Japanese Marxists maintained an intellectual and political distance from the American occupational forces from the beginning and actively sought an intellectual motivation *outside* Japan that would eventually affect domestic Japanese politics. This indicates that the Asianist scope of their social scientific thinking paradoxically continued to influence their mindset even after the official notion of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere completely disappeared.

Under these circumstances, a crucial intellectual alternative began emerging among these wandering postwar Japanese Marxist social scientists. The rise of Mao's China received enormous attention from them as early as the late 1940s. While the potential for a Marxist revolution had become extremely diluted in anti-communist American occupied Japan, Mao's continuous triumphs in the Chinese Civil War came pointed to the real possibility of reviving their already shattered zeal for an Asian revolution. Their interests in political changes in Mao's China did not stop at the level of personal inquiries. Just a couple of years after Japan's defeat in August 1945, Hirano and postwar Japanese Marxist social scientists established an academic institute, *Institute of Chinese Affairs* 中国研究所 (hereafter ICA), and introduced the most up-to-date information on China from the standpoint of radicalism. Ironically, their knowledge production on China took a unique stance in early postwar China studies in Japan. As Akira succinctly pointed out in his 1953 writing, Japan was completely "cut off from China" and "one of the gravest problems for the future of Japanese Far Eastern studies is the poor quality of the training of students in this field."²⁶ Perhaps the 1946-born ICA was one of the few intellectual avant-garde groups that actively translated contemporary Chinese materials into Japanese and published scholarly and journalistic works on China in the absence of archival-research-oriented knowledge production on China.

How, then, did these passionate new radical sinologists view Mao's China vis-à-vis Japan's status as an occupied nation? Not surprisingly, the narrative of liberation within Mao's philosophy captured their attention. Accordingly, the ongoing Chinese revolution led by Mao Zedong was interpreted as one of Asia's emerging nationalist movements, not as representing spatially confined concept of Sinocentric Chinese Civilization vs Western Civilization. The contemporary politics of coloring Mao's campaign as an Asian revolution was followed by new academic trends in early postwar Japan that situated China in an Asian context. Prominent socio-

²⁶ Akira, *Current Trends in Japanese Studies of China and Adjacent Areas*, p.47

economic historian of China Karl Wittfogel's pioneering research on the famous and also controversial concept "conquest dynasty" received attention from the ICA. Wittfogel published the *History of Chinese Society: Liao* in 1949, and it was a masterful work that synthesized his decade-long research on non-Han Chinese ethnic groups and their presence in Chinese history. In this work, Wittfogel basically rejected the notion of approaching non Han-Chinese regimes as either barbarian or auxiliary.²⁷ Nohara Shirō 野原四郎 (1903-1981), a researcher at the ICA and also a renowned scholar of Chinese history at Kyoto University, showed keen interest in Wittfogel's conquest dynasty theory. Nohara found that Wittfogel's emphasis on cultural understandings between Han-Chinese and non-Han Chinese opened up a new paradigm of placing Chinese history in a broader Asian context.²⁸ Nohara also was actively involved in early 1950s scholarly discussions of China and the Chinese revolution. In 1953, he published a book titled *Thoughts of the Chinese Revolution* (中国革命の思想), together with Takeuchi Yoshimi 竹内好 (1910-1977), one of the most influential China experts in 20th century Japan.²⁹ Later, Wittfogel's conquest theory was further accepted by Otagi Matsuo 愛宕松男 (1912-2004) in the 1960s as a methodology of positioning China in an Asian context.³⁰

Needless to say, the *Kōza -ha* led China studies at the ICA in the late 1940s reflect one facet of the complexity of radical thought in early postwar Japan. As discussed earlier, the American occupation was the single most important factor that shaped the mindset of postwar Japanese intellectuals. Divergence within radical groups culminated in 1947 when two different parties – the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) and the Japanese Socialist Party (JSP) were formed. Leading figures at the ICA showed intellectual proximity with *Kōza -ha* Marxist social scientists who diagnosed the status of early postwar Japanese society as the continuation of the legacies of semi-feudalism as well as wartime state monopoly capitalism. These Marxist intellectuals observed that the notion of democratic revolution promulgated by the American occupation force would not fundamentally change these wartime legacies. In this respect, it was not surprising that both Iwamura Michio 岩村三千夫(1908-1977) and Hirano Yoshitarō – two main figures at the ICA- saturated their works on China with the narrative of a "New China (新中国)" which

²⁷ Karl Wittfogel and Feng Jiasheng, *History of Chinese Society: Liao, 907-1125* (New York: Macmillan Co. 1949)

²⁸ Nohara Shirō 野原四郎, "Wittfogel hakase no yakushin," (The emergence of Dr. Wittfogel) *Chūgoku Kenkyūjo shohō* 2 中国研究所所報(1947): pp. 10-26.

²⁹ Takeuchi Yoshimi 竹内好 et eds, *Chūgoku kakumei no shisō* 中国革命の思想 (Thoughts of the Chinese revolution) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1953).

³⁰ Otagi Matsuo 愛宕松男, *Ajia no seifuku ōchō* アジアの征服王朝 (Conquest dynasties in Asia) (Tokyo: Kawade shobo shinsha, 1969).

would transcend the common struggles that Asian countries had undergone in the early 20th century.

While the Chinese Civil War between Chiang Kai Shek and Mao Zedong extended into the late 1940s, the ICA published several books and journals that delivered up-to-date information on China. In 1947, two years before the end of the Chinese Civil War, Ishimaha Tomoyuki 石濱知行 (1895-1950), professor of economics at Kyushu University and a member of the ICA, published a book entitled *On New China* (新中国論). He contended that Mao's new China would pursue a "new democratic system."³¹ Not surprisingly, Ishimaha's notion of new democracy came directly from his reading of Mao's works on new democracy (新民主主義), which were first published in January 1940. According to Mao, China's road to new democracy was characterized by a joint dictatorship of several revolutionary classes including petty bourgeoisie and even some capitalists.³² In other words, Mao himself acknowledged that China's revolutionary forces had not reached the maturity needed to forge a direct socialist revolution. For this reason, Mao posited that the Chinese Communist Party first had to realize a bourgeois democratic revolution which aimed to create a "path of the regulation of capital and the equalization of landownership."³³

Although Mao rarely used the term "stagnation," many Japanese Marxist social scientists observed that Mao's two-track revolutionary strategy – first bourgeois revolution and then socialist revolution – pertained to the reality of China's stagnant social and economic development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Ishimaha pointed out that the stagnant nature of the Chinese economy as a result Western and Japanese imperialism was the breeding ground for a different group of petty bourgeois and capitalists who at times would cooperate with nationalist and revolutionary forces but also compromise with counter-revolutionaries.³⁴ This line of thinking was naturally associated with another observation by Japanese Marxist social scientists, that Mao would launch a rigorous ideological war against the legacies of imperialism and colonialism, both of which were considered the main reason for China's stagnation. This indicates that the rhetoric and politics of anti-imperialist nationalism would prevail in Mao's continuous revolution. Three weeks after Mao's declaration of the People's Republic of China, Iwamura Michio, now the director of the research bureau at the ICA, published a book titled

³¹ Ishimaha Tomoyuki 石濱知行, *Shin Chūgoku ron* 新中国論 (On New China) (Tokyo: Jitsugyō no nihonsha, 1947).

³² Mao Zedong, "新民主主義 (1940)" (On New Democracy)," in Timothy Cheek, *Mao Zedong and China's Revolutions* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2002), p.90.

³³ *Ibid.*, 93.

³⁴ Ishimaha, pp.75-76.

Basic Knowledge of the Chinese Revolution 中国革命の基礎知識, in which he reconfirmed that Mao's new democracy would pursue an utterly different path from the conventional western concept of democracy.³⁵ Iwamura was convinced that Chinese capitalism could not properly emerge due to foreign imperialists' constant exploitation of Chinese workers and peasants, which resulted in the failure of industrialization and the rise of nationalist capitalists.³⁶ All in all, the radicality of a new China in the making of Mao's China and America's Japan was conceived of as relevant to the grand question of modern imperialism that had frustrated Asian's own modernization. In that respect, the ICA's emphasis on the birth of a new China replacing the old China stained by Japanese and Western imperialism indicated that postwar Japanese Marxist social scientists would soon utilize the presence of Mao's China to address American imperialism in occupied Japan.

In the meantime, more aggressive voices called for a fundamental reevaluation of China. Takeuchi Yoshimi's series of writings on China in the late 1940s had a profound impact on both Marxist and liberal intellectuals in occupied Japan. Takeuchi rejected the widely accepted notion by both progressive and conservative Japanese intellectuals that Japan had succeeded in modernization while China had not in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Instead of looking at the external trappings of economic development, Takeuchi made the provocative statement that China's modern history, in spite of its failure in superficial modernization, well represented its national identity, something that Japan had never achieved.³⁷ While Takeuchi's challenge sounded somewhat abstract, his voice was powerful enough to be echoed by many early postwar Japanese intellectuals as they juxtaposed occupied Japan as non-sovereign with China's rise as a strong sovereign state.

Mao's notion of externalizing China's problems was well received by Japanese postwar Marxist social scientists, *Kōza -ha* Marxists in particular in the late 1940s. The ICA played an important role in introducing Mao's interpretations of 20th century Asian history to the Japanese audience. Japanese Marxists' proximity to Mao's China became even more conspicuous as Japanese radicals and progressives began casting a suspicious eye on the American occupation force around 1947 with the beginning of the "reverse course." However, their intellectual solidarity with Mao's China based on anti-imperialism had to face a series of academic challenges from both political and methodological perspectives. One of the major questions

³⁵ Iwamura Michio 岩村三千夫, *Chūgoku kakumei no kiso chishiki* 中国革命の基礎知識 (Basic knowledge of the Chinese revolution) (Tokyo: Sekai Hyōronsha, 1949).

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.70.

³⁷ Robert Hoppens, *The China Problem in Postwar Japan* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), pp.47-51.

pertained to the different economic developmental stages that both countries had undergone. As Hoston has succinctly argued, the Japanese *Rōnō-ha* Marxist social scientists observed that the developmental stage of the Japanese economy had already exceeded a bourgeois democratic revolution period even during the 1930s.³⁸ The *Rōnō-ha* group, together with its forward-looking attitudes toward the U.S. occupation, showed little interest in Mao's advocacy of liberating China and Asia from the remnant of imperialism-driven feudal economic structures and establish "new democracy," a concept which had substantially different connotations compared with the conventional concepts of western democracy.

For this reason, *Kōza -ha* Marxists' endorsement of Mao's China in the early postwar period, perfectly spelled out in the ICA publications, at least deserved scholarly attention. In other words, this Marxist group showed the most critical responses to the American occupation forces domestically and also sought international solidarity in its interpretations of Mao's China as a platform for Asian anti-imperialism movements. In fact, Mao himself constantly aimed to reach out to Asian progressive groups, certainly including Japanese Marxists, through "Asianizing" his anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist visions.³⁹ The newly shaped common epistemological ground between Mao's China and Japanese *Kōza -ha* Marxists through the logic of anti-imperialism marked another turning point during the Korean War, in which China and the United States directly collided with each other militarily.

In this way, the conspicuous possibility of a Mao-led communist regime in China in 1945-1949 provided a group of Japanese Marxists with a sense of contemporaneity that enabled them to envision a similar type of subjective future in Japan, although literary critics such as Takeuchi made the bold point that an anti-imperialist Japanese national identity could not be achieved by simply following Mao's path.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, this *Kōza -ha* Marxist group achieved at least one visible object of political imagination, while the entire Japanese intellectual circle was still in the midst of the intellectual and political conundrum of how to interpret the U.S. occupation of postwar Japan and its logic of democratic revolution in 1945-1949.⁴¹ *Kōza -ha* Marxists' turn to revolutionary energies in China, however, faced a series of challenges that would later reveal the serious pitfalls of their seemingly forward-looking approaches to postwar China. First and

³⁸ Chapter 9 "Postwar Development," in Germaine Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis of Development in Prewar Japan* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp.274-284.

³⁹ Akahata 赤旗 [Red Flag] Akahata Henshūkyoku eds, *Kaihō o mezasu nihon no tomo e 解放をめざす日本の友へ* (Toward Japanese friends in search of liberation) (Tokyo: Gogatsu Shohō, 1952).

⁴⁰ Takeuchi Yoshimi, Richard Calichman trans., ed., *What is Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

⁴¹ Koschmann, "Intellectuals and Politics," pp. 395-423.

foremost, these Japanese Marxist intellectuals' conviction that they were on the same epistemological ground as Mao's understanding of Asia could by no means provide a sophisticated methodology for analyzing and criticizing Asia's historical paths other than through the lens of resistance-oriented political solidarity. Here, it is proper to refer to Takeuchi Yoshimi's famous 1948 writing on modernity in China and Japan. Takeuchi was convinced that "resistance by the orient (東洋の抵抗)" against imperialism and western modernization in the early 20th century played a pivotal role in reconfirming the ontological nature of Europe. In other words, Europeans came to reach a clearer sense of their own identity while constantly confronting a variety of resistance movements labelled "anti-West" in Asia and elsewhere.⁴² The more Europe experienced severe oppositional forces from outside, the wider the gap for ordinary white Europeans became between advanced Europe and the uncivilized non-European world. However, Takeuchi was reluctant to acknowledge that Asia's responses to and resistance against the West gave rise to a visible sense of the "Orient." He lamentedly contended that Asia's resistance ended up in many cases with the feeling of being "defeated."⁴³ In other words, he was aware that solidarity around anti-Western resistance would only be functionally appropriated for each nation's political goals rather than creating a real political and cultural identity across Asia.

As I have discussed, Hirano and like-minded Japanese postwar Marxist social scientists encountered a revolutionary China but were unable to overcome existing stagnation theories that had haunted China and Asia. To be sure, anti-postwar imperialism was successful in constructing an ideological tie between Mao's ongoing Chinese revolution and Japan's yet-to-start subjective postwar nation building. Under these circumstances, the beginning of the tumultuous 1950s came as a critical moment for Japanese radicals' search for subjectivity in the Asian context. In the pages that follow, this study will discuss how the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 strengthened Japanese Marxist social scientists' existing epistemology – postwar Asia still under Western imperialist control – and more importantly how Mao's triumph in the Korean War followed by his economic modernization in the mid-1950s had an impact on Japanese progressive intellectuals.

⁴² Takeuchi Yoshimi, "Chūgoku no kindai to nihon no kindai" 中国の近代と日本の近代 (The modern in China and Japan), in Takeuchi Yoshimi et ed, *Tōyō-teki shakai rinri no seikaku* 東洋的社会倫理の性格 (The Nature of Oriental Social Ethics) (Tokyo: Hakujiitsu shoin, 1948), pp. 6-8.

⁴³ Ibid., p.11.

The Korean War, the San Francisco Treaty and the Specter of Anti-Americanism in early 1950s Japan

Despite the GHQ's "reverse course" to crack down radical intellectuals and activists in the late 1940s, the process of China's becoming a communist regime was by no means considered an urgent threat to occupied Japan. As I have discussed, many Japanese writers in the trade and business sectors called for the GHQ not to disconnect trade channels with mainland China. This indicates that both the American occupation force and the private sector – businessmen and intellectuals – did not have a clear vision of a dynamically changing China. However, the outbreak of the Korean War, less than a year after the founding of People's Republic of China, marked a turning point in postwar Japanese attitudes toward communist China.

Interestingly, it was the industrial sector that most swiftly took advantage of predictable changes that the war in the Korean peninsula would bring to Japanese firms. Business-related journals that had once covered depressing news on the devastated postwar Japanese economy began sharing "bright" prospects as early as August 1950, just a few months after the beginning of the Korean War. The August 11 issue of *Economist* (エコノミスト), a leading business journal in postwar Japan, featured a special session on the Korean War and its impacts on Japan's ocean shipping industry. Not surprisingly, the journal anticipated that all major Japanese shipping companies would face a special procurement boom during the Korean War.⁴⁴ While some businessmen showed concerns about losing trade channels with China due to the war, the America-initiated 2.4 billion dollar special procurement plan in Japan became a game changer.⁴⁵ The special procurement plan came to an impasse in spring 1951 as the Korean War reached a stalemate. However, Japanese business leaders and journalists were convinced that maintaining or reinstating trade channels with China would be indefinitely impossible with China's direct military confrontation with the United States since October 1950. Accordingly, the Korean War provided a clear sense for Japanese business leaders that mainland China would no longer be the space for their business opportunities.⁴⁶

If profit-seeking elite groups in Japan finally accepted the framework of an American economic umbrella and a demonized Mao's China initiated by the Korean War, how did Japanese radical and liberal intellectuals approach the hot war? First of all, the Korean War

⁴⁴ "Chōsen dōran no eikyō ha dōka" 朝鮮動乱の影響はどうか (How would the Korean War influence Japan?) *Economisuto* エコノミスト Vol.38 No 23 (August 1950): pp.50-54.

⁴⁵ Akagi Kanji, "The Korean War and Japan," *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 24, No.1 (June 2011): pp. 175-184.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 180.

created a space within Japan where political hostilities dominated rational thinking and productive debates. In July 1950, when Kim Il Sung's North Korean Liberation Army continued its sweep to reach the southeastern part of the Korean peninsula, the fear of facing North Korean communist forces within a 150-mile radius of Japan's Kyushu Island compelled McArthur's GHQ to initiate a series of anti-communist campaigns in Japan proper. The Japanese Communist Party later condemned GHQ's anti-communist drives as "implanting a new American-style anti-communism in Japan where old and stagnant anti-communist sentiments have already been prevalent."⁴⁷ To be sure, the latter half of 1950 became a turning point when any remaining possibilities of cooperation or mutual understanding between the American occupation forces and Japanese Marxists came to an impasse. In that respect, the Korean War in 1950-1953 forced Japanese radicals to fight realistic anti-communist forces inside, but they were already overwhelmed by a series of domestic challenges.

More importantly, the Japanese Communist Party, a leading organization with Japanese communist groups, never overcame the problem of internal division during and even after the Korean War. Factionalism within the JCP made it impossible for Japanese Marxists to deal with anti-communist sentiments first initiated by the GHQ. However, both anti-Chinese and anti-North Korean sentiments rapidly grew among the public. For instance, the notion of "resistance" that both the Chinese Communist Party and the JCP shared in the late 1940s gradually lost ground in Japan as ethical judgments about North Korea's invasion of South Korea and China's support for Kim Il Sung were constantly propagandized by GHQ and eventually penetrated the thinking of a wide range of anti-communist Japanese intellectuals. Under these circumstances, the JCP received a series of direct signals of international cooperation for a communist united front regarding the situation in the Korean peninsula. First, the Chinese Communist Party suggested that the JCP be unified after years of internal division. Mao also shared his own messages with the JCP leaders, calling for a united anti-American revolutionary front in Japan and East Asia.⁴⁸ The *People's Daily*, the mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party, produced a series of editorials and columns by influential politicians and journalists such as Zhōu Ēnlái 周恩来 (1898-1976) and Guō Mòruò 郭沫若 (1892-1978) during the Korean War. Guō argued in his

⁴⁷ Nihon kyōsantō chūō iinkai ahuppanyoku 日本共産党中央委員会出版局, *Nihon Kyōsantō no rokujūgonen: 1922-1987* 日本共産党の六十五年 1922-1987 (The 60-Year history of the Japanese Communist Party) (Tokyo: Nihon kyōsantō chūō iinkai shuppanyoku, 1988), p.134.

⁴⁸ Koyama Hirotake 小山弘健, *Sengo nihon kyōsantō shi : tōnai tōsō no rekishi* 戦後日本共産党史: 党内闘争の歴史 (The postwar history of the Japanese Communist Party: histories of internal party conflicts) (Tokyo: Kobushi shobo, 2008), pp. 105-112.

1951 column that America was attempting to recreate Japanese imperialism and emphasized the urgency of constructing joint forces against America's new "militarism."⁴⁹

Mao's labeling of MacArthur and American forces as an imperial power seemed to have provided Japanese Marxist intellectuals with a clear strategy in domestic politics. The long *People's Daily* editorial published on July 7, 1950, about two weeks after the outbreak of the Korean War, appealed to the Japanese to be united as part of an international anti-American imperial front. Pointing out that revolutionary forces could not represent the Japanese people's interests during the Japanese imperial period, the CCP's official newspaper called for national unity (民族的団結) in occupied Japan.⁵⁰ This message took on a much more serious tone after MacArthur-led United Nation alliance forces began fiercely fighting Kim Il Sung's army. Importantly, a series of letters to the Japanese people by the *People's Daily* in 1950 emphasized China's historical struggle against modern imperialism. The September 3rd 1950 editorial, for example, ends with a call for all Asian people to join a united anti-American front as China celebrated its 5th year anniversary of victory against the Japanese empire.⁵¹ In other words, Mao and the CCP conceived of the presence of American imperialism as part of its ongoing endeavor to liberate China and Asia from postwar imperialism. At stake was the question of whether Japanese Marxist intellectuals understood the political implications of this highly historical and *Asianized* interpretation of a hot war in the Korean peninsula.

On the other hand, conservative Japanese intellectuals and journalists basically viewed the Korean War as the ambition of the Soviets through Kim Il Sung to communize the Asian region. Kim Il Sung's preemptive attack was unjust enough for even liberal intellectuals to think of North Korea as an anti-pacifist entity. In that respect, China's massive support for North Korea beginning in October 1950 was also interpreted as a coalition of destructive communists by conservative intellectuals and many Japanese medias, which was exactly the response that Washington DC intended to obtain from Japan. However, not every Japanese intellectual followed such a clear-cut narrative. Skepticism toward America's northeast Asian policy rapidly grew as the Truman administration made it clear that it would restructure the Asian security system by reshaping America's presence in Japan. In other words, the San Francisco Treaty controversy in late 1950 and 1951 played a pivotal role in making Japanese intellectuals, both

⁴⁹ *Kaihō o mezasu nihon no tomo e*, pp. 228-234.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 66-73.

⁵¹ "Imakoso nihonjinha danketushite tekini ataru dokide aru," 今こそ日本人民は団結して敵にあたる時である(This is the right time that the Japanese should be united and fight its enemy) *Rénmín Ribào* 人民日報, September 3, 1950, in *Kaihō o mezasu nihon no tomo e*, p.81.

conservative and radical, ponder the future of Japan in a newly shaping East Asian order while the Korean War was at its stalemate.

The anti-American front fueled by the politics of the San Francisco Treaty became a testing ground to measure the internationalist and historical mindset of leading postwar Japanese intellectuals. As is well known, progressive and liberal figures in the *Sekai* 世界 circle, arguably the most influential magazine in 1950s Japan, immediately railed against the formation of a U.S.-Japan security system. The *Sekai* group intellectuals, Maruyama Masao 丸山真男 (1914-1996), Tsuru Shigeto 都留重人 (1912-2006) and Shimizu Ikutaro 清水幾太郎 (1907-1980), were all vocal in their criticism of America's hegemonic ambition by adding Japan as a site for its strategic military bases. However, their seemingly progressive writings were not associated with any historical reflection on why the Korean people ended up fighting each other after 35 years of Japanese colonization. To borrow insights from Bruce Cumings' masterful works, the Korean War was not just an ideological conflict between northern communists and pro-American anti-communists in the South. It was an explosion of a set of Korea problems – a transition from feudal agriculture to a modern economy, imperialism and colonialism – most of which had been aggravated during Japanese colonial rule.⁵² While the *Sekai* intellectuals observed China's entrance into the Korean War, they also believed that China would not have been involved in the Korean conflict if the United States had not expanded it into an international conflict. In other words, they basically viewed the Korean war as an internal war (内戦) among the Korean people and their criticism around the Korean War was centered on Japan's position.⁵³ For this reason, it was not surprising that some *Sekai* progressive and liberal intellectuals showed keen interest in the idea of a neutral state as an alternative to America's imperial hegemony and communist movements in Asia.⁵⁴

How, then, did Hirano and the ICA group portray Asia's hot war in the early 1950s? They basically accepted Mao's rhetoric of Asians' national liberation from imperialism. Hirano's 1954 book *National Liberation in Asia* clearly demonstrates his even stronger pro-Chinese standpoint after the Korean War. Defining Mao's 1949 revolution as the end of the era of oriental despotism first theorized by Karl Wittfogel, he spent more than two-thirds of this book proving that China's

⁵² Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War, Volume 1* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981).

⁵³ A roundtable, "Tsumetai senso kara tsumetai heiwa e" 冷たい戦争から冷たい平和へ (From the cold war to the cold peace) *Sekai* 世界 94 (Oct 1953): pp.184-204

⁵⁴ *Sekai* published a series of essays and articles on the non-coalition movements of the Third-World right after the end of the Korean War.

hostile responses to the San Francisco treaty system were politically correct since the U.S.-Japan security system was a mere continuation of western imperialism in Asia.⁵⁵

In this book, Hirano also discussed the issue of Korean residents (在日朝鮮人) in 1950s Japan. He basically acknowledged the responsibility of Japanese imperialism for the colonization of the Korean peninsula. He also asked for the Japanese government to protect the political rights of the Korean people in Japan proper through his provocative slogan, “A nation that is oppressing another nation cannot be free (他民族を抑圧している国民は自由ではありえない).”⁵⁶ Hirano seemed to be calling for forward-looking attitudes toward Korean residents who had been on the receiving end of continuous discrimination. However, a close look at his historical analysis of Korean-Japanese relations reveals serious pitfalls. First of all, Hirano took a very clear stance as he differentiated Japanese communism from Japanese imperialism. The latter, he stressed, had deprived the Koreans of their independence while the former fought imperial violence together with Korean anti-colonial activities.⁵⁷ In other words, the responsibility for colonial violence, Hirano reasoned, only rested with the Japanese government, while Japanese communism had remained anti-colonial through and through. This line of thinking explains why a self-reflective confession of Japanese Marxists’ collaboration with the Japanese empire was completely missing in Hirano’s writings throughout his postwar career.

More importantly, a full chapter on Korea in Hirano’s book faithfully followed Mao’s new political initiative to demonize the United States as the ultimate anti-Asian empire. Hirano was not hesitant to label South Korea an American puppet government whose economic basis was comprador capital (買弁資本).⁵⁸ To be sure, it is a necessary question to explore the politico-economic nature of the Rhee Syng-Man government in 1950s Korea. However, at stake was the explicit intention within Hirano’s argument that all three Asian nations now faced a common American enemy. In this way, the complicit historicity of Japanese wartime Marxism in which he himself was deeply involved was concealed and the victimization of postwar Japan could obtain contemporaneity since, as he believed, China, Japan and South Korea were being victimized by the American empire. I argue that repeated reference to Mao’s continuous revolution in China and Asia by Hirano and like-minded pro-Chinese Japanese radicals was part

⁵⁵ Hirano Yoshitarō 平野義太郎, *Ajia no minzoku gaiho* アジアの民族解放 (National liberation in Asia) (Tokyo: Rironsha, 1954).

⁵⁶ Ibid, pp. 342-348.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp.317-318.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

of their highly politicized effort to justify Japan's status as a victim in the 1950s Cold War context.⁵⁹

A serious question might arise about these Japanese Marxists' postwar perceptions of Asia during and after the Korean War. As is well known, a number of wartime Marxists served the Japanese empire by providing the logic of an anti-Western East Asian empire. Although they called for China and colonial Korea to join their empire-building project, they certainly intended to promote the status of imperial Japan by concealing their own imperial ambitions in the name of anti-Western imperialism.⁶⁰ If that is the case, did the reality of Japan's subordination to the American power demonstrate that these postwar Japanese Marxists were now fighting imperialism in its real sense? There is scarcely any attempt by Hirano in his postwar writings to evaluate his own collaboration with wartime Asian empire building projects. What one can easily recognize is that Hirano was still resorting to Asianist perspectives as he theorized Japan's postwar "victimization" by the American empire in the Asian context. For this purpose, Mao's rhetoric of China's continuous revolution provided Hirano with a very timely epistemological ground for Japan's anti-American national movements. In that respect, Hirano and many of his *koza-ha* colleagues utilized the framework of Western imperialism – Asian victimization to rationalize Japan's national interests in both the wartime and early postwar periods.

Therefore, the anti-imperialist Asian revolution writings by Hirano and postwar Japanese Marxist social scientists need to be critically examined to explore their concepts of independence, subjectivity and Asian development. Here it is important to point out that the notion of China's continuous revolution after the Korean War already began receiving skeptical responses outside China. Mao's claim that the world's strongest nation was beaten by the People's Republic of China certainly helped absolutize his domestic power as well as the PRC's position in the world. Mao also touched upon the dormant victim mentality of the Chinese people as he launched several post Korean War political and cultural campaigns.⁶¹ However, Mao's

⁵⁹ The prioritization of Japan's independence against American imperialism also substantially changed relations between Japanese communist leaders and Zainich activists. Ko Young ran argued that the urgency of the Anpo-Protest created a political pressure for Zainich Marxists to join the national movement of Japanese Marxism and this shift gradually resulted in the marginalization of Korean residents' struggle during and after Japan's colonization as a "past thing." Ko Yōng-nan 高榮蘭, "*Sengo*" to iu ideorogī : rekishi, kioku, bunka 「戦後」というイデオロギー : 歴史/記憶/文化 (Postwar ideology: history, memory and culture) (Tokyo: Fujiwara shoten, 2010).

⁶⁰ Harry D. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002).

⁶¹ About the concept of China's victim mentality, see Zheng Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation: Historical Memory in Chinese Politics and Foreign Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

bold moves also generated doubt even among leaders of former colonized states. The 1955 Bandung Conference, for example, turned out to be tense as several decolonized nations questioned the real nature of China's role in challenging American-Soviet dominance. Arik Dirlik has made the succinct point that despite Premier Zhōu Ēnlái's impressive speech at the Bandung Conference to embrace the leaders of participating nations who might have questions about China's recent bold moves, "fear of communism as represented by the Soviet Union and the PRC as a new form of imperialism and colonialism remained a contentious one at the Conference."⁶² It is no exaggeration that Mao's rhetoric of regaining China's lost glory was inseparable from China's historical past as a dominant old imperial power in Asia.

Were Hirano and a group of pro-Chinese Marxists in 1950 Japan not recognizing this intertwined aspect of Chinese anti-imperialism and nationalism? If not, what was the political intention shared by these Japanese Marxists to accept Mao's post-Korean War concept that China represented Asia's liberation movements? As fighting for Japan's own imperial legacy became marginalized in the prioritization of the Anpo protests, the concept of building a strong anti-American nation gradually influenced the mindset of these Japanese Marxists. Therefore, Mao's bold top-down economic development drives in the mid-1950s were a useful political tool to compete with the LDP (Liberal Democratic Party)- American conservative economic development plans in 1950s Japan. At stake is the question of whether endorsing Mao's anti-imperial and anti-colonial communist economic initiatives served to ideologically underpin the concept of Japan as a nation victimized by America and thereby revealed pro-Chinese Marxists' passion for Japan not just being independent but regaining its *economic* power. Mao himself did not hide his ambition that the end of the first 5-year top-down economic development plan would promote China's status to the level of economically surpassing the United Kingdom, because of which, he believed, China's hundred years of national humiliation had begun. In the pages that follow, this study will discuss how Mao's "go-fast" top-down economic development plan was interpreted and politicized by pro-Chinese Japanese Marxist social scientists.

Mao's "Go-Fast" Developmental Projects and Japan

The Anpo protests politics dramatically changed the topography of progressive movements in postwar Japan. Radical language ingrained in Marxism and anti-imperialism still appeared in

⁶² Arik Dirlik, "The Bandung legacy and the People's Republic of China in the perspective of global modernity," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* Vol.16 No.4 (2015): p.619. About Japan and the Bandung Conference, see Ampiah, Kweku, "Japan at the Bandung Conference: The cat goes to the Mice's convention," *Japan Forum* 7 No.1 (1995): pp.15-24.

the writings of postwar Japanese Marxist intellectuals. However, their rationale for radical movements became increasingly underpinned by the rhetoric of victimization, that is, that the postwar Japanese state was the victim of American imperialism. Here, Japanese Marxist social scientists, intentionally or not, began sharing similar epistemological ground with conservative social scientists whose writings mainly targeted the reality of Japan's subordination to America. However, the difference between conservative social scientists and Marxist social scientists in the early 1950s was that radical Japanese intellectuals at least acknowledged the continuity between the wartime Japanese fascist bureaucracy and its collaboration with America's "colonial control" in postwar Japan. Hirano observed that wartime bureaucrats created parasitic relationships with the American colonial empire.⁶³ As I will discuss later, Hirano later modified this perspective and produced problematic writings about the nature of Meiji Japan and early 20th century Japanese politics.

Importantly, Hirano's and his colleagues' overt anti-American writings attracted a readership. First of all, many Japanese intellectuals, both liberal and conservative, shared a similar anti-American epistemology based on the notion of Japan as victim. To be sure, their analyses of the postwar international order and domestic politics varied substantially depending on their political position. Second, the ineffective anti-communist campaigns by Washington D.C. in Asia and non-Western areas until the mid-1950s enabled Marxist and radical intellectuals to envision a non-American political ideology, and at the center of their alternative imagination was Mao's China. Interestingly, many businessmen and even conservative politicians in Japan believed that Japan's subordination to America's security system would not necessarily mean that Japan had to disconnect itself from its relationship with China completely. Leng Shao-Chuan's interview-oriented 1958 essay shows that the Japanese elite group had complex feelings – nostalgia for China, a sense of kinship, and a guilt complex.⁶⁴ In other words, the rise of China after the Korean War was not considered to have sharpened the tension in international politics between China and the United States. Rather, it was seen as an advantage in terms of economic opportunities in particular, that would not be easily taken advantage of by the Japanese due to America's presence.

The ICA attempted to penetrate the Japanese audience with even more radical interpretations of a rising China. It not only illustrated the blueprints of China's emergence in the 1950s, but

⁶³ Hirano Yoshitarō 平野義太郎, *Kokka kenryoku no kōzō* 国家権力の構造 (The structure of state power) (Tokyo: Rironsha, 1954), pp. 163-175.

⁶⁴ Shao-Chuan Leng, "Japanese Attitudes toward Communist China," *Far Eastern Survey* Vol.27 No. 6 (Jun 1958): p. 82.

more importantly it aimed to present another role model that would replace America's hegemony in Asia. However, pro-Chinese Japanese Marxists' writings in the 1950s and the early 1960s showed a very important ideological tendency. While they still put forward the notion of "fight Western (American) imperialism," their anti-imperial mindset did not engage in any self-reflective assessment of Japan's colonial past. Instead, the conviction-driven assessment of Japan as an American colony strengthened their desire for Japan to be independent as well as economically strong. Precisely for this reason, Mao's top-down economic development drives received close attention from these Japanese pro-Chinese Marxist social scientists. Also, the ICA social scientists did not simply consider Mao's developmentalist approach a one-time strategy change. Instead, they attempted to draw a broader historical picture of a century-long Asian humiliation by the West which certainly included Japan's own past and highlighted Mao's China as a true liberating force. For this reason, pointing to writing China's presence as a rising independent power in Asia was always logically connected to stress the reality of Japan's victimhood.

The ICA's 1963 publication entitled *China's Modernization and Japan* (中国近代化と日本) clearly illuminates these Marxist intellectuals' confidence in China's path to anti-imperialist modernization. This book is a collection of essays by ICA scholars published around 1961 and thus reflects their perceptions of a rising China in the 1950s. Hirano first made the provocative point in the first essay of this book that the Taiping Rebellion (1851-1865) as an anti-western peasant revolution had direct impacts on the Meiji Restoration several years later. According to him, both the Meiji Restoration and the Taiping Rebellion were Asia's revolutionary responses to the spread of imperial capitalism by the West.⁶⁵ Hirano's seemingly transnational approach revealed two problematic perspectives. First, his historical consciousness became retroactive as he labelled the Meiji Restoration an anti-colonial revolution. As I have discussed, Hirano's writings in the late 1940s at least acknowledged the colonial nature of the Meiji Restoration. Unquestionably, this shows his intension to historicize Asia's victimization by the West since the mid-19th century and Japan as part of victimized Asia. Second and more importantly, he emphasized that the Taiping Rebellion forces clearly recognized the colonial nature of British imperial power and eventually helped Japan protect itself by fighting the British forces that would eventually invade Japan.⁶⁶ Hirano's intention seems to be clear as he constantly constructed a historical viewpoint in which Japan and China fought together against Western

⁶⁵ Chūgoku Kenkyūjo 中国研究所 hen, *Chūgoku kenkyūjo kiyō 2: Chūgoku kindaiika to nihon* 中国研究所紀要: 中国近代化と日本 (China's Modernization and Japan) (Tokyo: Chūgoku Kenkyūjo, 1963), pp. 66-64.

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp.59-60

imperialism. The ultimate purpose of such a victimization-victimhood narrative since the mid-19th century was to put Mao's search for a strong China in the postwar Asian context, in which Japan's subordination to the American empire would be highlighted. How, then, were Mao's developmental drives portrayed by Hirano and the ICA social scientists?

A close look at the 33-page 1955 book entitled *Large-Scale Construction in China* (中国の大規模建設) tells us that the ICA was full of expectations for China's becoming an economic superpower. The ICA published this book in association with the Japanese Association for Supporting International Trade (日本国際貿易促進協会). This indicates that Japanese business elites who might have been politically pro-American also found China's rise to be an economic opportunity. In this book, the ICA even attempted to introduce a bold interpretation of China's economic developmental stage. The ICA social scientists first gave credit to Mao's focus on developing heavy industry during his first 5-year economic plan. They made the almost unscientific point that the Soviet model was different from the western model as the former first developed heavy industry, which would be automatically followed by the development of light industry.⁶⁷ While providing their own interpretations of what was happening in China's domestic economy, the ICA faithfully introduced China's own voices to the Japanese audience. A series of translated works on Mao's 5-year economic plan and several political campaigns such as the Hundred Flowers Campaign (百花齊放) were published in the mid-1950s by the ICA.⁶⁸ The 1960 translation of China's internal evaluation of the first 5-year economic plan was almost a declaration of the birth of a great China in just 10 years since 1949. The ICA's engagement with these first-hand accounts from mainland China unwittingly reconfirmed their conviction that a new modern Asian system had been established and was effectively functioning.⁶⁹

However, an emphasis on China's economic rise clearly reflected Japanese Marxists' contemporary dilemma. In other words, they were aware that Japan's political independence from American imperialism must be accompanied by economic autonomy. Arguably, the era of the early 1950s was a time when the effect of high growth under the U.S.-Japan security system was yet to be realized. An ideological rivalry between the communist and the "free world" was

⁶⁷ Chūgoku Kenkyūjo 中国研究所 hen, *Chūgoku no daikibo kensetsu Dai ichiji gokanen keikaku no gaiyō* 中国の大規模建設: 第一次五か年計画の概要 (Large-scale construction in China: An introduction to China's first 5-year plan) (Tokyo: 1955), pp. 18-20.

⁶⁸ Chūgoku Kenkyūjo 中国研究所 hen, *Gendai chūgoku shisō ronsō* 現代中国思想論争 (Debates over thought in modern China) (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1957).

⁶⁹ Chūgoku Kenkyūjo 中国研究所 hen, *Gendai chūgoku keizaishi: furoku "idaina 10-nen" hoka* 現代中国経済史: 付録. [偉大な十年]他 (The economic history of modern China: The great 10 years) (Tokyo: Gōdō Shuppansha, 1960).

turned into an economic competition for each side to more quickly bring about a state of affluence than the other. Under these circumstances, the Chinese “go-fast” model was considered as a positive Asian alternative that might be related to Japan’s emancipation from its (semi)colonial status. While these Japanese Marxist social scientists declared that the specter of Wittfogel’s oriental despotism had been totally overcome by Mao’s developmentalist drives, they also had to prove that the Chinese model was an authentic Asian one and most importantly “quicker” than any other development models. For this reason, the ICA constantly stressed China’s development potential, that is, that a nation founded in 1949 could launch a national economic development plan in just four years. They believed that this phase was much quicker than that in the Soviet Union.⁷⁰ In addition, the 1954 ICA assessment after the first year of Mao’s 5-year plan pointed out that the Chinese system had endeavored to provide even more advanced social welfare policies for women and children than western capitalist states. Therefore, they were convinced that Mao’s developmentalist approach would liberate China from its semi-colonial status and eventually promote its national status dramatically.⁷¹

The rhetoric of liberation through economic development, as I have discussed, changed the topography of postwar Japanese Marxists’ perceptions of revolution and resistance. Unquestionably, Hirano and the ICA’s endorsement of Mao’s top-down development plan aimed to target conservative directions of economic development within Japan. As is well known, the newly established Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) accelerated its economic development initiatives under American financial and military aid, which was later called the “1955 system.” As Rostow’s and Millikan’s bold 1957 report called for more engaged American foreign economic policies in strategic areas including Northeast Asia, Washington DC elites became increasingly convinced that it would be challenging to confront the tendency toward top-down communist model economic development in recently decolonized third-world countries.⁷² A group of Japanese social scientists also paid attention to the rise of communist leaders and their passion for economic development in these “gray” areas.⁷³ Many of these “weak” new communist states adopted multi-year government-led economic development plans like those first introduced by Stalin in the Soviet Union. It is true that America’s “blueprint” for implanting

⁷⁰ Chūgoku Kenkyūjo 中国研究所 hen, *Zukai chūgoku no keizai* 図解中国の経済 (A diagram of the Chinese economy) (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1954), pp.181-182.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Walt Rostow and Max Millikan, *A Proposal: Key to an Effective Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), pp.43-69.

⁷³ Special edition, “Ajia no keizaihattsu to kyōsanshugi” アジアの経済開発と共産主義 (Economic development in Asia and communism), *Ajia Keizai* アジア経済 Vol.5 No.6 (Dec. 1956): pp.10-126.

democracy and economic prosperity in non-Western areas had not been quite successful because political leaders in these states felt a greater affinity toward either the Soviet or the Chinese model. This indicates that fierce cold war ideological conflicts had found another arena of competition regarding which ideology would provide a “go-fast” economic development prescription for decolonized states.

However, the quest to bring Mao’s “developing” China to Japan’s present by a group of Japanese Marxist social scientists soon faced ideological as well as realistic challenges. The renowned political scientist Rōyama Masamichi 蠟山政道 (1895-1980) argued that the rise of communist economic development in postcolonial Asia was fundamentally different from Japan’s encounter with communist ideology. Pointing out that Japan was already a highly westernized nation, Rōyama made the point that Japan was not in the position of needing to overcome absolute poverty, which had been the main reason for the popularity of the top-down economic development plans of communist governments.⁷⁴ Rōyama’s observation was utterly different from the views of postwar *Kōza-ha* Marxists, who still viewed 1950s Japan as embedded with semi-feudal economic structures.

Whether Rōyama’s assessment of communist economic development in decolonized Asia was correct or not, he posed an important question about the continuity and discontinuity of Japan’s communist movements in the 20th century. He observed that anti-Westernism and anti-racism caused by the colonial experience had been driving forces for current communist nationalism in these countries. Japan’s first encounter with communism, he thought, had taken place when Japan had already been westernized and industrialized after the Great War.⁷⁵ This indicates that the nationalist energies that Japanese Marxists and third-world communist activists, including those in China, had in common on the surface might head in substantially different directions. In this respect, Rōyama concluded that the role of radicalism in westernized countries *including* Japan should correspond to those countries’ developmental patterns – bourgeois democracy.⁷⁶

It is of course not the intention of this article to make the preposterous claim that rationalist social scientists such as Rōyama Masamichi showed a more correct understanding of the Asian political climate than pro-Chinese Japanese social scientists. In fact, completely missing in the

⁷⁴ Rōyama Masamichi 蠟山政道, “Ajia ni okeru kyōsanshugi no mondai” アジアにおける共産主義の問題 (The problem of communism in Asia), *Ajia mondai* アジア問題 Vol.5 No. 6 (Dec 1956): pp.15-20.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* p

postwar writings of Rōyama, an ideologue of wartime East Asian imperial discourses, was the observation that Japan and most “bourgeois” countries were colonial powers, and as Kenneth Pomeranz has powerfully argued, their being colonial powers cannot be separated from their economic superiority.⁷⁷ In other words, Rōyama noted his historical perspective from an economic imperialism and colonialism were a *fait accompli* and thus not the object of ethical value judgment. He and like-minded social scientists were instead concerned with the possibility of Japan’s reentering postcolonial Southeast Asia through economic strength.⁷⁸ He believed that communism in Southeast Asia had “subtle” features. That is to say, the absence of bourgeois middle classes and capital for initial investment might invite foreign economic intervention in these former colonies. Rōyama and a number of non-Marxist postwar Japanese social scientists predicted that rapid economic development through American military and economic aid would enable Japan to engage in development projects in Southeast Asia and thereby promote Japan’s status in the international order.⁷⁹ Arguably, anti-Japanese sentiments in Southeast Asia were not as fierce as in China and the two Koreas. In that respect, it is not surprising that there were several calls by Washington DC for Japan to bring capital to Southeast Asia in the form of post WW II reparations.⁸⁰

In other words, a substantially different vision of a postwar approach was being imagined by a group of Japanese social scientists under the umbrella of the American security system and cold war economic development projects in Asia.

⁷⁷ Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence- China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp.3-27

⁷⁸ As for Rōyama’s postwar Asian discourses, see Seok-Won Lee, “Asianism After Asianism: Rōyama Masamichi and the Making of a Postwar Asian Order,” *Journal of Northeast Asian History* Vol.12 No.2 (Winter 2015): pp.67-104.

⁷⁹ Although the Japanese government concretized its plan to build cooperative relations with Southeast Asian countries, a number of Japanese social scientists were carrying out research projects on the politico-economic impacts of economic development in “underdeveloped” Southeast Asia. Itagaki Yoichi was one of the leading social scientists who focused on Japan’s role in Southeast Asia as early as the late 1950s. See Ajia Kyōkai アジア協会 hen, *Kōshinkoku kaihatsu no riron* 後進国開発の理論 (Theories of developing underdeveloped countries) (Tokyo: Nikkankōgyōshinbunsha 1956), also see Karashima Masato 辛島理人, *Teikoku nihon no ajia kenkyū* 帝國日本のアジア研究 (Research on Asia in imperial Japan) (Tokyo: Akashi shoten, 2015).

⁸⁰ Unquestionably, the American government intended to eliminate the legacy of Japan’s colonial expansion in Southeast Asia by asking Japan to quickly end its negotiations on reparation with former Japan’s territories during WW II in Southeast Asia. This line of thinking then changed in a decade or so as Japan attempted to approach Southeast Asia as economic partners. See Peng Er Lan ed, *Japan’s Relations with Southeast Asia* (London: Routledge, 2013).

Conclusion

Hirano Yoshitarō and a group of Japanese Marxist social scientists produced extensive writings on Mao's China in the late 1940s and the 1950s. Many of these writers were deeply involved in knowledge production in imperial Japan as the notion of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere became the official policy of a Japan-led East Asian empire. While the presence of "stagnant" and "traditional" China became the object of Japan's integration of Chinese subjects, the postwar presence of a rising China was also politically appropriated to a great extent by these Japanese social scientists. In other words, China was an Asian mirror for many postwar Japanese intellectuals whose perceptions of China and Asia played an important role in constructing both liberal/progressive and conservative politics. The former *koza-ha* Marxist group first gave credit to Mao's anti-imperial endeavors and supported China's entering the Korean War in the context of fighting American imperialism. Mao's notion of continuous revolution and its anti-imperial energies could not be simply conceived of as applying to Asian subjects in general. China's self-identification as a leading anti-imperial force created tensions among many decolonized non-western countries. Postwar Japanese Marxist social scientists rarely criticized the subtle aspect of Mao's nationalist movement. This indicates that China's anti-American slogan was by no means a reflective tool for postwar Japanese intellectuals to critically revisit Japan's own imperial past. Instead, the Cold War framework of America's victimization of Asian subjects provided a convenient logic of positioning Japan as the object of western victimization. When Japan labelled itself either as a victim or a colony of the American empire, the victim mentality made a number of Japanese intellectuals, radical and conservative, become oblivious to their own history. In that respect, the rise of China in the 1950s vividly reveals how one important group within postwar Japanese radical intellectual circles concealed the legacy of Japan's colonial violence.