

The Revival of Japanese Right-Wing Thought and the Coincidental Collaboration of the Left and Right

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Abstract | How has right-wing thought been revived in postwar Japan? This paper considers the revival from a new perspective that stresses 'left-right collaboration' as an outgrowth of historical coincidences. Despite the appearance of conflict, the left and right wings have been deeply intertwined. In postwar Japan, there were violent clashes between the so-called left and right wings. Yet upon a closer look at the pre- and postwar periods, we can see that the postwar left wing's anti-American struggles inherited the anti-American sentiment of the prewar right wing. The connection between left and right existed during the 1920s and 1930s. We can also find the connection during the formation of the Emperor System, the American occupation, the Korean War, and the Cold War. Over the decades, the right-wing thought underwent changes while staying relevant. This paper will analyze the process of change and adaptation to the times through the writings of Hashikawa Bunzō, Hayashi Fusao, Ashizu Uzuhiko, Takeuchi Yoshimi, and Matsumoto Ken'ichi.

Keywords | left-right collaboration, anti-American nationalism, Hirano Yoshitarō, Hashikawa Bunzō, Hayashi Fusao, Ashizu Uzuhiko, Takeuchi Yoshimi, Matsumoto Ken'ichi

How to Perceive the Revival of the Right Wing

In the midst of growing global anti-American sentiment in the 2000s, the 'anti-American conservatives' and 'right-wing netizens (*netto uyoku*)' emerged in Japan. As historical revisionism gained power in the late 1990s, the tendency to deny the history of Japanese invasion in Asia and the positive value of postwar democracy also increased. Claiming themselves to be the 'revolutionary' force to overcome the national crises of the time, the conservatives and right wing were

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revived.

However, politicians remain reluctant to be labeled ‘right-wing.’ The right wings were branded as war criminals after Japan’s surrender, and were stereotyped as ‘fascists, militarists, terrorists, chauvinists, and [the members of] violent political organizations’ (Hori 1993, 137-43) during the *Anpo* (Security Treaty) Struggle.¹ Unable to conform to the peaceful consumerist society, the right wing remained underground or on the street in loudspeaker trucks (*gaisensha*). In attempt to suppress the right wing’s rise, the *Asahi Newspaper* (*Asahi shinbun*) refrained from reporting on the right wing; even the *Sankei Newspaper* (*Sankei shinbun*) wished to avoid any social unrest caused by the right wing’s presence. Defying such existing media, conservative right-wing magazines and channels have expanded since the 2000s.²

During the Cold War period, the reformist leftists possessed a hegemony over Japan’s *zeitgeist*. Cartoonist Kobayashi Yoshinori explains the confrontation among the left wing (*sayoku* in kanji), its followers (*sayoku* in katakana), and the conservatives:

The Cold War did not take place on Japanese territory, but it drew a 38th parallel across our Japanese mind, causing the ideologically-divided Japanese to confront each other. If communism is left wing, let us call the *sayoku* (in katakana) those who advocate human rights, equality, and commitment to the disadvantaged and minorities as the absolute good, and lean toward anti-authoritarian and anti-nationalist sentiment. The sentiment of left wing and *sayoku* was deeply rooted in the mind of this country’s people. The *sayoku*’s sentiment was present in not only the media and all of the intelligentsia, including the cultured class, scholars, and judiciary, but also the Liberal Democratic Party in power. If these people were located north of the Japanese mind’s 38th parallel, it is plausible to say that, to the south, there were those with the conservative sentiment, trying to maintain this country’s culture, history, tradition, and a society with common sense (Kobayashi 2000, 160).

1. In the escalated situation of the 1960s *Anpo* Struggle, the right and left wings clashed violently. Kishi Nobusuke’s government allied with the right wing in suppressing the protesters, and Prime Minister Kishi was also assaulted. The public dismissed the right wing that overlapped with the image of war criminals and the loudspeaker truck gangs. The public used to sympathize with the new Japanese left wing’s innocent method of resistance. Yet after the *Asama-Sansō* Incident, the public withdrew their sympathy and completely ostracized violent resistance.

2. In 2004, the Japanese Culture Channel *Sakura* (*Nippon Bunka Channeru Sakura*) was established. It focused on the production and distribution of conservative right-wing political talk shows. In addition to the existing conservative magazines, the *Literary Times* (*Bungei shunjū*), *Gentlemen!* (*Shokun!*), and *Reasonable Arguments* (*Seiron*), the *SAPIO* and *Vioce* were first published respectively in 1989 and 1997, and *Will*, *Me-ism* (*Washizumu*), and *Expressive People* (*Hyōgensha*) began to be published in the 2000s.

Kobayashi refrains from using the term ‘right wing.’ Since the 1950s, self-proclaimed right-wing groups have existed and placed the ultimate value on the Japanese imperial institution’s cultural tradition. Still Kobayashi refers to them as the ‘conservatives.’ Born in 1953, Kobayashi identifies himself as a *sayoku*, drawing social commentary cartoons on the discrimination against the *burakumin* (descendants of former outcasts), the Tokyo Subway Sarin Attack, and the victims of the HIV-tainted blood scandal in the mid-1990s. To an active ‘anti-American conservative (*han-Bei hoshu*)’ such as Kobayashi, the right wing may be invisible or constitute a belligerent presence linked with terrorism.

Meanwhile, Ishihara Shintarō (2010) declared that “the Japanese right wing is already extinct” in the 2010 Tokyo governor’s interview. Having defected from the Liberal Democratic Party by opposing its pro-American alignment and thereafter consecutively elected as the governor of Tokyo from 1999, Ishihara lacks a reason to deny his ‘right-wing’ identity. Then, what could be the ‘right wing’ that Ishihara refers to? Ishihara borrows Mishima Yukio’s (1925-1970) argument that “there is no healthy nationalism in a country without healthy terrorism.” Mishima committed *seppuku* (stomach-cutting, a form of ritual suicide) after a failed coup attempt of the Self-Defense Force. Ishihara claims that ever since Mishima’s death, ‘healthy terrorism’ disappeared and that neither patriotism nor nationalism exists; the loudspeaker truck gangs may exist, but the ‘right wing’ does not.

As with Ishihara and Kobayashi, the connotation and denotation of the term ‘right wing’ are inconsistent, depending on the periods and individual understanding. While Ishihara—born in 1932 and given a ‘Japanization’ education—agrees with the necessity of the right wing’s extremist measures, Kobayashi—born in 1953 and taught in the postwar democracy—rejects the ‘right wing.’ The ‘right wing’ of the past may be the ‘conservative’ of the present. Recently, Nakajima Takeshi (2013), a distinguished scholar of pan-Asianism and conservatism, pointed out the affinity between conservatism and liberalism and refers to himself as a ‘liberal conservative.’³ As opposed to Korea, where ‘right wing’ and ‘conservative’ are often interchangeable, the self-claimed ‘right wing’ or those labeled the ‘right wing’ in Japan have changed over time. The breadth of its acceptance and denial is also notable.

Then, how was the ‘right wing’ revived, shifting its meaning from negative to positive? This study examines the historical process of the Japanese right-wing thought’s revival from a new perspective, the ‘left-right collaboration.’ The

3. Nakajima Takeshi is a member of the editorial board of both the liberal magazine *Weekly Friday* (*Shūkan kin'yōbi*) and the conservative magazine *Expressive People* (*Hyōgensha*).

term 'left-right collaboration' captures the mutually constitutive and coincidentally collaborative relationship between the left and right wings that underlies their apparent opposition and mutual exclusion. In this paper, the terms 'left and right wing' refer to those who have a strong ideological orientation and organizational partisanship, and 'leftist and rightist' collectively refer to the party followers and popular support. In the process of establishing postwar democracy, the left and right wings engaged in armed conflict. However, in a sequential viewing of the prewar and postwar periods, the left and right wings do not merely clash. While the right wing 'pioneered' the anti-American struggle before 1945, the left wing 'inherited' the struggle after 1945.

This paper first considers the emergence of the left and right wings and the formation of the Emperor System in the 1920s, then examines the 'left-right collaboration' in Asian right-wing activities since the 1930s. The right-wing thought has continually renewed its meaning throughout the American occupation, Korean War, Cold War, and post-Cold War era. Then the paper attempts to analyze how various individuals have established the right-wing thought in the postwar period. Hashikawa Bunzō, Hayashi Fusao, Ashizu Uzuhiko, Takeuchi Yoshimi, and Matsumoto Ken'ichi revived the right-wing thought in response to the changing times.

Emergence of the Left and Right Wings and Problems of the Emperor System

In Japan, the terms 'left and right wings' were introduced in the 1877 publication of *The History of the French Revolution* (Asaba 2006, 50-52). The terms then referred to political powers in the mid-1920s. Both the left and right-wing activities and divide between them escalated during the formation of the Japanese Community Party (JCP) that followed Lenin's Bolshevism. With the 1925 Universal Male Suffrage Act taking effect, the left wing was divided over whether to legitimately partake in the parliamentary democracy or to engage in illegitimate revolutionary means.⁴ Following the dissolution of the JCP in 1924,

4. Japan's social democracy has a longer history than the communist party does. The Japanese Socialist Party and Japan Socialist Coalition (*Nihon Shakaisyugi Dōmei*) were founded in 1906 and 1920, respectively. Although the socialists participated in the 1922 establishment of the Communist Party, they were criticized for dissolving the party. In preparation for the Universal Suffrage Act, the socialists formed the Farmers and Workers Party, as the legal proletarian party. In 1926, the conflict within the proletariat group led to a leftist and rightist confrontation: the leftists as the Labor-Farmer Party, the rightists as the Social Democratic Party, and the moderates as the Japanese Labor Party. See Masushima, Takahashi, and Ōno (1969).

the left wing was further divided into the factions of social democrats and national socialists.⁵ Reestablished in 1926, the JCP was determined to struggle for public realization of the revolution by adopting the Communist International's (Comintern) 1927 *Theses on the Japan Problem*. As with the Soviet revolution's overthrow of the Czar (monarch), the theses proposed the abolition of the monarchy as the revolution's main objective. They attacked social democracy as 'social fascism,' while calling for labor disputes and the popularization of art (Fujioka 1951).⁶ The 'extreme-left' emerged during the secondary formation of the JCP and its struggle to seize state power.

The Modern Terms Dictionary (Kōjimachi and Kita 1930) defines the left wing as "an organization that adheres to the revolutionary doctrine" and the right wing as "a reactionary group opposed to left-wing communism." According to the JCP's revolutionary theory, the right wing includes all of those striving to maintain the imperial institution as the political system: the emperor, bureaucrats, military, police, landowners, capitalists, and the groups and intellectuals of *Shintō* and National Learning (*Kokugaku*). However, the left and right split occurred even within the proletariat (laborer and peasants) movement. In the 1920s, state socialism (fascism) propagated in the young military officers' reformist ideas and the rural community movements by the emperor's worshippers. Moreover, Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933 heightened the national sentiment of the crisis, which led many JCP members to convert. Thus, the late 1930s hegemony over the discourse formation was transferred to the right wing and converted left wing. After the Sino-Japanese War, the emperor's status solidified as the state's political mechanism of total mobilization.

Meanwhile, agrarianism, active since the 1920s, integrated with the Black Dragon Society's (*Kokuryūkai*, 1901-46) pan-Asianism and the national socialist forces of the 'Shōwa Restoration.' As a result, agrarianism emerged as the fundamental ideology of postwar right-wing thought. Upholding agriculture as the nation's foundation, agrarianism coincides with the traditional Asian ideologies, as well as the nation state's existence that taxes landowners and

5. In defining the Japanese revolution's characteristics, they began the 'discussion of Japanese capitalism.' The social democracy group united as the Labor-Farmer School (*Ronōha*), and the reformed Communist Party was called the Lectures School (*Kōzaha*). The latter attacked the former for evading the struggle against the Emperor System. Regarding the dispute between two parties, see Jo Gwan-ja (2010).

6. As an illegitimate political party, the JCP was influential in establishing organizations such as the Labor-Farmer Party and the National Trade Union Council. Although the Communist Party could no longer publish magazines following a mass arrest (April 16 Incident), its central organization was maintained until 1935.

farmers. However, anti-modernist agrarianism and the theory of rural autonomy surfaced in the post-World War I agricultural crisis. In 1920, Gondō Seikyō (1868-1937) wrote the *Basic Principles of Imperial People's Self-Rule (Kōmin jichi hongī)*, in which he discusses the *shasoku* (the state deities) self-rule. *Shashoku* means the gods of land and grains, to whom the ancient Chinese feudal lords and emperors performed ancestral rites at the establishment of a state; the word *shashoku* itself means the state or the imperial court before the separation of religion and politics. Gondō's thought also influenced the ideas of Ōkawa Shūmei and Kita Ikki, such as the Renovation of Japan and Asian Revival Theory (Tanikawa [1971] 1996).⁷ Thus, the community theory based on Asian farming life proposed an alternative to the modern capitalist state. The community order, guaranteed by the priest-emperor's direct rule, was thus perceived as an ideal national reform.

Following the 1929 Great Depression and 1931 Manchurian Incident, agrarians directly participated in political terrorism and Manchuria's establishment. Tachibana Kōzaburō founded the labor school's Academy for the Love of One's Community and partook in the 1932 right-wing terrorist attack (May 15 Incident). In 1936, young military officers from farming communities attempted a military coup (February 26 Incident), calling for national reform of soldier-farmer unification and the emperor's rule (*kōdō*). Criticizing the bureaucrats' incompetence and corruption, they argued for fulfilling the 'Japan's Renovation' and 'Asian Rural Community' under the emperor's direct rule. Katō Kanji founded the Agricultural Training School, where agricultural studies and martial arts were combined. He was later in charge of the 'Manchuria-Mongolia Settlement Missions' and established the 'Youth Volunteer Army Training School' (Nakamura 1984). Likewise, various 1930s agrarian sentiments and practices were mobilized in the Japanese migration to Manchuria.

After Japan's surrender, the right-wing forces, including agrarians and pan-Asianists, were summoned as war criminals. Consequently, the JCP was revitalized, once again focusing on the abolition of the Emperor System. However, the pan-Asianists accused the military and bureaucrats of war crimes, asserting that Tōjō Hideki extended the battlefield by usurping the emperor's sovereignty and thereby interrupted the realization of an Asian community.⁸

7. Gondō's *shasoku* theory is not a simple agricultural nation theory. Rather it could be seen as similar to Kang Youwei's concept of the great unity (*datong*) that combines primitive communism with the evolution of an egalitarian society (Ida 1998, 27-32).

8. Opposing Tōjō Hideki were the pan-Asianists in China, Kwantung Army (Ishiwara Kanji), and left-wing converts of the East Asia Community Theory. This fact serves as the historical basis to justify the right wing's anti-modernist discourse of Asian revolution. The YouTube video of Ōkawa

While right-wing nationalism defended the imperial institution as the essence of cultural tradition, the JCP communists declared the emperor responsible for war crimes. Even in the postwar period, this problem of the Emperor System continued to be the main issue of the conflict between the right and left wings. However, with the United States' approval of symbolic imperial power and the JCP's support for a parliamentary democracy system, the controversy of the Emperor System and responsibility for war crimes were dissolved.

Even among the JCP leaders, Nosaka Sanzō, who coined the slogan 'loveable JCP,' opposed the Emperor System's abolition. Returning home in 1946 after joining the Chinese Communist Party in Yan'an in 1940, he approved the tradition of the imperial institution in advocating nationalism. During the occupation, Nosaka proposed the 'Theory of Peaceful Revolution.' In 1950, Tokuda Kyūichi and he were exiled to China to avoid the Red Purge. Imitating Maoism strategy, they remotely commanded the Japanese domestic armed struggle from 1951.⁹ However, the left and right wings compromised and coexisted during the postwar revival and thus established the '1955 System'; the JCP's theory of revolution was absorbed into parliamentary democracy and capitalist consumerism. In order to protect the 9th Article of the Constitution, the JCP opposed its amendment and then practically accepted the symbolic Emperor System. The new left wing, following the JCP, was not the group that opposed the symbolic Emperor System. Paradoxically, the new right wing, which gathered force by revering Mishima, came to criticize the system.

Mishima Yukio represented the right-wing voice against the symbolic Emperor System. As a nominee of the Nobel Prize for Literature, Mishima criticized the symbolic emperor as an American war trophy and the National Self-Defense Forces as having been degraded to US mercenaries in 1970. In front of the Self-Defense Forces, Mishima pushed to restore Japan's army and the emperor as a divine being. Unable to persuade the officers, the youth members from his private army, Shield Society (*Tate no kai*), and he committed *seppuku* after yelling 'long live the emperor.' The 'nationalist' new right wing was deeply moved by, and thus succeeded the thought of, the 'healthy terrorist' Mishima, who practiced martial actions in order to protect the national

Shūmei slapping the back of Tōjō Hideki's head in the Tokyo Trials has become very popular: "Tokyo Saiban: Tōjō Hideki no atama o tataku Ōkawa Shūmei (Tokyo Trials: Ōkawa Shūmei hitting Tōjō Hideki's Head)."

9. After returning to China with the United States' assistance in early 1946, Nosaka was repeatedly exiled to China, thereafter influencing the anti-American armed struggle movement. However, in his later years, he was suspected to be a double agent, spying on behalf of the US as well (Kobayashi and Katō 1993).

culture.¹⁰

In 1966, a new right-wing student organization emerged in opposition to the new left wing's invasion in universities. Contrary to the past right-wing generation that supported pro-American anti-communism, the new right-wing students stood for 'nationalism.' However, during the Vietnam War, they continually assimilated to the new left wing's slogan of 'anti-war, anti-nuclear, and anti-American peace' slogans.¹¹ Much like the new left-wing students' criticism of the JCP in order to establish a revolutionary method, the new right-wing students proposed a revolutionary method by opposing the past right wing's postwar system. The new right wing mourned the loss of the autonomous tradition of the emperor's authority and argued for the overthrow of the Yalta-Potsdam polity to achieve military armament and neutrality.¹² The new generation of left and right wings each attempted to overturn Japan's reality as a pawn in the US global hegemony.

In the 1970s, through approval of the US-Japan Security Treaty and peace constitution, the emperor's responsibility in the war was obscured. Enthroned in 1989, Emperor Heisei then came to symbolize peace in postwar Japan. Thus, one should now seek the Emperor System's agenda, not in the past war responsibility, but in its role of building trust for postwar Japan's peaceful image and taking responsibility for peace in the future. As East Asian nationalism continues to clash without any compromise and as Japan attempts to restore armament, even this 'image' of peace established by the symbolic Emperor System is at stake.

Historical Perspectives That Transcend the Prewar and Postwar Divide

Establishing the Manchukuo state, Japan turned against the American and British empires and instead proposed to the Chinese Nationalist Party to form

10. Regarding Mishima's theory of defending the national culture, see Mishima (2012).

11. New right-wing activist Suzuki Kunio (2009, 186-88) stated that the anti-war and anti-nuclear movement of the All-Japan Federation of Student Self-Government Associations (*Zengakuren*) was influenced by the anti-Vietnamese War Movement.

12. Regarding the existing right wing's activities and emergence of 'nationalist' students (new right wing) during the period of the *Anpo* struggle, see Hori (1993, Ch. 2). The new right wing's thought similar to state socialism can be found in Kojima Genshi's work, *The Basic Policy of Right-Wing Movements* (*Uyoku undō no kihon seisaku*, 1964). For Kojima's thought and policy, see Hori (1993, 122-33).

an alliance against Soviet communism and Western imperialism.¹³ However, as anti-Japanese nationalism persisted in China and the Second United Front formed, Japan expanded its battlefront in the Sino-Japanese War. After forming the mobilization system, Japan continually raised pan-Asian ideologies for building Japan's Asian empire, such as the East Asian Community (*Tōa Kyōdotai*) and the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere. Cornered by the prolonged Sino-Japanese War and the American and British embargos, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor and called it the 'Greater East Asian War.'

After Japan's defeat, this name changed in Japanese to the American 'Pacific War.' The US and liberal leftists and rightist democrats denounced the Japanese empire's justification of the 'war for the independence and liberation of Asian nations from Western imperialism.' Instead, the US defined the war as a 'struggle between Japanese militarist fascism and Western democracy.' Meanwhile, viewing World War II as the imperialist nations' scramble for colonies, the JCP called it the 'war of Asia invasion directed by the fascist Emperor System.' The 1955 best-seller *The History of Shōwa* (*Shōwa shi*) (Tōyama, Imai, and Fujiwara 1955) portrays the confrontation by grouping the JCP and Japanese people on one side and the emperor, military, and right wing on the other side.¹⁴ Marxist historians did not blame the JCP and Japanese people for their 'responsibility in the war crime.' If anything, the Japanese were victimized as much as other Asians were, portrayed as sufferers of the military invasion and the US nuclear bomb attack. Kamei Katsuichirō, a prominent critic of the Japanese Romantic School (*Nihon Rōmanha*), spoke against such historical interpretations. He criticized the phenomenon of treating *The History of Shōwa* as Japan's historical reflection on its imperialist war. It was a 'history without men,' overlooking the Japanese people's participation in the war, merely switching the Emperor System's 'loyal-traitorous' structure with Marxism's 'revolutionary-reactionary' structure (Kamei 2005, 12).¹⁵

After China's communization and the outbreak of the Korean War, the JCP also shifted to the direction of anti-American armed struggle. The US hastened

13. In October 1935, Foreign Minister Hirota proposed *Hirota's Three Rules* (*Hirota san-gensoku*) to Chiang Kai-shek of the Chinese Nationalist Party. It demanded China's abandonment of anti-Japanese speeches and activities, recognition of Manchukuo and removal of European and American dependence, and cooperation in the elimination of Communism (Usui 2000, 21-24).

14. This is a historical paperback in which the Lectures-School Marxist historians explain the history that led to the imperialist invasions. It reflects their goal of national liberation and people's democracy.

15. Regarding the 'controversy of *The History of Shōwa*' raised by Kamei, see Jo Gwan-ja (2012a, 49-51).

the peace treaty for the restoration of Japan's sovereignty, and Yoshida Shigeru provided the US with the military bases for Japanese security. Fearing a third world war and Japan's involvement, Japanese people supported 'unarmed neutrality' and opposed securing exclusive relations with the US. Although the JCP opposed rearmament and supported neutral peace in public, it simultaneously employed guerilla war tactics in its illegal activities. Until 1955, the JCP, together with Korean residents in Japan, formed the three anti-coalition (anti-American, anti-Rhee Syngman, and anti-Yoshida Shigeru). They consolidated for an East Asian communist revolution.¹⁶

With the advent of the Korean War, the criticism of Japan's rearmament and conservative shift gained momentum. This was in response to the July 1950 establishment of the police reserve and the reinstatement of the purged military officials, bureaucrats, continental activists (*tairiku rōnin*), and right-wing organization's affiliates in 1946. Akao Bin was a socialist who became a nationalist advocating the Emperor System in the prewar period. After the reinstatement, he founded the Great Japan Patriotism Party in 1951 and worked as a 'pro-American right-wing' activist. Expecting the US-Japan Security Treaty, liberal intellectuals opposed the exclusive relations with the US and criticized the regression in postwar democracy. The time's 'conservative shift' was to keep the 'liberal shift' in check; the left-wing camp was also planning to denounce Japan's peaceful democratization and hasten an armed revolution. After all, the conservative and liberal shifts were two sides of the same coin.

Although the JCP welcomed the US as a liberation force after Japan's defeat, it condemned the US in its involvement in the Korean War for having the motive of occupying Asia. The resolution of the 4th National Conference in February 1951, attacked the US as a "predatory invader aiming for world domination" and claimed that Japan had been degraded to a "colony of American imperialism" (Kōan Chōsachō 1953, 174-89). In the following October, the 5th National Conference was held, and its 'new program' began with Article 1 by denouncing the US's exclusive occupation of Japan. It states, "The war and the defeat brought destruction upon the people. Japan has been subordinated to American imperialism. Japan has lost its independence, liberty, and even its basic human rights" (Kōan Chōsachō 1953, 1-7, 40-42). At the time, the JCP criticized the US for making Japan its anti-communist base, claiming it to be an oppressive act against an autonomous Japan that desired world peace. Additionally, it underlined the 'Asian people's solidarity' that engaged in various

16. Regarding the solidarity among Korean, Chinese, and Japanese people and movements by Korean residents in Japan, see Jo Gwan-ja (2012b).

illegal armed struggles.

In its anti-American struggle, the postwar leftists viewed Japan as a US colony. It also granted the position of a struggling minority to Japanese people, in a coalition with Chinese and North Koreans. The Korean War's armistice and postwar Japanese revival terminated the JCP's agenda of armed struggle, and peace became not only the liberals' strategic value but also Japan's national symbolic value. Despite such peaceful implementation, some Japanese felt that Japan was still a US colony, and the restoration of its sovereignty became 'Japan's national task.' Such awareness of the Japanese's obliviousness to sovereignty has persisted even amidst the affluence of rapid development and the consumerist society's political indifference.¹⁷ In 1966, the JCP split on the issue of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, and the party's relations with the Chinese Communist Party deteriorated (Miyamoto 1966).¹⁸ Regardless, the proposal of an anti-American, unified Asian front (anti-imperialist unified front) persisted, and the problem of Japanese subordination to the US continuously surfaced even during the Vietnam War.

Although the postwar left split into many conflicting factions, it repeatedly reorganized itself under the principal definition of anti-US imperialism and the shared cause against nuclear warfare and American monopolistic capitalism. The historical perspective of America's 'Asian conquest' ultimately justifies the Japanese prewar historical perspective. In other words, the Japanese empire defended itself against Western imperialism and enforced the 'Asian liberation war,' but the US expanded its Asian conquest after Japan's defeat. In particular, the postwar generation's underlying mentality of denying the Japanese 'Asian conquest' and instead emphasizing the effect of Japanese colonial modernization and liberation seems to be influenced by the postwar leftist discussion.

A cartoon trilogy by Kobayashi Yoshinori, *On War (Sensōron)*, is based on the historical perspective of the national struggle for liberation and depicts the US as an imperialist expansionist state. Today's right-wing netizens historical perspective of the 'Asian liberation war' does not merely reproduce the former Japanese empire's perspective of history. The postwar historical revisionism

17. See Jo Gwan-ja (2009, 211-18). This is a review of Yoshimi Shunya's *Pro-Americanism and Anti-Americanism: Japanese Political Subconscious (Sin-Bei to han-Bei: sengo Nihon no seijiteki muishiki)*. Yoshimi argues that pro-Americanism is embedded in the Japanese political subconscious. In contrast, I would contend that anti-American nationalism forms the foundation of the political consciousness and subconscious of the Japanese who desire their own political subjectification (*shutaiika*).

18. Instead of the weakened relationship between the Japanese and Chinese communist parties, the Japan-China Friendship Association led the China-Japan exchange.

fundamentally absorbed the postwar left wing's anti-American liberationist perspective of history. The Japanese youths' recent denial of Asian conquest is more likely to be influenced by the leftist discourse that defines postwar Japan as a US colony, rather than the colonial modernization theory of prewar bureaucrats in Korea and Manchukuo. Just as the postwar left wing justified the socialist nations' violence against the American embargo of China and North Korea, right-wing netizens justify Japan's war as a 'self-defense' against Western nationalism's embargo of Japan.¹⁹ Despite the apparent conflict between the left and right wings, the modifications in the perspective of history and the 'left-right collaboration' recur according to the changes of the times.

Even in the prewar period, leftists and rightists had united against the US. The first left and right collaboration occurred in the 1938 wartime reform policy. Beginning in the 1920s, revolutionary right-wing thinkers, such as Ōkawa Shūmei and Kita Ikki, who were active in China, criticized the bureaucrats' and capitalists' greed and argued for national reform by strengthening a sense of community under the Emperor System.²⁰ Since its publication in 1923, *An Outline Plan for the Reorganization of Japan* is considered a sacred text for the right wing and a guidebook for national socialism's course of action; in his writings, Kita criticizes bureaucrats, monopoly, and warlord politics and urges the restoration of an Emperor System that is united with the people—in turn restricting private property, protecting the proletariat's rights, and uniting the national capital.²¹

In the late 1930s, the innovative right-wing bureaucrats adopted socialism, consequently criticizing capitalism and individualism and building a community-based total war system. The leftist converts involved in the process issued the 'East Asian Community Theory' and reorganized the controlled economy and general mobilization systems. As such, it is possible to identify the evidence of the convergence between left- and right-wing thoughts in many aspects of the wartime reforms. Ishiwara Kanji, the Kwantung Army's staff officer who wanted

19. See Andō (1965, 142-45). Published in light of opposition to the Korea-Japan Summit, the book analyzes that the United States, which participated in the Korean War, aims for the blockade of China as the foremost goal of its global strategy. It also views the Korea-Japan Summit as another method for the blockade of China, through the "union between Japan as military base and Korea as battlefield."

20. Ōkawa wrote on the Asian revival, history of Western invasions of Asia, and New Order in Asia: *Problems of Asian Revival (Fukkō Asia no sho mondai, 1922)*, *The History of American and British Invasions of Asia (Bei-Ei Tōa shinryakushi, 1942)*, and *Construction of Greater East Asian Order (Dai Tōa chitsujo kensetsu, 1943)*.

21. See Kita ([1923] 1959). This text formed the ideological basis of the Sino-Japanese War and the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere. Also see Toyoda (1996).

to establish a 'harmony among five races' and a 'paradise of the royal rule,' envisioned an 'East Asian League' (*Tōa Renmei*) to halt the Sino-Japanese War at the end of 1938 (*Tōa Renmei Kyōkai* 1940).²² Under the premise of Korean sovereignty and Manchukuo and China's political independence, this alliance introduced a unified East Asian economic and defense community.

Meanwhile, the Lectures-School (*Kōzaha*) Marxist economist Hirano Yoshitarō preached the 'Greater Asianism.' The focus was to export and implement the post-Meiji Restoration modernization program in China on the foundation of community commonalities among Asian villages such as irrigation systems and shared labor. In the introduction of Hirano's *The Historical Basis of Greater Asianism* published in June 1945, just before Japan's defeat, Hirano describes Japan as the "pioneer nation that challenges the Anglo-Saxon's old world order." He means that Japan's development "is liberating the subordinate Asia and is building a new order of peace with Asia's own hands, to settle a living environment of coexistence among the people of Great Asia" (Hirano 1945, 3). Although Hirano stressed the importance of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere through the war with the US, he became a peace activist thanks to the JCP during the postwar period and headed the solidarity among the Chinese, North Koreans, and Korean residents in Japan. Although innovative right-wing bureaucrats were branded as war criminals, many leftists who supported the war were able to flexibly adapt to the period's change; even in the postwar period, many kept their status as 'liberal intellectuals.'

Although the Cold War era's left wing and the 'nationalist right wing' split on the issue of the emperor, they harmonized with each other on the issues of Japan's subordination to the US and Asia's anti-capitalist, national awareness. During the 20 years since the 1990s, when the US was hegemonic power in the region, the discourse of 'anti-American conservatism' and the Asian community theory revived.²³ In the 2000s, research focusing on the prewar right wing's liberal and innovative characteristics was more actively published. However, the actual content of pan-Asianism merely served as the means for Japan to deal with a common opponent or to promote its national interests. As a result, the anti-American and pan-Asian slogans receded as the US weakened, only to

22. Although Ishiwara had predicted that Japan would clash with the Soviet Union and fight a final war with the United States, he advocated the East Asian League for the Sino-Japanese War's aftermath and opposed extending the battlefield to fight with the United States. He retired in 1941 due to his disagreements with the Tōjō Cabinet, and was not declared a war criminal. Regarding Ishiwara, see Katayama (2013).

23. On the situation of the period, see Jo Gwan-ja (2014). The latter part of the paper discusses the change in postwar Japan's left-wing activities.

heighten the Japanese awareness of security crises. Although Koreans and some Japanese criticize Japan's conservative turn, nationalism's logic of self-existence and emotional confrontation have been aggravated in East Asia since 2010. Each East Asian country's own grassroots nationalism offsets the ideological conflict and difference of historical understanding between the left and right wings.

The way in which the postwar generation remembers the prewar history depends on their period's political conditions and alteration of discourses. Having grown up with Kobayashi's cartoons, the right-wing netizens' perspective of history employs the logical basis of the leftist camp's anti-American nationalism. They then switch Japan's guilt towards Asia with a sense of Japan's resistance against Western imperialism. Having lost the economic giant's pride, 'the lost generation' perceives the war as 'Japan's sacrifice' for Asia and dismisses Korea and China as 'oppressing forces' for their attack on Japan's historical revisionism. Now, the conflict surrounding the historical perspectives among Japan, Korea, and China has escalated to the point of political disputes on national interest and pride. Such nationalistic conflict structure has absorbed the opposing structure between the left and right wings. As nationalism's emotional conflict intensifies, the safe haven for 'historical truth,' 'universal ethics,' and 'freedom to transcend boundaries' diminishes.

Right-Wing Thought's Escape Route and the Left-Right Collaboration

Although the right-wing thought was considered fascist ideology and its members were purged after the defeat, the right wing reemerged amidst the left wing's armed struggles and the *Anpo* Struggle. Japan's right wing problem raised similar political and ideological issues as the pro-Japanese (*ch'inilpa*) problem did in the Korean Peninsula. Those involved in the 1959-60 *Anpo* Struggle were more angered by the political reinstatement of Kishi Nobusuke, the former bureaucrat of Manchukuo, than by the Security Treaty itself.²⁴ The postwar democratic generation vehemently opposed the past government's bureaucrats and intellectuals. In spite of that, one should comprehensively view the historical responsibility, traditional system, and continuity problem in relation to the nation-state's institutionalization and the postwar Asia's Cold War history. After the new left-wing movement's decline, research on such issues was examined in

24. See the testaments from anti-American writers and artists in the *ANPO: Art X War* (2010).

various studies of total war, bureaucracy, and post-colonialism.²⁵

During the *Anpo* Struggle, the right-wing organizations formed the 'All-Japan Council of Patriotic Organizations (*Zen Nihon Aikokusha Dantai Kaigi*)' for their anti-communist activities.²⁶ Responding to their infamous reputation as a 'relation between politics and violent gangs,' the 'anti-communist' right wing claimed that they were fulfilling their duty as a warrior group, as seen in the history of *Genji* and *Heike* (Dai ni-ji 'Tōdairiku' Henshūbu 1995, 11). However, right-wing terrorism provides counterevidence of their linguistic incompetence and absence of authority. In reality, the prewar right-wing writers remained underground. Even Yasuda Yojūrō, who used to inspire Japanese youth in the 'Japanese Romantic School' of the prewar period, was seen as a failure of history and could merely call for "establishing an independent press" (Yasuda 1988).²⁷ It was only after 1959 that the *Sankei News* established the conservative press, due to the demand of economic circles. The right wing's representative monthly magazines *Gentlemen!* (*Shokun!*, first published in 1969) and *Reasonable Discourses* (*Seiron*, first published in 1973) were published only after the right wing felt threatened by the All Campus Joint Struggle Committees' (*Zenkyōtō*) student movements.

At the time when the right wing's 'warrior gang' attempted an 'illegal service' to complement the postwar democratic constitutionalism, Shintō thinker Ashizu Uzuhiko and the right-wing group, Great Eastern Academy (*Daitōjuku*), that inherited *Fuji Kadōkai* and the ideas of National Learning, also opposed the US-Japan alliance (Hori 1993, Ch. 3). However, because such nationalistic cultural traditionalists aimed for national independence and protection of the

25. On the continuity of the total war society's system, see Yamanouchi et al. (1995). On its economic history, see Okazaki and Okuno (1993) and Hata (1981, 2001). The innovative bureaucrats are the bureaucrats in the Planning Bureau (successors of the 1935 Cabinet Investigation Bureau), who led the wartime controlled economy and legislated the National Mobilization Law after the Sino-Japanese War in 1937. Among them are Yoshida Shigeru and Kishi Nobusuke, and the bureau fostered many bureaucrats who have contributed to postwar Japan's revival.

26. A national right-wing organization, the Japan Council of Patriotic Associations declared the protection of the government system and unified anti-communist front as its two fundamental principles. The organized activities of right-wing intellectuals became active around 1981. Revolving around the clergy, intellectuals, and retired bureaucrats, the National Council for Defending Japan (*Nihon o Mamoru Kokumin Kaigi*) was established. In 1997, it was renamed the Japan Council (*Nihon Kaigi*), of the ultranationalists supporting the Yasukuni Shrine worship. See each organization's website for additional information.

27. After being expelled from the public service as an advocate for the Greater Asian Literature Theory, Yasuda published the magazine *Homeland* (*Sokoku*) in his hometown Nara (Yasuda 1988). The image of the right wing, as failures of history, is connected to the image of the Japanese Romantic School's concept of irony.

national polity, the right wing did not need to participate in the anti-American movement as openly as the leftists did. While the right wing's reputation had been degraded to a 'political gang' in the political arena and leftist discourses, some liberal intellectuals began research on the prewar right-wing sentiment and principles of its behavior. During the postwar revival of the late 1950s, an academic field formed to perceive the right-wing thought in relation to the village community sentiment of the Asian tradition, as opposed to capitalism and nationalism.

The generation of student soldiers who participated in battles at the end of the war and felt a sense of debt toward their dead comrades, could not be complacent with the postwar revival.²⁸ Although the leftists described the Japanese sacrifice in the war as 'death in vain because of state power,' such anger and criticism could not assuage the souls of the sacrificed. For this reason, academic research began to categorize the right-wing thought, apart from its negative image associated with war criminals, not as an imperialist fascist ideology but as an academic category in Japanese thought. The reevaluation of right-wing thought assumed the new perspectives of 'national sentiment' uncaptured by Western rationale, 'agrarianism' in opposition to capitalism, and 'localism' that valued communities. This academic reinterpretation is similar to the Korean strategy of separating the 'resistance nationalism' (*chōhang minjokchuūi*) from the ruling power's nationalism (*kokka sughi*) in order to accentuate the purity of its meaning.

Prominent scholars of early research include Takeuchi Yoshimi and Hashikawa Bunzō. In 1959, Takeuchi ruminated upon the past Japanese Romantic School's nationalism and 'overcoming modernity' (*kindai no chōkoku*) theory, in order to awaken Japan's ideological subject that had been subordinated to American modernity (Takeuchi [1959] 1979). On the contrary, Kamei, who had actively participated in the Japanese Romantic School and criticized the civilization (*bunmeika*) that followed the Meiji Restoration in the Overcoming Modernity symposium of 1941, opposed the revival of the Japanese Romantic

28. Hashikawa Bunzō (1922-83), who succeeded in elevating the right-wing thought to the subject worthy of an academic research, enrolled in the University of Tokyo's School of Law in 1942. While attending school, he worked at the Hiroshima office of ration and returned to Tokyo in June, 1945 for his Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry exam, just three days before the Hiroshima nuclear bomb explosion. Influenced by Japanese Romanticist Yasuda Yojūrō as a young enthusiast of the Japanese empire, Hashikawa joined Marxism as the editor of the magazine *Tide* (*Chōryū*). Meanwhile, he also took on the academic mission of analyzing the early Shōwa nationalism, labelled the 'right-wing ideology,' from various perspectives. See Hashikawa (1974) in Nakajima (2011, 529-39), and Tsurumi Shunsuke's comments in Hashikawa (1984, 304-15).

School and advocated modern scientific technology.²⁹ Meanwhile, Hashikawa focused on the localism aspect of the Japanese Romantic School and agrarianism. This perspective is related to Fujita Shōzō's understanding of agrarianism as a "nonpolitical and independent community movement" against bureaucratic politics. It is also related to his understanding of the Japanese Romantic School as the "rejection of current affairs or politics," and as an "artistic and emotional experience" that aims for "aloof defiance in a world of irony" (Hashikawa 1960, 68-69). Successors and disciples of Maruyama Masao, Fujita and Hashikawa moved away from Maruyama's understanding of the origin of ultra-nationalism in pre-modernization farm communities. Instead, they endeavored to separate the concepts of 'hometown' and 'local patriotism' from 'nation' and 'bureaucracy.'³⁰

Meanwhile, Hashikawa points out that even the prewar radical socialist movements considered the 'loss of homeland' a 'national problem.' The former left-wing movement merely shouted the slogans of 'worker-farmer alliance,' and lacked sufficient knowledge and practice on the 'homeland and nation' (Hashikawa 1960, 68-71). However, the JCP, unlike its prewar strategies of class conflict and abolition of the Emperor System, advocated postwar strategies that affirmed the problem of 'homeland and nation.' Accordingly, Hashikawa's evaluation of the 'national problem' connected the prewar right-wing thought to the JCP's strategic goal of 'national liberation' and 'national culture' in the 1950s. After publishing his preliminary work on the Japanese Romantic School, Hashikawa delved into the differentiation between nationalism and local patriotism. He examined contradictions in the union and the clash between national patriotism and local patriotism in the context of Japanese thought (Hashikawa 1968).³¹

As the Cominform (Communist Information Bureau, 1947-56) attacked the peaceful revolution theory under occupation in the *1950 Japan Theses*, the JCP proposed the establishment of a people's government for national liberation (*minzoku kaihō kokumin seifu*) in the 1951 'New Platform.' The New Platform

29. An active member of the Japanese Romantic School, Kamei had openly criticized the civilization of the Meiji Restoration but later accepted the view of progressive civilization in the postwar period. For distinction between Takeuchi and Kamei, see Jo Gwan-ja (2009, 38-51).

30. From June 1970 to October 1973, Hashikawa—who published the *Shōwa Restoration*—reevaluated Maruyama's *Form of the Military Nation Ruler's Mind*, on its thought of continental activists. Instead of viewing it as an outlaw or violent idea, Hashikawa views the thought from the perspective of Japanese people's 'idea of life' and 'sense of guilt' (Hashikawa 2013, 68-73).

31. Drawing upon the studies of German nationalism and localism, Hashikawa analyzes the Mito School, Yoshida Shōin of the 'revere the emperor, expel the barbarians' movement, and the ideas of National Learning. His works on the *Shōwa Restoration* are results of such nationalism studies.

emphasized not only the anti-American armed struggle but also the cultural struggle by means of ‘people’s movement for national culture (*minzokuteki kokumin bunka undō*)’ and ‘people’s movement for national science (*minzokuteki kokumin kagaku undō*)’ (Kōan Chōsachō 1953, 30-100). This ‘movement for national culture’ continued after the 1955 withdrawal of the armed conflict agenda, remaining even after Asian communism converted to individual nations’ socialist movements (Nihon Kyōsantō 1957). Leading Japan’s *zeitgeist* at the time, the left-wing cultural movement emphasized the ethnic nation rather than class conflict. Hashikawa restored the patriotic sentiment of ‘homeland and nation’ in the right-wing thought. In doing so, he opened up possibilities for the ‘right-wing thought’ to be reconsidered in a positive light by both the leftists and rightists.

At the time, Hayashi Fusao was reinstated from the right-wing purge and affirmed the Greater East Asian War (*Dai Tōa sensō kōteiron*). Hayashi stated that Japan conducted the ‘Hundred Year East Asia War’ to resist Western imperialist colonial rule, starting from the Open Port Period. After Japan’s surrender in 1945, the war against the US continued throughout the Chinese Revolution, Korean War, and other anti-American wars in Southeast Asia, Middle and South America, and Africa (Hayashi 1964, 19-23, 135-38).³² Although his evaluation lacked logical reasoning, Hayashi underscored a history of wars in terms of a resistance against the global Anglo-Saxon colonization, attributing meaning to Japanese pan-Asianism and ‘Greater East Asian War’ in the context. Hayashi relied on the ‘Asian solidarity’ that had escalated since 1955 with the non-aligned nations’ anti-imperialist nationalist movement, in order to restore the contemporary relevance of the postwar Japanese military colonization and prewar Japan’s anti-imperialist (American and British empires) nationalism.

As the left and right wings expanded their agreement on anti-imperialist nationalism, *Shintō* thinker Ashizu Uzuhiko redefined the right wing, not in terms of a left-right conflict but in terms of its conflict with Western civilization. In his 1969 work *The Genealogy and Current Situation of the Right-Wing Spirit* (*Uyoku seishin no keifu to genjō*), he defines the ‘right wing’ as a competing thought against ‘Westernization.’

The right wing was not considered to be conservative or radical. Rather it has been limited to describing the opposition to the West. Anything in Japan that

32. *Affirming the Greater East Asian War (Dai Tōa Sensō kōteiron)* was serialized in the *Central Review (Chūō kōron)*, from September 1963. The 1964 and 1965 volumes were reprinted by a different publisher and were republished in 2001 and 2006, when the anti-American pan-Asianism revived.

originates from Western civilization, whether or not it is conservative and reactionary, is not a part of the right wing. The right wing, whether it is radical or reactionary, has been used as the general term for struggles against 'Westernization' (Ashizu 1969, 149).

In order to reestablish the 'right wing' as anti-Western Japanese thought, the right wing needed to be differentiated from Western liberalism. Matsumoto Ken'ichi in the 1970s fulfilled this role. Matsumoto, who succeeded the lineage of Hashikawa and Takeuchi, severed right-wing nationalism from Western thought and strengthened its ties with pan-Asianism. During the age of the new left-wing movement and consequent emergence of the new right wing, he majored in economics as undergraduate and studied Japanese literature in graduate school; he was appraised for his 1971 work, *The Young Kita Ikki* (*Wakaki Kita Ikki*). From the 1980s, Matsumoto demonstrated the right-wing portrayal of the Asian alliance's potential and despair, through the works of Kita Ikki and Nakano Seigō (Matsumoto 2014). He also distinguished between the terms 'conservative' and 'right wing' and stressed the significance of the distinction. According to Matsumoto, the Japanese translation of liberalism is 'conservative.' In other words, the rationalist ruling power, with hegemony over Japan by the US alliance in the modern period, becomes 'conservative.' On the other hand, the right wing, blamed as war criminals, becomes the resistant force of the ruling power's opponents.

Matsumoto explained the characteristics of Japanese authority. The 'liberal-conservatives' that had imported Western civilization have maintained their ruling power by continually excluding and including the left and right wings. By inserting the 'liberal-conservatives' between the 'left / right wings' and 'ruling / resistant,' Matsumoto constructed the groundwork necessary to shift the blame for the Japanese invasion of Asia from the 'anti-American right wing' to the 'pro-American conservatives.' He thus provided an opportunity to save the right wing from its negative image as the war's 'main culprit' and postwar terrorists. In other words, the 'liberal-conservatives,' under American pressure, pursued the modern nation's civilization and enlightenment and led Japan's invasion of Asia. On the contrary, we could conclude that the right wing, which had expressed solidarity with Asians, ended up helping Japan's invasion of Asia under the rule of the 'liberal-conservatives.' In the postwar period, the conservatives re-allied with the US to gain authority, but the right wing was once again defined as the 'failures of history' by postwar democracy (Matsumoto 2009, 17-18).

In the right wing's doctrine, one could also find the Japanese's romanticized understanding of the 'right wing.' Arahara (1966, inside the book cover) states,

“The true right wing does not flatter the current power, does not follow the world’s current of events, does not yield to power, does not pursue its own benefit, does not seek a false reputation, endures infamy, swings its sword of death against evil when it rises, and lives with exalted and noble patriotism.”³³ Tōyama Mitsuru was considered the fulcrum of continental adventurers. His pen name ‘standing on the clouds (*ritsun*)’ seems to reveal the right wing’s ‘moral’ sentiment of striving to exceed worldly standards. Surely, in Japanese leftist discussion and Koreans’ collective memories, the image of the right wing often indicates the “emperor-centric nationalism.”³⁴ Meanwhile, scholars, approaching the right wing from the viewpoint of Japanese characteristics, understand the ‘emperor-centric love for one’s country and homeland’ as a national sentiment that rational technocrats cannot fathom.

Separating the ‘conservative’ and ‘right wing’ not only opens an escape route to ‘save the right wing’ from the image of war criminals, but also expands sentimental commonalities between the two wings. The nationalist perspective of both the left and right wings agree on the resistance against capitalist modernization and the nation-states’ imperialism. However, they split on the difference between Western modernity (capitalist *Gesellschaft*) and traditional society (agrarian community).³⁵ Having borrowed the concept of class conflict from the West, the left wing ultimately shares its roots with the conservatives. As a result, only right-wing thought could claim to have pervaded the Japanese tradition from the pre-Open Port Period, justifying itself as the resistant force against the ruling powers that reacts to political crises, and as the essence of nationalism.

Such discourse of connecting and reinterpreting the right-wing thought with anti-American nationalism and pan-Asianism, continued in liberal academia after the postwar revival and was popularized in the later 1990s. Takeuchi, who was criticized as the right-wing ideologue by the left wing until the early 1960s,

33. Journalist Ino Kenji (1973), famous for his research on the yakuza, attempted to construct a right-wing genealogy by identifying the right-wing thought that dispels the image of the postwar right-wing gang in the ‘revere the emperor, expel the barbarians’ movement.

34. Han Sang-il’s (2014) research on the Japanese right wing focuses on their involvement in politics and contribution to imperialist invasions.

35. Attempting to overcome the mindset in which the farming community voluntarily joins the ultranationalists, liberalist Maruyama Masao was attacked as a ‘governmental scholar who ideologically supports the postwar democracy’s ruling structure.’ On the other hand, Mishima Yukio, who dreamed of the right-wing nationalists’ resurrection, formed an ideological common ground with the new left movement of the All Campus Joint Struggle Committee (*Zenkyōtō*). In such contrasting cases, the point of separation between the conservatives and both the left and right wings is conceivable.

became a symbolic representative of pan-Asianism in the 2000s.³⁶ Calling it the ‘third modernization,’ Takeuchi commended the anti-capitalist and anti-West Chinese Revolution; his ‘pan-Asianism as a method’ was reinterpreted as a new ‘method’ for overcoming the Americentric globalism with localism, which was also well received in Korea and China.³⁷ Some works of Matsumoto, whose work gained even more momentum since the 2000s, have been published in Korean.³⁸ Pan-Asianism, reinterpreted as the antithesis of Western modernization, produced a trend of reinterpreting Japanese nationalism and reemerged at the turn of the century with Korean and Japanese anti-American sentiment.

How to Perceive the Historicization of Right-Wing Thought

Adopting the thoughts by Hashikawa Bunzō to Matsumoto Ken’ichi, Japanese right-wing thought has been established as ‘Japanese nationalist thought.’ Apart from Western liberalism, rationalism, and conservatism, Japanese right-wing thought has its roots in the traditions of loyalism to the emperor, agrarianism, and localism. In Hayashi’s discussion of the ‘Hundred Year East Asia War,’ he claims the roots of the right wing in the ‘maritime defense theory’ and ‘revere the emperor, expel the barbarians’ movement after the appearance of foreign ships. In the postwar *zeitgeist*, the nationalism (*kokka shugi*) as the ruling ideology was differentiated from the nationalism (*minzoku shugi*) as the ideology for resistance. Saigō Takamori, who opposed the Meiji government, was often revered as the founding father of the Japanese right wing. The origin of right-wing thought was traced back to the late Tokugawa Shogunate, when the term ‘right wing’ did not even exist.

However, in actual history, both the bureaucrats (conservatives) of the Meiji Restoration and their opponents originated from the ‘revere the emperor, expel the barbarians’ movement. In addition, the opponents’ argument to invade Korea (*sei-Kan ron*) and Freedom and People’s Rights Movement were also

36. In the 2000s, Marukawa Tetsushi redefined Takeuchi in the context of pan-Asianism. See Chen and Marukawa (2011). On the other hand, Nakajima Takeshi, following Matsumoto Ken’ichi’ footsteps, seems to propagate pan-Asianism in the general public discussion in the 2010s.

37. Sun Ge’s works, which introduced Takeuchi to China, have been translated into Japanese and Korean as well. For its Korean translation, see Sun (2007).

38. In 2004, Iwanami Shoten revised and published Matsumoto’s *Legend of Kita Ikki* (*Kita Ikki densetsu*), originally published by Kawade Shobō Shinsha in 1986. For its Korean translation, see Matsumoto (2010).

unified in the national sovereignty movement (*kokken undō*).³⁹ Ultimately, the roots of the left and right wings are not so different, if not sharing one body. Granted all this, Hashikawa's differentiation of nation and homeland together with Matsumoto's differentiation between right wing and conservative reflect the *zeitgeist* in which the two lived. Hashikawa was active during a period (1950s-'70s) in which the government was denied authority and democracy elevated. As he criticized the right-wing thought of nationalism, he simultaneously attempted to rescue patriotism ingrained in the popular sentiment. In Matsumoto's period of activity, Japan achieved its status as a major economic power and had a future-oriented desire to lead the Asian regional order. This being so, both the guilt and solidarity toward Asian countries were conceivable at the time. Matsumoto attempted to prove that pan-Asianism was actually an ideology that aimed for alliance over invasion.

However, such right-wing research provides evidence to politicians such as Abe and the national sentiment demanding the Yasukuni Shrine worship. In accordance with the popularization of such research since the end of 1990s, the right-wing sentiment has exceeded the former resistance against the nation, bureaucracy, and politics, thus erupting as nationalism demanding a 'strong nation.' The grassroots nationalism and localism emphasize the revitalization of the local economy and oppose neo-liberalism and globalization measures such as the US-Japan Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). The need to distinguish state nationalism from ethnic nationalism has faded, as the conflict among competing perspectives of history and territorial disputes have been aggravated since 2010. The right wing of the past assigned itself the task of 'reviving' Asia, at a time when China and the Korean Peninsula were weak. However, Japan has lost its hegemony in Asian economic growth, and the right-wing sentiment is intensifying Japan's inward instinct of protection and desire for a strong nation.

In the current situation of Japan's desire for a 'strong nation,' the popularity of Saigō Takamori, the founding father of the right-wing opponents of the Meiji government, has waned. Instead Yoshida Shōin, who is believed to have cultivated both the driving force and leaders of the Meiji Restoration, has emerged as the new father figure. Having studied Confucianism, National Learning, and Dutch Learning (*Rangaku*), Shōin was also interested in Western civilization's technology and military science. He founded the *Shōkason Academy* (*Shōkasonjuku*), where

39. The military tacticians, including Saigō Takamori, as the supporters of *sei-Kan ron* and heroes of the resistant People's Rights group, suggested that the management of Korea and Manchuria was necessary to protect Japan's sovereignty. Leader of the continental activists Tōyama Mitsuru, together with Saigō Takamori, exchanged ideas with Itagaki Daisuke, who represented *sei-Kan ron* and the People's Rights group. Regarding their exchange of thoughts, see Tōyama (2008).

the leading individuals of the ‘revere the emperor, expel the barbarians’ movement and the Meiji Restoration gathered. Through Yoshida’s emergence as the new father, public awareness for restoring the ‘strong spirit’ has become active. Published in May 2013, the most recent Japanese compilation of Yoshida’s quotations, *A Method of Refining Resolution*, printed thirteen editions and sold over 200,000 copies until January 2014. Its advertising copy reads, “Will you live in the anxiety, or will you die for the ideal? (*fuan to ikiru ka, risō ni shinu ka*).” This slogan attempts to inspire the daily lives of Japanese who have experienced the “lost two decades” and advises a determination to achieve the national ideal (Ikeda 2013).⁴⁰

The underlying psychology of the reinterpretation of the right-wing thought is to summon the collective memories regarding the revolutionary spirit of the Meiji Restoration in order to incite a new ‘national revolution’ to break from the postwar polity. The historicization of right-wing thought is also a task to reestablish modern Japanese history, which transitioned from the ‘revere the emperor, expel the barbarians’ movement to the Meiji Restoration, within the genealogy of ‘national’ thought. In this context, it may be possible to depict a complete ‘revolutionary history of Japanese thought,’ which encompasses both the left and right wings. There is no need for a determinist mindset that either criticizes the Japanese right-wing thought or causes an adverse effect by instigating the conservative shift. That being said, it is certain that the right-wing spirit has existed all along in the Japanese collective memories, starting from the Late Tokugawa Shogunate, Meiji Restoration, and all the way up to the 1930s Shōwa Restoration after Japan’s withdrawal from the League of Nations. The right-wing thought remains alive and influential, thereby leading the ‘national reformation’ during crises. The right wing’s usage of the term ‘restoration,’ in their organizations and party names, reveals their sense of duty to control the nation’s destiny.

The right wing’s ‘rebellious energy,’ which served the opponents of both the Meiji and Shōwa governments, advocated the innovative energy of a national renovation. However, this innovative energy was always accompanied by a war. As a result of this historical trauma, the majority of Japanese hastened the renovation of the postwar polity and feared the emergence of the right wing as a political power. Although modern Japanese people welcome a positive reinterpretation of right-wing thought,⁴¹ they are resistant against its

40. In the Amazon book reviews, the right-wing readers and enthusiasts of the political movements of the Late Tokugawa Shogunate criticize Ikeda’s book (2013) as a mere self-improvement book adapted into modern language.

41. Published as a series in *Henkei* (Frontier) for three years, Hashikawa’s *Essay on the Shōwa*

popularization and politicization. This phenomenon shares its traits with the underlying psychology of Chinese and Koreans, in their opposition to Japan's conservative shift. Accordingly, it is necessary for Koreans and Chinese to broaden their perspective of the historicization of Japanese right-wing thought and collaborate with Japanese in the endeavor to suppress the 'rebellious energy' that could cause disputes. After all, this communication skill that supersedes each nation's inward historicization is the most important driving force in creating the region's future order.

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Restoration (*Shōwa ishin shiron*) was posthumously published as a book in 1984. Regarding the publication, Tsurumi Shunsuke expresses his feelings by borrowing the following words of Katō Norihiro: "Should I express this as drinking not only the inexpensive 10 to 20 years-old drinks but also the delicious drink that has aged for 40 years after the war? Or should I say that postwar Japan has just started to acquire the Kafka-like truth of this grotesque taste?" (Hashikawa 2013, 304). As revealed in Tsurumi's reaction, Hashikawa's endeavor to rethink the representation of the leaders of the Shōwa Restoration as the 'right wing, which was considered synonymous with the war criminal' continued throughout the 1960s and 1970s but revealed its full structure only after his death; his work was being published even more actively in the 2000s.

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