

# **Presentations**



# Pan-Asianism in Modern Japan and the East Asian Regional Order

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## Introduction

In East Asia, the environment surrounding Japan's security is currently undergoing dramatic changes. In the background is the state of the world that Ian Bremmer and others have labelled "G-Zero," the rapid rise of China and the confrontation between the United States and China, and the disintegration of the old order and the fluid situations in regions linked to them.

At the same time, there is an unbreakable economic interdependence among nations that are in fierce conflict and competition with each other, and enormous cross-national economic projects such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative, and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) underway. There is also a remarkable interpenetration of culture in Asia, including theater, music, video, art, dance, and cuisine.

At present, however, a "Pan-Asianist" ideology seems to be absent in East Asia. Around the time of the formation of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) government of Hatoyama Yukio in 2009, discussions of "East Asia Community" and other forms of Pan-Asianism gained momentum in Japan. According to Yamamuro Shin'ichi, the first official use of the term "East Asia Community" by the Japanese Government was in 2003 when Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichiro used the term at a special summit meeting with ASEAN as a response to China's agreement to conclude a free trade agreement with ASEAN in November 2001. In September 2004, Prime Minister Koizumi referred to the "East Asia Community" in his speech to the UN General Assembly. Later in 2009, Prime Minister Hatoyama promoted the concept of an East Asia Community as a long-term vision and advocated using it as the basis for strengthening the Japan-US alliance (Yamamuro Shin'ichi, *Ajia no Shisō-shimyaku - Kūkan-teki Shisō-gaku no Kokoromi* [Asia's Stream of History of Thought: The Development of Spatial Thought Studies], Jinbun Shoin, 2017, pp. 175-176). Nowadays, there seems to be a strong impression that the "East Asia Community" coincided with the Democratic Party of Japan administration.

With the so-called "nationalization" of the Senkaku Islands in 2012, the "anti-Japanese demonstrations" in China and the deterioration of Japan-China relations, the deterioration of Japan-Korea relations centered on the Takeshima issue and the so-called "comfort women" issue, such enthusiasm for the concept of the East Asia Community has disappeared. As pointed out by Hoshiro Hiroyuki, *Ajia Chiiki Shugi Gaikō no Yukue* [The Future of Asian Regionalist Diplomacy], (Bokutakusha, 2008), postwar Japan's "Pan-Asianism" excluded its neighbors China, and the Korean Peninsula from its agenda. Even today, few people believe that signs of "symbiosis" are sprouting between Japan and China, South Korea, North Korea, and Russia, with which Japan should be in solidarity because of its "Pan-Asianism."

Nevertheless, interest in “Pan-Asianism” is still high. Last year, Saga Takashi’s *Ajia Shugi Zenshi* [A Complete History of Pan-Asianism], (Chikuma Shobo, 2020), a compilation of his research to date, was published with the blurb “A definitive overview of the diversity of Asian history: Exploring the possibilities for symbiosis with Asia” and attracted much attention. Is this phenomenon due to nostalgia for a time when Japan had great influence? Or is it a reaction against a world order by either the United States or China, both of which have an overwhelming presence? Saga writes, “Pan-Asianism cannot be recreated in a past form in today’s world. However, in a situation where Western modernism is at a standstill, there is a possibility that it will inherit the positive qualities of past thought and become the basis for creating new values” (Saga Takashi, “Shippitsu Nōto [Writing Note]: *Ajia Shugi Zenshi*,” in *Mita-hyoron Online*, November 9, 2020, «<https://www.mita-hyoron.keio.ac.jp/literary-review/202011-1.html>» accessed on February 7, 2021). But how exactly is that possible? If we read Hatsuse Ryuhei’s essay “Gurōbaru-ka Jidai no Ajia Shugi - Nakamura Tetsu no Baai [The Pan-Asianism in the Globalization Era: The case of Nakamura Tetsu],” (Kyoto Women’s University, *Gendai Shakai Kenkyū* [Contemporary Society Studies], No. 8, December 2005) about Nakamura Tetsu, a doctor and the representative of Peace Japan Medical Services, who was killed in Afghanistan and whom Saga introduces as the model of “Asian sentiment” in the future, it is difficult to understand how the example is connected to modern Pan-Asianism and why it should be “Asian.”

In accordance with the purpose of this forum, this paper attempts to reconsider and organize modern Japan’s “Pan-Asianism” from the perspective of the “security environment” as “a policy designed to deal with the uncertainty over the existing international and regional order.” This perspective is useful in that it allows us to examine “Pan-Asianism” not only as an “idea” in the form of a “dream” or sentiment, but also as a “policy” of the state in response to the “security environment” in politics and economics. Because “Pan-Asianism” has been dealt with mainly in the field of the history of thought, various possibilities have been discussed freely and vaguely, separately from its reality and feasibility. To view “Pan-Asianism,” which originally had a strong character of romanticism, as a policy of the state is on the one hand to remove the aspect of “solidarity with the people” and “symbiosis.” On the other hand, because much of modern “Pan-Asianism” was presented under a dignified name but in the reality was used and salvaged by the state, it would be rather effective in clarifying the reality.

Viewing “Pan-Asianism” in relation to the national policies also helps to illuminate the relationship between “Pan-Asianism,” capitalism, and civilization. Umemori Naoyuki sees “Pan-Asianism” as resistance to the encroachment of capitalism, and brilliantly analyzed the character of the “Japanese communitarianism” of Saigō Takamori, Tōyama Mitsuru, Kita Ikki, Miyazaki Tōten, and others (Umemori, “Bunmei to Han Bunmei no Aida: Shoki Ajia Shugi-sha no Shisō to Kōdō [Between Civilization and Anti-civilization: Early Pan-Asianists’ Thoughts and Actions],” in Umemori Naoyuki et al., eds., *Rekishi no Naka no Ajia Chiiki Tōgō* [The Asian Regional Integration in the History], Keiso Shobo, 2012). However, if we look at “Pan-Asianism” in relation to the national policies it becomes possible to grasp the opposite aspect of Umemori’s point, namely, the aspect in which “Pan-Asianism” was closely related to capitalism and grew together, emerging as a new civilization of the state. Recognizing

the above, examining “Pan-Asianism” from the perspective of the “security environment” in politics and economics as a “policy designed to deal with the uncertainty over the existing international and regional order” will help us to organize the changes in “Pan-Asianism” over time and understand its dynamism.

### 1. “Pan-Asianism” as a Non-Mainstream “Dream”

The narrative of “Pan-Asianism” usually mentions Aizawa Seishisai, Satō Nobuhiro, Hashimoto Sanai, Yoshida Shōin, Hirano Kuniomi, and Katsu Kaishū in the late Edo period, and then introduces thinkers from the early Meiji period onward. These include Saigō Takamori, Sone Toshitora and others in the *Kōa-kai* [Raising Asia Society], the *Ajia Kyō-kai* [Asia Society], and the *Tōa Dōbun-kai* [East Asia Common Culture Society], (Hazama Naoki, “Shoki Ajia Shugi ni tsuite no Shiteki Kōsatsu [The Historical Thought of the Early Pan-Asianism],” 1-Final in *Tōa* [East Asia], Nos. 410-417, August 2001-March 2002); Kuroki Morifumi, “Kōa-kai no Ajia Shugi [The Pan-Asianism of Raising Asia Society],” (Kyushu University, *Hosei Kenkyū* [Journal of Law and Politics], Vol. 71, No. 4, March 2005, etc.), Tōyama Mitsuru’s *Genyōsha* [Dark Ocean Society], Uchida Ryohei’s *Kokuryūkai* [Black Dragon Society], Tarui Tōkichi, Miyazaki Tōten, and Okakura Kakuzō (Matsumoto Ken’ichi, *Takeuchi Yoshimi “Nihon no Ajia Shugi” Seidoku* [Intensive Reading of Takeuchi Yoshimi’s Japan’s Pan-Asianism] (Iwanami Shoten, 2000); Saga, *Ajia Shugi Zenshi*). All were aware of the threat of Western colonialism, including Russia, and called attention to Japan’s serious security crisis. However, due to the lack of objective means of measuring crises at the time, most of these were conceptual and not based on realistic calculations of how to overcome crises in the actual international environment.

#### (1) Anti-Westernism as a Non-Mainstream Faction of the Meiji Government

The first thing these Pan-Asianists had in common was that they asserted themselves as anti-Western, and were on the sidelines or anti-mainstream in relation to the Meiji government. As will be discussed later, it was not until the Sino-Japanese War of 1937 period that the government officially adopted Pan-Asianism. Iriye Akira’s *Nihon no Gaikō* [Japan’s Diplomacy], (Chuokoron-sha, 1966, pp. 27-29), a classic overview, pointed out that the Meiji government’s diplomacy was generally pragmatic or “thoughtless diplomacy” in line with Western-style imperialism, while the private sector was idealistic and retained a Pan-Asianist sentiment. In fact, after the Meiji Restoration, the gap in power between Japan and the Western powers was so obvious that the government made no insistence on collaborating with Asian countries at the risk of confronting the Western powers.

An example of this was in 1881 when King Kalākaua of the Kingdom of Hawaii, which was in danger of being annexed by the United States, visited Japan and proposed the formation of an Asian League with Japan as its leader, but the Emperor Meiji refused. Emperor Meiji replied that the neighboring nation of the Qing Dynasty was a “great power and arrogant in its ways” and that they did not have peaceful relations that would allow them to share in an Asian League, and it would be extremely difficult to realize the King’s proposal (Donald

Keene, *Meiji Tennō* [Emperor Meiji], Vol. 1, Shincho-sha, 2001, pp. 534-540). The Meiji government concluded a Japan-Hawaii migration agreement in 1885 and in accordance with the agreement, sent emigrants to Hawaii. However, the Hawaiian monarchy was abolished in 1893, and Hawaii was annexed by the United States in 1898 during the Spanish-American War. During this time, Japan dispatched the warship *Naniwa* to Hawaii to protect the Japanese residents, but this did not stop the United States from moving to annex Hawaii.

Until the victory of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, for Japan, the Qing Dynasty was one of the great powers. The military power represented by the North Sea Fleet's *Zhenyuan* and *Dingyuan*, known as the "most impregnable ships in the Orient," was a serious security threat to the Japanese Navy. Above all, the dynasties of mainland China were the "China" that shaped the political, economic, and cultural standards of East Asia including the "maritime ban" until the pre-modern era. That is why the Japanese Pan-Asianists tried to support Sun Yat-sen in his attempt to overthrow the "great power" Qing China. Utsunomiya Taro, who participated in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894 as a young General Staff officer of the Imperial Headquarters, visited the Forbidden City in 1913 when he was the Chief of the 2nd Bureau (Intelligence, G2), the Army General Staff. Utsunomiya "could not help but envy the greatness of the national power of China" when he compared it with Japan, "an island empire like a bean" (*Nihon Rikugun to Tairiku Seisaku: Rikugun Taishō Utsunomiya Tarō Nikki* [The Japanese Army and its Continental Policy: The Diary of Utsunomiya Taro, General of Army], Vol. 2, Iwanami Shoten, 2007, pp. 204-205, accounts on March 2, 1913). Utsunomiya was also keen on assimilating the Koreans and Chinese and advocated the formation of a Japan-Sino-Korean alliance after Qing China was divided in order to prepare for a racial war. After the Xinhai Revolution, he preached the division of China. Utsunomiya advocated "Greater Japanism" based on the principles of "self-reliance, self-strengthening, and self-preservation." He had Matsui Iwane, whom he expected to become a successor in the next generation and later became the center of the Greater Asia Association, be engaged in supporting Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary activity, Manchuria-Mongolian independence movement, and projects for Southeast Asia (Matsuura Masataka, "*Daitōa Sensō*" wa Naze Okita no ka [Why did the "Greater East Asia War" Break Out?], The University of Nagoya Press, 2010, pp. 113-121, 140-152). However, after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, the Japanese Government chose the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and coordination with Britain and the United States as the framework for security in East Asia.

Thus, Pan-Asianism in the Meiji and Taishō periods was positioned outside the mainstream of the government's policy of coordination with Britain and the United States as security realism and does not fit into the analysis as a national policy.

## **(2) Sentimentalism as the Bond with the Hometown and Landsmen**

The first person to be pointed to as the originator of Pan-Asianism is Saigō Takamori. Although Saigō was a hero of the Meiji Restoration, he did not seek power or wealth, and criticized the government's policy of Western modernization. Many Pan-Asianists, including Arao Sei and Tōyama Mitsuru, admired Saigō as a man who died for his hometown and landsmen. Some

interpret Saigō's advocacy of the Korean invasion not as a contention of armed aggression but as an attempt to criticize Western civilization and realize "Oriental royalism" (Saga, *Ajia Shugi Zenshi*, pp. 26-29; Mōri Toshihiko, *Meiji Rokunen Seihen* [Coups of 1873], Chuokoron-sha, 1979, pp. 127-131) argues that Saigō's application to become an envoy to Korea was for the purpose of negotiating a treaty with the country).

One of the key elements is emotional empathy with people and strong horizontal solidarity with the hometown and landsmen. Not only those who met Saigō only once, but also those who heard his stories and were influenced by his words, were fascinated by the way he lived his life, including his daily behavior and his relationships. An example of this is "*Nanshūō Ikun* (The Teachings of the Late Nanshū)," a compilation of Saigō's lessons in Kagoshima by a member of the former Shonai Clan who admired his kindness. The same is true of his Pan-Asianism, which was continuously reconstructed by Matsui Iwane, who revered Arao Sei from his hometown and who inherited the worship of Saigō by Arao Sei, a native of the Owari Clan (see Matsuura, "*Daitōa Sensō*" wa Naze Okita no ka, pp. 153-158). In this sense, it can be said that Pan-Asianism, with Saigō as one of its originators, was also a vertical network that transcended generations.

Capitalism is an inorganic system in which anyone can acquire goods through impersonal exchange via "currency." Conversely, Marxism, which criticizes capitalism, connects people through "reading" (or thinking one understands) Marx's text, *Capital*. In Pan-Asianism, on the other hand, the opportunity to "meet" face-to-face is crucial. Information that cannot be quantified or symbolized, such as the color of the face and hair, smell, warmth, tone of voice, speaking speed, pauses, accent, gaze, and facial expression, plays a significant role. Even if you do not speak a common language, it can be that you know someone in common or have met them before. As introduced by Caroline S. Hau and Shiraishi Takashi, Sun Yat-sen got to know Chinese students studying in Japan and met Inukai Tsuyoshi through Miyazaki Tōten. Furthermore, through Liang Qichao, a member of the Reform Movement (*Henpōjikyō-ha*) introduced by Inukai, he met Vietnamese independence activist Phan Bội Châu and discussed the uprising against France in written Chinese characters. Mariano Ponce, a member of the Philippine independence movement, met Sun Yat-sen at Inukai's house. Through Sun Yat-sen, Ponce got to know Korean reform activists such as Park Young-hyo and Yu Kil-chun. Also, Rash Behari Bose, who fled to Japan after an assassination attempt on the Viceroy of India, was hidden in Shinjuku Nakamura-ya through the introduction of Uchida Ryōhei, a comrade of Tōyama Mitsuru who was introduced to Sun Yat-sen (see Matsuura Masataka, "Murata Shōzō to Jitsugyō Ajia Shugi - Senzen, Senchū, Sengo o Tsuranuku Mono [Murata Shozo and Industrial Pan-Asianism: The Things that go through before, during and after the War]" in Huang Zi-jin ed., *Nitchū Sensō to wa Nandatta no ka* [What was the Sino-Japanese War of 1937?], Minerva Shobo, 2017, pp. 317-318).

Not long after the Meiji Restoration, when Japan was still weak and lagging in modernization compared to the great powers, local and blood relations, such as home feudal domain and birthplace, were extremely important. Even after the abolition of feudal domains in the Meiji era, the networks of home feudal domain were extremely important in the creation of society. For this reason, the network of Pan-Asianism often closely

overlapped with that of birthplace.

The author once pointed out the presence of personal genealogies stretching from the end of the Edo period to the “Greater East Asia War,” with Nagoya added to the Kagoshima and Saga cliques, including Saigō, Kawakami Sōroku (Kagoshima), Arao Sei (Nagoya), Utsunomiya Taro (Saga), and Matsui Iwane (Nagoya), as an influential trend of Pan-Asianism, and discussed the characteristics of the hometown and landsmen consciousness, trade and military expansion, and historical memory behind it (Matsuura, “*Daitōa Sensō*” *wa Naze Okita no ka*, p. 141 and his article entitled “Han Ajia Shugi ni okeru ‘Kyūshū Yōin [The ‘Kyushu factor’ in the Pan-Asianism]” in *Hokudai Hōgaku Ronshū* [The Hokkaido Law Review], Vol. 59, Nos. 2 and 3, 2008). Here, the author will follow Yamamuro Shin’ichi to briefly introduce the relationship between Pan-Asianism and the local area in Kumamoto. Pan-Asianists in Kumamoto included Miyazaki Tōten (whose elder brother Hachirō participated in the Seinan War), Hosokawa Moriyoshi (president of the *Kōa-kai* [Raising Asia Society]), Tokutomi Sohō, Sassa Tomofusa, Sassa Masayuki, Adachi Kenzō and other members of the *Kumamoto Kokken-tō* [Kumamoto National Rights Party] as well as Munakata Kotarō. There were also “ruffians” associated with the assassination of Empress Myeongseong, members of Arao Sei’s *Kankō Rakuzen-dō* and the *Nisshin Bōeki Kenkyūjo* [Sino-Japanese Trade Research Center], Ishimitsu Makiyo, an intelligence activist from the Japanese Army, and Mutō Akira who served as the General Staff of the Kwantung Army, Vice Chief of Staff of the Central China Area Army and the North China Area Army and Director of the Military Affairs Bureau (of the Ministry of Army), (Yamamuro Shin’ichi, *Ajia-bito no Fūshi - Kanchihō-gaku no Kokoromi* [The Appearance of Asian people: An Attempt of Regional Rim Studies], Jinbun Shoin, 2017, Chapter 2). What is interesting about the relationship between the “Kumamoto people” and Pan-Asianism, as Yamamuro notes, is that the traditions and education of Chinese studies and Korean language at the clan school *Jishūkan* and the Chinese studies schools, such as *Dōshin Gakusha* and *Seiseikō* established by Sassa Tomofusa, played a significant role. In Kumamoto, the tradition of Western studies since Yokoi Shōnan, the Kumamoto Band, and the freedom and popular rights movements had been thriving. The national rights movement and Pan-Asianism grew in competition and opposition to those. In addition, the human network based on links to the hometown and landsmen of Kumamoto and businesses such as printing and the newspaper were also closely related to Pan-Asianism.

In Pan-Asianism, people-to-people relationships are extremely important, not only those related to the hometowns of former clans, but also the individuals who serve as connectors. Sun Yat-sen, who became the center of a network of Asian independence activists in Japan, was one such activist, as was Inukai Tsuyoshi. Inukai, who was born in Okayama, studied Chinese studies, built his reputation as a newspaper reporter, travelled across the country as a civil rights activist, led a small political party as a party politician, and influenced people all over the country as “a China expert.” He was a Pan-Asianist who along with nationalists such as Tōyama Mitsuru and Uchida Ryōhei befriended and supported the activities of many Asians, including Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, Sun Yat-sen, Kim Ok-gyun, Park Yung-hyo, Rash Behari Bose of India, Cuong De of Vietnam, and Mariano Ponce of the Philippines (regarding Inukai, refer to Oka Yoshitake’s *Kindai Nihon no Seijika* [The Modern Japanese



Politicians], Iwanami Shoten, 2020, the chapter on Inukai and “Commentary” by the author). The examples of Sun Yat-sen and Inukai show that even in the absence of geographical ties, godfathers who baptize people in Pan-Asianism create hometown and landsmen ties.

Yamamuro Shin'ichi argues that in the pre-war Japanese Empire, human identity was formed as an accumulation of interconnections and intersections of local spaces as reality and that these local spaces as reality shaped the way people looked at the national space of “Japan,” the regional world of Asia, and the global world (Yamamuro, *Asia-bito no Fūshi*, pp. 337-340). This is a very perceptive point. Before World War I, when the economic networks of capitalism were not so strong, it was natural for the Pan-Asianist identity to reflect strong ties with local hometowns and landsmen. This is probably why people with an anti-mainstream or fringe attitude toward the Meiji government, which was promoting Western modernization, often developed a Pan-Asianist mentality.

However, if the Pan-Asianists of the time thought that they should partner with neighboring Asian countries such as Korea and Qing China, they had no choice but to tie up with an alliance of collaborators who accepted the Meiji Restoration model as a variant of the Western modernization model. In East Asia, long dominated by Sinocentric relations, with a very strong ethnocentric worldview that looks down on other countries prevailing, if one aspired to a Pan-Asian partnership, it was necessary to deal with openers and modernizers who were free from the viewpoint of vertical order. In the case of Korea, it was the Radical Reformist Faction (the Enlightenment Party), including Kim Ok-gyun and Park Yung-hyo, who were supported by Fukuzawa Yukichi and involved in the *Kōa-kai* [Raising Asia Society]. However, the 1884 Gapsin Coup failed in a matter of days due to Qing intervention. Fukuzawa Yukichi's “*Datsu-A Ron* [Argument for Leaving Asia],” published in the *Jiji-shinpō* in March 1885, as interpreted by Banno Junji, was a declaration of defeat by Fukuzawa who had continued to support the modernization of Korea through an alliance with Japan (Banno Junji, *Kindai Nihon to Ajia - Meiji Shisō no Jitsuzō* [The Modern Japan and Asia: The Real Image of Meiji Thought], Chikuma Shobo, 2013, Chapter 1). Yamamuro Shin'ichi also explains that Fukuzawa's anger at the brutal executions of those people whom he supported in the modernization of Korea, regardless of women or men, old or young, led to his fervent call to break the relationship with Qing China and Korea (Yamamuro, *Asia-bito no Fūshi*, pp. 33-42).

In the case of Qing China, the Meiji Restoration model and the alliance with Japan were oriented toward the open-minded reforms based on the Self-Strengthening Movement carried out by the Guangxu Emperor, Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, and others in 1898. It was Ito Hirobumi who was invited to join them as an advisor on modernization. However, the day after Ito received the court's gracious treatment, the conservative Empress Dowager Cixi and others conducted the Coup of 1898, and the attempt failed (Takii Kazuhiro, *Itō Hirobumi*, Chuokoron-shinsha, 2010, p. 258).

Ironically, it was the so-called Europeanists such as Ito Hirobumi and Inoue Kaoru whom the Pan-Asianists criticized, and Fukuzawa Yukichi, who cooperated with the groups allied with Japan in Qing China and Korea. Pan-Asianism makes it relatively easy to form partnership at the civilian level among the “weak” in the fight against a common enemy, the Western powers. But it is difficult for those in charge of government in East Asia, which

has long been familiar with the tradition of hierarchical values, to form horizontal and equal alliances. The fact that open-minded governments in the Qing Dynasty and Korea collapsed so easily in their respective domestic power situations means that the domestic conditions were not right to an East Asian partnership among China, Japan, and Korea. Even if this trilateral partnership is realized, Pan-Asianism will end up being a “dream” without realism if it does not have the security rivalry to create a balance against the Western powers. The theory of a Sino-Japanese alliance of Konoe Atsumaro, who organized the *Tōa Dōbun-kai* [East Asia Common Culture Society], was not feasible domestically or internationally in the face of “China partition” by the great powers. Japan could not participate in either “China preservation” through the theory of a racial alliance or “China partition.”

Oka Yoshitake gave a New Year’s lecture in 1966 to the Showa Emperor: “Changes in International Consciousness in Modern Japan: Focusing on the Period from the First to the 38th Year of Meiji.” In that lecture, Oka stated the following. The pressure of the West against the backdrop of the Eastward expansion of Western power heightened a sense of national crisis in Japan, and the Meiji Restoration took place as a national revolution. Regarding the greatest external issue of national independence, there were two paths to choose from: either to move toward “*Kōa* [Developing Asia]” based on the Sino-Japanese partnership theory, or to move toward what Fukuzawa Yukichi called “*Datsu-A* [Leaving Asia],” by which Japan would become a great power through external expansion and create a balance with the West. Due to the victory in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, “*Datsu-A*” was chosen. As a result of the Triple Intervention, “the Yellow Peril,” and China’s partition by the West, Japan countered Russia’s expansion into Manchuria with the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and secured national independence by winning the Russo-Japanese War. However, this resulted in the Manchurian problem: a major problem in the history of Japanese diplomacy (Matsuura Masataka, “Oka Yoshitake to Akihito Kōtaishi [Oka Yoshitake and Crown Prince Akihito]” in *Shisō* [Thought], No. 1153, May 2020, pp. 25-45). In a manuscript Oka prepared the year before, he wrote that the theory of a Sino-Japanese partnership before the Sino-Japanese War had a standpoint to see China as a cultural and political great power (“Oka Yoshitake Bunsho [Documents of Oka Yoshitake]” II [1] 2).13: “Shōwa 40 [1965] Imperial New Year’s Lecture ‘Kindai Nihon Gaikō ni okeru Chūgoku-kan no Hensen [Changes in the View of China in the Modern Japan Diplomacy]” in Collection of the Center for Modern Japanese Legal and Political Documents, Graduate Schools for Law and Politics, The University of Tokyo). That was just at the level of sentiment or consciousness.

However, the political process cannot be directly explained by “international consciousness” or sentiment. In terms of “international consciousness,” it is doubtful that Pan-Asianist consciousness such as the theory of a partnership among China, Japan, and Korea could have been dominant in Japan before the Sino-Japanese War of 1894. From the perspective of security realism, the Japanese Government had already chosen to follow and adapt to the Western powers rather than Pan-Asianism since the early Meiji period.

## 2. The Growth of Pan-Asianism as a Policy

However, the situation regarding Pan-Asianism subsequently changed. This is because the international situation surrounding Japan changed before and after World War I, and Japan's political and economic position was perceived to have improved. While Japan's political, economic, and military powers had not yet become sufficient to lead and build a regional order in East Asia, the growing number of people with strong confidence in their country's capabilities began to change things dramatically.

### (1) Development of the Japanese Economy

The first change in the situation was the growth of capitalism in Japan through World War I. Japan, which had been suffering from a current account deficit, moved to a large surplus after 1915 until 1919. Japan turned from a debtor nation to a creditor nation, exporting capital to European countries through the purchase of their government bonds, while at the same time providing the Nishihara loans to China (Sawai Minoru and Tanimoto Masayuki, *Nihon Keizai-shi* [The Economic History of Japan], Yuhikaku, 2016, p. 250).

Starting from the iron ore and coke sales contract between the Hanyang Iron Works and the Imperial Steel Works (Yawata Steel Works) signed after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, Japan provided loans to the Hanyang Iron Works just prior to the Russo-Japanese War. After the Russo-Japanese War, seeking to invest in railroad concessions in Central China and South China including Fujian Province, Japan extended large loans to the Han-Ye-Ping Iron and Coal Company through the Yokohama Specie Bank. The fact that Japan was now providing loans to China represented a major shift. During the Xinhai Revolution, Japan and Russia joined the British, French, German, and US loan syndicate to China, established in 1910 and became members of a six-nation loan syndicate (Kubota Yūji, *Taichu Shakkan no Seiji Keizai-shi* [The Politico-Economic History of Loan to China], The University of Nagoya Press, 2016, Chapters 1 and 2). However, with the onset of World War I, the withdrawal of German and Russian capitalists and the busyness of the British and French sides greatly improved Japan's position in East Asian finance. The second Okuma cabinet, which made the Twenty-one Demands to China, envisioned Japan's ascendance in the international loan syndicate and a sole loan to China. The Terauchi cabinet supported Duan Qirui's government with the Nishihara loans amidst the rise of the "Japan-China friendship" theory, and as seen in the "Integration of Korean and Manchurian Finance" by Shōda Kazue and others, attempted to unilaterally get involved in the monetary reform of China and the financial affairs of the warlord regime (Kubota, *Taichu Shakkan no Seiji Keizai-shi*, Chapters 5, 6, and the final chapter). The reasons why Japan actually began to intervene in the monetary system reform and the financial and economic affairs of the Chinese state and local governments were to secure resources such as iron ore and coal against the "China partition" by the Western powers and, as a security motive, to secure "spheres of influence" such as Fujian Province to protect the colonies and interests in Taiwan, Korea, and Manchuria gained as a result of the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars.

In addition, as is well known, with the exit of European countries from the Asian

market during World War I, Japan expanded its exports to the Asian market, mainly in light industries such as textiles and general merchandise. The global shortage of ships led to the development of the shipping and shipbuilding industries, which in turn stimulated demand in the machinery and steel industries, creating a virtuous cycle. In this way, Japan achieved import substitution, which had been an issue since the Meiji Restoration, and succeeded in replacing the capital of Western powers, including Britain, in China, India, Southeast Asia, and other markets after fierce competition (Sawai and Tanimoto, *Nihon Keizai-Shi*, p. 250). Even before the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, “industrial Pan-Asianism,” a mixture of early business, intelligence (military), and cultural exchange existed, as seen in *Rakuzen-dō* and the *Nisshin Bōeki Kenkyūjo* [Sino-Japanese Trade Research Center] in which Arao Sei, Nezu Hajime, and Nishi Kiichi were involved (Matsuura, “*Daitōa Sensō*” wa Naze Okita no ka, pp. 153-159). However, with the growth of Japanese capital after World War I, it came to be linked with fiscal and economic policies.

Investment in Manchuria in the 1920s was mainly by the South Manchuria Railway while that in mainland China went into commerce and industry with cotton spinning accounting for the overwhelming majority. The spearheads of this “industrial Pan-Asianism” were the textile industry including Kanebo, the shipping industry including Osaka Shosen, and trading companies including Mitsui & Co., which sold Japanese products around the world. They entered China and other parts of Asia, and had an intense sense of competition and hostility toward Western capitalism, including the British, as seen in such figures as Mutō Sanji and Tsuda Shingo of Kanebo, Murata Shōzō of Osaka Shosen, and Mori Kaku of Mitsui & Co. (Matsuura, “Murata Shōzō to Jitsugyō Ajia Shugi [Murata Shōzō and Business Pan-Asianism]” and idem, “Zaikaijin-tachi no Seiji to Ajia Shugi [The Businessmen’s Politics and Pan-Asianism]” in *Rikkyō Hōgaku* [St. Paul’s Review of Law and Politics], No. 95, 2017). Many of them also competed and confronted the fast-developing Chinese national spinning industry by expanding outward to China and other countries. Therefore, the large Japanese spinning companies shifted from the traditional export strategy to a direct investment strategy and established local factories (*zaikabō*) mainly in Shanghai (Sawai and Tanimoto, *Nihon Keizai-shi*, p. 268). According to the recent studies, the prevailing view has been that the expansion of the Japanese-owned cotton spinning industry in China was driven by the logic of capital rather than by national policy or military expansion (Ishii Kanji, *Teikoku Shugi Nihon no Taigai Senryaku* [The Foreign Strategy of Japanese Imperialism], The University of Nagoya Press, 2012, Chapter 5; Kuwabara Tetsuya and Tomizawa Yoshia, “Senjiki no Zaika Nihon Bōseki Dōgyō-Kai Riji no Kaiko [The Memoir of Director of Japanese Cotton Mill Owners Association in China during the War] – Interview with Tsutsumi Takashi-shi, Kanebō, Zaika Nihon Bōseki Dōgyō-kai” in Tōyō Bunko, *Kindai Chūgoku Kenkyū Ihō* [Bulletin of Modern Chinese Studies], Vol. 35, 2013, pp. 10-20, etc.). The conflicts between these Japanese and British companies were further intensified by the trade frictions with Britain in the 1930s, and they became one of the leaders of the anti-British movement and Greater Asianism. Unlike early Pan-Asianism, which relied heavily on territorial connections and local personal relationships such as feudal domains, economic interests and economic networks were the factors that cultivated Greater Asianism, as we will see later.

Thus, as Japan's economic power emerged in the world and East Asia, the idea of an economic security partnership emerged, underpinned by confidence. Part of that development was the demands of the 1918 Sino-Japanese Joint Defense Agreement, including recruitment of Japanese political, economic, and military advisors, the introduction of Japanese made weapons, materials, engineers, and establishment of a Japan-China joint arsenal, as stated within section 5 of the Twenty-one Demands to China, which took advantage of the international environment favorable to Japan during World War I. The same can be said for the "Integration of Korean and Manchurian Finance" of Shōda Kazue, the Finance Minister of the Terauchi cabinet, and the alliance with the warlord regime under the pretext of "Japan-China friendship" as seen in the Nishihara loans. The strong opposition to the anti-yellow movement in California in the United States was another factor behind them. Hara cabinet Finance Minister Takahashi Korekiyo's concept of "East Asian Economic Power" in 1921 linked the theory of "racial competition" with a theory of regional economic integration based on Japan-China economic partnership and the creation of a third independent economic bloc to counter the two great powers of Britain and the United States (Mitani Taichirō, *Kindai Nihon no Sensō to Seiji* [The Modern Japan's War and Politics], Iwanami Shoten, 1997, pp. 94-95) was certainly another aspect there.

However, Takahashi's concept of "East Asian Economic Power" was based on the following: "We cannot deny that conventional diplomacy with China has been unsuccessful to date partly because it has been focused on gaining rights, and partly because we have allowed our plans to be forced upon them (Chinese people). So we are to be blamed in part.... In addition, Japan's policy toward China has always been biased toward individuals or factions of one party. In particular, the loans that assisted some of the people would inevitably arouse the hatred of the Chinese people and create an atmosphere of further anti-Japanese sentiment," he said, harshly criticizing loans such as the Nishihara loans (Takahashi Korekiyo, "Tōa Keizai-ryoku Juritsu ni kansuru no Iken [The Opinion of Foundation of East Asia Economic Power]," Ogawa Heikichi Bunsho Kenkyū-kai [Study Group on Documents of Ogawa Heikichi], ed., *Ogawa Heikichi Kankei Bunsho* [Documents related to Ogawa Heikichi], Vol. 2, Misuzu Shobo, 1973, p. 147). For the sake of coexistence between Japan and China, Takahashi thought that it was imminent that "Japan and China should work together to establish independent economic power in Asia," and that "the inflow of British and American capital should be greatly welcomed" (Ibid., p. 146). Takahashi thought that the bloc should be open to foreign capital, including British and American capital (Mitani Taichiro, "Nihon no Kokusai Kin'yū-ka to Kokusai Seiji [The Japan's International Financiers and International Politics]," *Wall Street to Kyokutō - Seiji ni Okeru Kokusai Kin'yū Shihon* [The Wall Street and the Far East: International Finance Capitals in the Politics], University of Tokyo Press, 2009, pp. 53-55; Harada Kumao, *Saionji-kō to Seikyoku*, Vol. 4, Iwanami Shoten, 1951, pp. 313-315). That is because Takahashi believed that "by combining Japan's financial power, China's natural resources, Japan's industrial capability, and China's labor in perfect harmony, to extend the economic power of East Asia and to further expand the production of goods, we must not only achieve the fruits of coexistence between Japan and China, but also contribute to the progress of the world and the betterment of mankind" (Takahashi, "Tōa Keizai-ryoku Juritsu ni kansuru

no Iken,” p. 146). Takahashi believed that we had entered a stage where security was possible through economic and technological cooperation between Japan and China without relying on military power (Banno, *Nihon Kindai-shi*, pp. 342-345). After World War I, Takahashi highly valued the role that the economy played in international politics, and this view of security did not change.

In 1935 when the British sent Leith-Ross to reform China’s monetary system and asked for Japan’s cooperation, the Japanese Government rejected the request partly due to opposition from the military. Though Finance Minister Takahashi believed that Japan should cooperate as an economic major power in Asia (Matsuura, “Nitchū Sensō Shūshū Kōsō to Kachū Tsūka Kōsaku [The Patch-up Ideas of Sino-Japanese War and Chinese Currency Policies],” in *Kokusai Seiji*, No. 97, 1991, p. 86; Fujimura Kin’ichirō, *Takahashi Korekiyo to Kokusai Kinyū* [Takahashi Korekiyo and International Finance], Volume 2, Fukutake Shoten, 1992, pp. 213-226).

## **(2) Collapse of Empires in East Asia**

The second change in the situation regarding Pan-Asianism was the collapse of East Asian empires that had been a threat to the infant Japanese Empire before and after World War I. In 1911, the Xinhai Revolution led to the collapse of the Qing Empire and the establishment of the Republic of China, although confusion ensued due to internal strife, warlords and intervention by the powers. Although the Romanov Dynasty was overthrown by the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the Soviet Government was established in 1922, civil wars and wars of intervention continued. As the two empires in East Asia fell head over heels, the outer rim of Manchuria, Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Siberia became a vacuum, and Japan reached out. In the international political arena, the so-called “Washington system” was established, led by the United States, which rose to prominence through World War I. The transition from the “old diplomacy” of secret diplomacy to the “new diplomacy” of open diplomacy took place, but China and the Soviet Union were excluded from the “Washington system.”

In Northeast Asia, including Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, and Siberia, which had become fluid due to the collapse of the two empires, Japan attempted to develop diplomacy beyond the framework of traditional empires and sovereign states. Partly because the United States, which had come to lead the international order after the war, was seen as having different principles of behavior from the imperialism of the Old World, such as that of the United Kingdom, Japan believed that it could maintain and expand its interests in Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, and other areas while also pursuing international coordination with the United States as the center of power. The Hara cabinet emphasized coordination with the United States and other powers on disarmament and other issues, and aimed to solve the Manchurian-Mongolian problem not as a political problem but as an economic problem through international financial capital (Mitani, *Wall Street to Kyōkutō*, Part 2), thus Japan initially adopted a policy of economic expansion. After the Manchurian Incident, Japan also attempted to justify changes in the status quo in East Asia on the expectation that the United States would tolerate Asian Monroe doctrine, which recognized Japan’s special status in East Asia.

The Tanaka Giichi cabinet sought to coordinate relations with two new state actors, China and the Soviet Union, while exploring the idea of realizing Japan's expansion in coordination with US capital. Tanaka Giichi, welcomed as president in the place of Takahashi Korekiyo who had split the *Seiyūkai* [Association of Friends of Constitutional Government] after the death of Hara Takashi, was the Vice Chief of the General Staff at the time of the Siberian intervention. After other countries had withdrawn their troops, as Minister of the Army in the Hara cabinet, Tanaka directed continued stationing of the Japanese troops. Therefore, Tanaka knew the situation surrounding the outer rim of the two empires, which had disappeared from East Asia, and was familiar with the international politics in which the United States was gaining power. Recent studies have shown that the Siberian intervention was designed to establish an independent autonomous state in the three Far Eastern provinces east of Lake Baikal (Zabaikal, Amur, and Primorskaya Oblast) that would be a puppet state of Japan. This would create a new region uniting Eastern Siberia, Manchuria, and Inner Mongolia and bring it under Japanese influence, secure the entire Chinese Eastern Railway and the oil of Northern Sakhalin, and stabilize the rule of colonial Korea. It has been revealed that the objective was to establish an advantage over the United States in China (Yamamuro Shin'ichi, *Fukugō Sensō to Sōryoku-sen no Dansō* [The Fault between Mixed and Total Wars], Jinbun Shoin, 2011, p. 117).

At the beginning of his cabinet, Tanaka decided to appoint Inoue Junnosuke, former Governor of the Bank of Japan, as Foreign Minister because of his connections with international financial capital, and he tried to have US capital buy South Manchuria Railway bonds to try to solve the Manchurian-Mongolian problem, but Inoue did not accept the offer because of the issue of timing. The Tanaka cabinet negotiated the introduction of foreign capital from the United States to the South Manchuria Railway via Inoue, who later became Governor of the Bank of Japan again. However, this failed due to US public opinion critical of the Tanaka cabinet's "active measures" on the mainland and opposition from the Zhang Zuolin and Kuomintang governments. Later, Tanaka appointed Yamamoto Jōtarō as President of the South Manchuria Railway. Yamamoto had been involved in the Manchurian soybean business at Mitsui & Co. and was trying to promote his cherished theory of the establishment of the state upon industrialism as Secretary-General of the *Seiyūkai*. Tanaka had Yamamoto and Zhang Zuolin sign contracts for the construction of five railroad lines and other projects. Yamamoto's methods were heavy-handed and forceful. However, unlike the Kwantung Army and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Mori Kaku (Prime Minister Tanaka doubled as Foreign Minister) who tried to eliminate Zhang Zuolin and take direct control of Manchuria and Inner Mongolia, it was an economic approach to secure Manchuria as a raw material supply region and product market through a partnership with Zhang Zuolin.

Tanaka's patron, the former businessman Kuhara Fusanosuke, who came from the same province as the Prime Minister, also tried to implement a completely new regionalist policy in the Tanaka cabinet for Manchuria and Inner Mongolia, which were in flux after the collapse of the two empires in East Asia. Kuhara's idea of a trilateral buffer zone was to create a demilitarized buffer zone between Japan, China, and the Soviet Union by offering Siberia (Primorskaya Oblast) east of Zabaikal from the Soviet Union, Manchuria from China, and

Korea from Japan. A committee of representatives from the three countries would oversee the project and open it equally to investment by the other powers. The foreign capital that Kuhara was thinking of was mainly US capital. In October 1927, Tanaka appointed Kuhara, who had turned to politics after a failed business venture, as a special economic research commission member for the Imperial Government. After visiting France, Italy, Britain, and Germany, Kuhara met with Stalin, Zhang Zuolin, and others to discuss the idea of a trilateral buffer zone. It is said that Tanaka was thinking of appointing Kuhara to the vacant Foreign Minister's post and, before Kuhara's visit to the Soviet Union, he repeatedly asked the Soviet side to support the idea of a trilateral buffer zone. For Tanaka, who had planned the Siberian intervention, Kuhara's theory of a trilateral buffer zone, which aimed to create a new regional order in the power vacuum after the collapse of the Qing and Russian Empires, was an extension of his own.

This concept of Kuhara's was never a wild dream. In Japan, the Japanese Navy, which expected to develop heavy oil in the North Sakhalin oil field as fuel for naval vessels, had supported this concept since the end of the Russo-Japanese War. In 1918, Russia's Stakheyev Trading Company and Kuhara Mining agreed on a joint venture to develop oil fields, and the Navy had five private oil companies including Kuhara Mining establish *Hokushinkai* [North Dragon Society] (later known as *Kitakarafuto Sekiyu Kabushiki-gaisha* [North Sakhalin Oil K.K.]) to conduct oil extraction activities (Yamamuro, *Fukugō Sensō to Sōryoku-sen no Dansō*, pp. 145-150; Sakai Tetsuya, *Taishō Democracy Taisei no Hōkai - Naisei to Gaikō* [The Collapse of Taisho Democracy Regime: Domestic Policy and Diplomacy], University of Tokyo Press, 1992, pp. 153-154). From 1920 to 1922, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union established Far Eastern Republic, centered in the Zabaikal region, as a buffer state to avoid military conflict with Japan's Siberian Expeditionary Army. The idea of a democratic buffer state advocated by the Republic's first leader, Krasnoshchyokov (Horie Norio, *Kyokutō Kyōwa Koku no Yume - Kurasunoshichokofu no Shōgai* [The Dream of Far Eastern Republic: A life of Krasnoshchyokov], Miraisha, 1999, pp. 55-152; Asada Masafumi, *Shiberia Shuppei* [The Siberian Intervention], Chuokoron-shinsha, 2016, pp. 141-195) was in the minds of Kuhara and Tanaka. The doctrine of Northern Manchuria expansion of Tanaka's diplomacy was mediated by Zhang Zuolin and had a pro-Soviet aspect that recognized North Manchuria north of the Chinese Eastern Railway as a Soviet sphere of influence (Sakai, *Taishō Democracy Taisei no Hōkai*, pp. 168-177).

Tanaka forced Kuhara, who had been elected in the general election of 1928, to join the cabinet as Minister of Communications although he abandoned an appointment of Kuhara as Foreign Minister. However, the above-mentioned idea of a trilateral buffer zone was welcomed by the Soviet Union but opposed by Zhang Zuolin from the standpoint of anti-communism, and above all by the Imperial Court and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which opposed giving up the colony of Korea, and aborted (Matsuura Masataka, "Tanaka Giichi Naikaku (April 20, 1927 – July 2, 1929) Ron [On Tanaka Giichi Cabinet]," in *Rikkyō Hōgaku*, No. 101, 2020, pp. 27-50).

In the case of the Tanaka cabinet, the 1927 Eastern Conference, the Jinan Incident, Zhang Zuolin's assassination, and the theory of Manchurian-Mongolian independence are often



mentioned, but those around Prime Minister Tanaka harbored the idea of reorganizing the fluid Asian regional order into an Asian bloc while seeking coordination with the United States.

### (3) Structural Changes in the Army

The third change in the situation regarding Pan-Asianism is the structural changes within the Army after World War I. Beginning with the secret promise in Baden-Baden in 1921, the rise of the middle-ranking officer class of the Japanese Army known as the “Showa warlords” is often discussed. But here the author will focus on the rise of the “new China experts” as a new generation within the Army.

Kitaoka Shin’ichi pointed out that the “new China experts,” newly trained in the Army during the preparatory phase of the Russo-Japanese War, rose to prominence between 1922 and 1925 mainly in the China Division of the General Staff. Examples include Kōmoto Daisaku, Okamura Yasuji, Isogai Rensuke, Itagaki Seishirō, Sasaki Tōichi, and Suzuki Teiichi. Having grown up as unregarded or second-rate elites in the Army, they were in competition with each other in the field in mainland China, and with the warlords in each area (Kitaoka Shin’ichi, “Shina-ka Kanryō no Yakuwari [The Roles of Bureaucratic Officials of China Division],” in idem, *Kanryō-sei toshite no Nippon Rikugun* [The Japanese Army as Bureaucracy], Chikuma Shobo, 2012. The original paper was presented at an overseas workshop in 1985, revised and edited in 1990).

As introduced by Banno Junji, the list of attendees at the “Meeting of Military Intelligence Attaches in China” in the office of Military Attaché to the legation in Beijing in January 1925 included Okamura Yasuji (Military Attaché in Shanghai), Sakai Takashi (Military Attaché in Hankou), Kikuchi Monya (Military Attaché in Jinan), Kaneko Teiichi (General Staff, Tianjin Army), Ura Sumie (General Staff, Kwantung Army), Itagaki Seishirō (Assistant Military Attaché to the legation in Beijing), Dohihara Kenji (Banzai Special Service Agency), Satō Saburō (Chief of the China Division), Suzuki Teiichi (Deputy Assistant Military Attaché to the legation), Matsumuro Takayoshi (dispatched officer in Zhangjiakou), Sasaki Tōichi (stationed officer in Nanking), Oikawa Genshichi (research officer in Beijing), and Oku Kamenosuke (research officer in Zhengzhou). The list covers a wide range of eminent “new China experts” who were subsequently involved in major incidents at home and abroad (Banno, *Kindai Nihon no Kōzō*, pp. 70-72). In a 1920 article on the abolition of the General Staff distributed to cabinet ministers and political party members, the Hara cabinet’s Finance Minister, Takahashi Korekiyo, referred to the fact that the “overseas dispatched officers” of the General Staff Headquarters were criticized in Britain and the United States as “shady and vicious diplomats” who did not follow government control and intervened in diplomacy and economy. As Takahashi had feared, these military attachés stationed in various parts of China, who were also “new China experts,” linked up with local warlords and “pro-Japanese cliques,” and made independent claims based on their own local conditions. While the so-called Showa Warlords were setting out to solve the Manchurian-Mongolian problem, the counter assertion of the “anti-Chōshū clique” was the centripetal force. For example, in dealing with Zhang Zuolin, it is difficult to say that each local situation was integrated. The division chiefs of the

Ministry of the Army and military staff officers in the local agencies were the influential actors among the “new China experts,” and they led a fluid existence, changing their posts as they were transferred.

It was through the Sino-Japanese War of 1937 that these actors who influenced the Army’s local policy toward Asia came together in the regionalist ideology of Greater Asianism. Even there, the structure of competition and strife over the puppet governments and personal connections involved in each remained strong.

#### **(4) Changes in the Pan-Asianists**

The fourth change in the situation regarding Pan-Asianism is the rise of a new generation that had gained confidence due to Japan’s political and economic achievements before and after World War I, and the transformation of Pan-Asianism in the private sector.

An example of the former is Konoe Fumimaro, the son of Konoe Atsumaro, who was Chairman of the House of Peers and an influential Pan-Asianist during the Meiji period. Konoe Fumimaro became Prime Minister in the period of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937. There was a huge disconnect between Atsumaro and Fumimaro in their Pan-Asianism. Fumimaro’s father, Atsumaro, was the first President of the *Tōa Dōbun-kai* (East Asia Common Culture Society), and he made direct friendships with many Chinese people including Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, Zhang Zhidong, Liu Kunyi, and Sun Yat-sen, as well as efforts to accept foreign students from Qing China (Li Tingjiang, “21 Seiki ni Okeru Konoe Atsumaro no Shisō-teki Isan [The Konoe Atsumaro’s Legacy of Thought in the 21st century],” Aichi University Dōbun Shoin Memorial Center, in *Dōbun Shoin Kinen-hō*, Vol. 20, 2012). He was close to Inukai Tsuyoshi, Tōyama Mitsuru, Uchida Ryōhei, and other private sector Pan-Asianists. He advocated the idea of a Sino-Japanese alliance, formed the Kokumin Dōmeikai (National Alliance) and the *Tairo Doshikai* (Anti-Russian Comrades Society) and became a central figure in the hardline movement against Russia.

In Fumimaro’s case, he took over the positions of Dean of the *Tōa Dōbun Shoin* [The Tung Wen College] and President of the *Tōa Dōbun-kai* and inherited the “*Shina rōnin*” and other Pan-Asianist connections from Atsumaro, who had died suddenly at a young age. Although Fumimaro had political relations with the right-wing Imperial Way faction, ideological rightists, and Greater Asianists in Japan such as the *Dai Ajia Kyōkai* [Greater Asia Association], of which he was initially made president, he had little empathy or flesh-and-blood friendships with the people of China, Korea, and other Asian countries. When Wang Jingwei’s escape from Chongqing was delayed several times, Konoe was quoted as saying, “It’s a Chinese thing anyway. I think we have been tricked by Wang.” Those words speak volumes (Matsuura, “Oka Yoshitake to Akihito Kōtaishi,” pp. 38-41). As pointed out by Shoji Jun’ichiro, Konoe Fumimaro, in his famous essay published just after World War I, “*Eibei hon’i no heiwa shugi o haisu* [Eliminating the Anglo-American Standard Pacifism],” in *Nihon oyobi Nihonjin* [Japan and the Japanese], December 15, 1918), criticized the old-fashioned imperialism of Britain and other European countries and expected that the United States would realize idealism such as “justice and humanity.” In addition, while supportive of Greater

Asianism, he was indifferent to China's criticism of Japan or the self-independence of the Japanese colonies (Shoji Jun'ichiro, "Shin Chitsujo no Mosaku to Kokusai Seigi, Ajia Shugi: Konoe Fumimaro o Chūshin toshite [The Quest for International Justice and Pan-Asianism in a "New Order in East Asia": Konoe Fumimaro and his View of the World], in National Institute for Defense Studies, *Sensō-shi Kenkyū Kokusai Fōrum Hōkoku-sho* [Proceedings of International Forum on War History], No. 2, 2004). This essay, written by Konoe Fumimaro, whose confidence was boosted by Japan's rising political and economic status around the time of World War I, became an idea that would carry him through the rest of his life (Oka Yoshitake, "Konoe Fumimaro," in *Oka Yoshitake Chosaku-shū* [Collected Works of Oka Yoshitake], Vol. 5, Iwanami Shoten, 1993, pp. 162-165).

An example of the latter is the meeting between Sun Yat-sen, who gave his famous Greater Asianism speech in Kobe in 1924 during his last visit to Japan, and his supporters including Tōyama Mitsuru. In response to Sun Yat-sen, who spoke of the need for partnership among Asian nations and stated that all unequal treaties between China and the Great Powers should be abolished, Tōyama held a hardline stance against the return of Japan's special interests in Manchuria. Sun Yat-sen expressed his acceptance of Japan's maintenance of the status quo in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. Saga Takashi argues that Sun Yat-sen, who had originally given priority to Japan's support for the Chinese Revolution and had admitted to abandoning Manchuria, did not intend to criticize Japan in the Greater Asianism speech he gave after his meeting with Tōyama, but the gap between Tōyama and Sun Yat-sen was already significant. According to the analysis of Nakano Seigō, Sun Yat-sen wanted to "Strike at Asia and unite, and then in turn unite the Soviet Russia, Germany, and other oppressed nations to oppose the global hegemon, Britain and the United States." Whereas Sun Yat-sen called on Japan to recognize the Soviet Russia and oppose the Western powers that were hindering the Chinese revolution, the "Greater Asianists of Japan" inclined to unite Asia, to fight back against the Whites on the basis of race, with Japan as the center and to elevate another imperialism in order to resist white imperialism" (Saga, *Ajia Shugi Zenshi*, pp. 83-98, 132-143, 172-189).

The rift between Sun Yat-sen and the Japanese Greater Asianists, such as Tōyama Mitsuru, which became apparent here, soon manifested itself in the same way in 1924 when the Immigration Act was passed in the United States, and the *Zen Ajia Kyōkai* [All Asia Association] was established in opposition to it. In July of the same year, the *Zen Ajia Kyōkai* was established with the aim of contributing to the development of Asia, world peace, and the welfare of all mankind, at the time of the Katō Takaaki's *Goken Sanpa* [the three factions supporting the constitution] cabinet. With Iwasaki Isao, Secretary-General of the *Seiyūkai*, as Chairman, and Dietman Imazato Juntaro, another member of the *Seiyūkai*, as Executive Director, the event brought together prominent figures from various fields, including members of both houses of parliament and political figures. The demand for political participation by the three factions supporting the constitution, the opposition to racial discrimination, and Pan-Asianism were linked. The movement gained so much momentum that the first Conference of Asian Peoples was held in Nagasaki in August of 1926. Later, however, Justice Minister Yokota Sennosuke, a leader of the *Seiyūkai*, who was supposed to be the center of the movement, died suddenly. When British pressure blocked the visit of Pratap, an Indian citizen with Afghan

nationality, to Japan, Dietmen members of the ruling Kenseikai party and political figures such as Tanaka Giichi and Gotō Shinpei cancelled their participation. The only dietman who participated in the Nagasaki Conference until the end was Executive Director Imazato. The meeting was attended by 34 participants from various parts of Asia, including the Chinese representative, Huang Gongsu, a member of the National Assembly, the Indian representative, Rash Behari Bose, and representatives from the Philippines, Ceylon, and Korea. From the beginning of the meeting, there were conflicts over the Twenty-one Demands to China, the Korean representation issue, and the issue of assistance for India's independence, and the meeting only declared the formation of an all-Asian federation and resolved to hold the Shanghai Conference.

In the Shanghai Conference organized by Huang Xiangsu in 1927, did Ōkawa Shūmei, Nakatani Takeyo, and other private Greater Asianists from Japan participate. However, from the preparatory stage, the Chinese delegates criticized Japan's invasion of Manchuria and Inner Mongolia and unequal treaties with Asian countries, resulting in clashes between the Japanese and Chinese delegates, and the conference closed after one day. The movement of the Conference of Asian Peoples stagnated until the Dalian Conference in 1934. The Dalian Conference was attended by more Asian representatives than ever before, including A. M. Sahay, President of the Kobe branch of the Indian National Congress, Pratap, the representative of Afghanistan, and representatives from Annam, Malay, and Siam. In addition to the *Zen Ajia Kyōkai*, other nationalist groups from Japan, including the *Dai Nihon Seisantō* [Great Japan Production Party], the *Kokuryūkai* [Black Dragon Society], the *Jinmukai* [Jinmu Society], and the *Shinshū Gokokutō* [Shinshu Party for Defense Country] participated in the conference. This conference was fully sponsored by Manchukuo and South Manchuria Railway and held with the approval of the Japanese military. After the Manchurian Incident, the private-sector Pan-Asianist movement, which was linked to the movement for universal suffrage, underwent a major change in character. It became an effort to spread the Greater Asianist ideology controlled by Manchukuo and the Kwantung Army (see Matsuura, "*Daitōa Sensō*" *wa Naze Okita no ka*, Part 1, Chapter 3). Pan-Asianism came to be used as a national policy and its military local agencies.

### **3. Recognition of Pan-Asianism as a National Policy**

#### **(1) After the Manchurian Incident**

In the process of being used and recognized as a national policy, non-mainstream or private Pan-Asianist thought seems to have lost the emotional relationship between people through "meeting" and its original ideological nature. In particular, the character of Greater Asianism had strengthened as a conglomeration of various logics and constituencies: (1) a logic of rivalry within the military reflected in "the China experts" and "the Korea experts," such as the colonial armies including the Kwantung Army in Manchuria and the Taiwan Army, as well as the military special services in the local agencies, and the *Chosen Sōtokufu* [the Government-General of Korea] in which an Army General served as the Governor-General; (2) the interests of the militant sectors of Japanese capitalism, such as cotton spinning, trading,

and merchant shipping, which were competing with those of Britain and other nations in China, India, and other parts of Asia; (3) politicians, soldiers, and “revolutionaries” who sought to use the logic of Pan-Asianism; and (4) independence activists throughout Asia who sought to eradicate the colonial powers of Britain and other Western powers by linking them to Japanese Pan-Asianism.

Iriye Akira pointed out, regarding Ishiwara Kanji who led the Manchurian Incident advocating the theory of a Final World War between Japan and the United States, that, other than the idea of national defense, Ishiwara did not have a worldview or diplomatic philosophy (Iriye, *Nihon no Gaikō*, pp. 111-112). Ishiwara advocated the *Tōa Renmei Ron* [theory of East Asian League] when Manchukuo was founded, but he was not originally a Pan-Asianist. Both the theory of Manchurian independence and that of the East Asian League were created for the strategy in a final battle between Japan and the United States, which was forecasted in Ishiwara’s theory (Ishizu Tomoyuki, “Sōryoku-sen, Modernism, Nichibei Saishū Sensō - Ishiwara Kanji no Sensō-kan to Kokka, Gunji Senryaku Shisō [Toral War, Modernism and the “Final War with the United States”]: Ishiwara Kanji and his View on War, his Thought on Grand and Military Strategies],” in *Sensō-shi Kenkyū Kokusai Fōrum Hōkoku-sho*, No. 2, pp. 93-94).

However, the Manchurian Incident initiated by Ishiwara changed the situation regarding Pan-Asianism. The “Hirota diplomacy” after the withdrawal from the League of Nations, especially aspects such as the Amō Declaration in April 1934, strengthened the nature of Pan-Asianism as a logic to justify the existing facts after the Manchurian Incident (Iriye, *Nihon no Gaikō*, pp. 114-116). The Lytton Commission, the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, and other events helped to elaborate Greater Asianism in Japan’s isolation after the Manchurian Incident. As the British Empire, which Japan had regarded as a model and pillar of partnership since the Meiji era, criticized Japan for the Manchurian Incident and the Sino-Japanese War of 1937, Greater Asianism came to have anti-British imperialism as a clear core of its argument. The Greater Asia Association, founded in March 1933 on the first anniversary of the founding of Manchukuo, was different from previous Pan-Asianist organizations in that it was extremely close to political power. Matsui Iwane, an Army General who was at the center of the association and a “new China expert,” was shocked to see Japan’s isolation and the clash between Japan and China at the League of Nations in Geneva after the Manchurian Incident. After returning to Japan, Matsui joined the *Han Ajia Gakkai* [Pan-Asia Study Society], which was formed in 1932 by scholars, thinkers, and independence activists such as Nakatani Takeyo, Shimonaka Yasaburō, Mitsukawa Kametarō, Nakayama Yū, Rash Behari Bose, and Cuong De. In addition, political figures, army and navy officers, and scholars joined to form the association. As can be seen from the fact that the guests invited to the inauguration ceremony were Araki Sadao, Minister of the Army, Yoshizawa Kenkichi, former Foreign Minister, Honjō Shigeru, Commander of the Kwantung Army at the time of the Manchurian Incident, and Bao Guancheng, Manchukuo representative, the association had a deep relationship with the Kwantung Army and Manchukuo, and the reason for its existence was the great changes that occurred after the Manchurian Incident.

As stated in the founding document drafted by Nakatani Takeyo, the goal of the Greater

Asia Association was to create a new international organization consisting of a European Union, an Asian Union, an American Union, the Soviet Union, and the Anglo-Saxon Union (British Empire) in place of the League of Nations, which was ineffective in resolving international conflicts and alleviating ethnic strife. This was a policy proposal for a regional federation with the Monroeism of the United States in mind, although it may have learned from the pan-European vision of Richard Nikolaus Eijiro Coudenhove-Kalergi, who called for the formation of a Greater Asian Union. The international order centered on the United States after World War I and the changes in the situation after the Manchurian Incident gave birth to a new Greater Asianism (see Matsuura, “*Daitōa Sensō*” *wa Naze Okita no ka*, Chapter 9). Nakatani Takeyo, a political scientist, Shimonaka Yasaburō, the President of Heibonsha, Murakami Kengo, a professor at Tokyo University (Western history) who became deputy head, Yano Jin’ichi, a professor at Kyoto University (Oriental history), and Kanokogi Kazunobu, a professor at Kyushu University (philosophy) participated in the theoretical construction of Greater Asianism. At the core of this argument, however, were the removal of Britain’s policy of support for Chiang, the expulsion of Britain and other Western powers from China, Southeast Asia, India, and other regions, and the creation of satellite states in Manchuria, Siberia, and Central Asia on the peripheries of China and Russia where the collapse of empires produced a fluid state of affair, and the partition of China under the name of “autonomy of the united provinces.” The response to the United States was realistic, in part because of the hope of introducing foreign capital but also because of the expectation of segregation through Asian Monroe Doctrine.

## **(2) After the Outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937**

The Greater Asia Association stated that the goal of Greater Asianism was the partition of China and the establishment of puppet governments and pro-Japanese organizations such as the New People’s Society, Great People’s Association, and the Concordia Association in China. The directors encompassed the army officers who were the “new China experts” promoting the idea in various parts of China throughout the Sino-Japanese War. Namely, Nemoto Hiroshi (Deputy Chief of Staff, North China Area Army; Deputy Director, its Special Services Bureau; Deputy Director, North China Liaison Office of East Asia Development Board), Suzuki Sōsaku (Deputy Chief of Staff, Central China Area Army), Kusumoto Sanetaka (Deputy Director, Special Services Bureau of Shanghai Expeditionary Army; Deputy Director, Central China Liaison Office of East Asia Development Board), Wachi Takaji (Special Services attached to Commander, Taiwan Army), and Kagesa Sadaaki (Chief of the Propaganda Strategy Division, Imperial Headquarters, and in charge of Wang Jingwei initiative). Also, in charge of the Greater Asianism policy on the spot were members such as Major General Matsumuro Takayoshi of the Army Reserve (who operated in the regime in Shanghai and later became an advisor to the Great People’s Association) and Nakatani Takeyo, an executive director. The director who oversaw these activities in Japan was Suzuki Teiichi, head of the Political Affairs Bureau of the East Asia Development Board. As a non-regular staff of the East Asia Development Board, Nakatani established the *Dai Ajia Shugi Kenkyūjo* [Institute for Greater Asianism] in

Shanghai, promoted ideological and cultural operation for Wang Jingwei initiative, assembled Indians living in Shanghai and organized the Shanghai Committee of the Asian National Congress. When the Marco Polo Bridge Incident occurred, Matsui Iwane, a reserve officer, was mobilized for active duty as the Commander of the Shanghai Expeditionary Army, aiming to destroy the Chiang Kai-shek regime under the Greater Asianism policy. Wachi Takaji was one of Matsui's confidants, who had been involved in the collapse of China's southwestern government and the establishment of the North China Autonomous Government, and who advocated the hardest line on the spot as a General Staff member of the China Garrison Army when the incident broke out. He contacted the secretariat of the society, including Matsui, Nakatani, and Shimonaka Yasaburō, and its directors including Homma Masaharu, Chief of the 2nd Bureau (Intelligence, G2), the Army General Staff, Suzuki Teiichi, the Head of the Newspapers Section of the Ministry of the Army, and Tsutsui Kiyoshi, Head of the 2nd Division of the Intelligence Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They worked together to suppress the opposition to the expansion of the war by Ishiwara Kanji, Chief of 1st Bureau (Operations, G1), the Army General Staff (*Ibid.*, Chapter 11). In this way, the network of "new China experts," which grew significantly after the Sino-Japanese War, rallied to the Greater Asia Association, and influenced the actual policy toward China. They were responsible not only for the war, but also for the establishment of the East Asia Development Board, the Wang Jingwei initiative, and support for puppet regimes and operations in the occupied territories, so that the Greater Asianism network infiltrated the center of the state apparatus throughout the Sino-Japanese War.

As is well known, the "New Order in East Asia" Declaration (Second Konoe Statement) of November 3, 1938, called for peace based on the Greater Asianism to China after the fall of Wuhan and the three towns of Guangdong. Nakayama Yū, director of the Greater Asia Association, was involved in drafting that document. The "New Order in East Asia" Declaration defined the new war aims of the Sino-Japanese War as the construction of a New Order in East Asia and made Pan-Asianism as regionalism a national policy for the first time in an official statement of the government (Mitani Taichirō, *Nihon no Kindai to wa Nandeatta ka* [What was the Modern Period of Japan?], Iwanami Shoten, 2017, pp. 190-198). Rather than embodying the Pan-Asianism that had been in place since the Meiji era (Saga, *Ajia Shugi Zenshi*, pp. 210-224), it was a different nature of thing to announce the dispute-settlement policy based on Greater Asianism, in which many people from the Greater Asia Association were involved. As an extension of this, the "Anti-military Speech" delivered by Dietman Saitō Takao in February 1940 during the time of the Yonai cabinet was a scathing criticism of the "Konoe Three Principles" statement on the coordination of diplomatic relations between Japan and China (Third Konoe Statement), which was issued on December 22, immediately after Wang Jingwei's escape from Chongqing. Saitō remarked, "By hiding behind the fine-sounding name of holy war, by neglecting national sacrifices, enumerating a string of characters that seem to grasp at the clouds, international justice, moral diplomacy, coexistence and co-prosperity, world peace, and so on, if we miss a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and if there is any mistake in the nation's 100-year plan," "the current politicians may die, but their sins cannot be expiated." Saitō denounced the falsity of the Greater Asianism ideology which lacked realism.

If they were to follow Saitō's criticism, it would have been more realistic to choose the policy of the pro-British Ikeda Shigeaki and others, who sought to resolve the war by partnering with Britain in East Asia, including China. In fact, the Ishiwara-affiliated officers such as Tada Hayao, Vice Chief of the General Staff and others on the General Staff supported the policy of Ikeda and others. Indeed, Ikeda and others who were well aware of the reality of Japan's economic dependence on Britain and the United States, feared a conflict with them, and believed that Japan alone could not economically manage the vastness of China with her economic strength and insisted on an early ceasefire (Matsuura Masataka, *Nitchū Sensō-ki ni okeru Keizai to Seiji* [The Economy and Politics during the Sino-Japanese War], University of Tokyo Press, 1995). The turning point where Greater Asianism successfully attacked the pro-British faction and penetrated the public with the narrative of Greater Asianism centered on anti-Britishness and the partition of China was the anti-British movement in the summer of 1939 which coincided with the blockade of the concession in Tientsin (Tianjin) by the Japanese North China Area Army. This anti-British movement, which originated from the Government-General of Korea, one of the bearers of Greater Asianism, had an enormous impact on the colonies in Taiwan and Manchuria as it gained momentum and flowed back to the interior, even though it was not a government-led movement. Although it was an unprecedented movement in Japan's modern history, mobilizing up to 100,000 people in a single day, mainly in Kobe and Osaka, the movement followed a predetermined course in an orderly and solemn manner, without violence or confusion, and exerted intense pressure at home and abroad. Although newspapers, municipalities, and local councils played a key role in the implementation of the project, it is hard to say who planned and managed this empire-wide, nationwide mass demonstration movement, and it was a curious movement (Matsuura, "*Daitōa Sensō*" wa *Naze Okita no ka*, pp. 742-795).

The influence of the Greater Asia Association on regionalist policies is due to networks, not to institutional entities such as political parties like the Nazis. Because it is not a political activity by an integrated "political organization," it has rarely been the subject of analysis in the past. In the first place, the Greater Asia Association itself was an organization that encompassed bureaucrats and military personnel for whom political activity was difficult, such as mid-ranking officers of the Army and Navy and bureaucrats of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "As a joint public-private public opinion body, the Greater Asia Association would focus exclusively on cultural and spiritual movements in Asia, while avoiding political issues because of their delicate impact on diplomacy" with Europe and the United States ("Ashita no Meirō Shina Kensetsu o Mezasu Dai Ajia Kyōkai no Shimei o Miyo: Shimonaka Yasaburō-shi ni Kiku Sono Katsuyaku Buri [Look at the Mission of Greater Asia Association that Aims to Build a Bright China in the Future: Interview with Mr. Shimonaka Yasaburo to Hear his Story of Outstanding Performance]," in *Chūgai Nippō*, October 17, 1937). Apart from the desire of Matsui and others to promote policies based on the Greater Asianism, the association had to take the position that it was a movement for culture and thoughts.

The activities of the Greater Asia Association were carried out not only by army officers, especially the "new China experts," scholars and commentators such as Nakatani Takeyo and Shimonaka Yasaburō, but also by businessmen who served as a councilor such as Tsuda Shingo,



President of Kanebo, and Murata Shōzō, President of Osaka Shosen, Ataka Yakichi, President of the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry who served as a councilor of the Osaka branch, and Nakayama Taichi and Kataoka Yasushi, Vice Presidents of the chamber. They were at the forefront of the anti-British movement from the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War and played a leading role in the anti-British movement of 1939 (*Ibid.*, pp. 601-603, 719-720, 745-748). This was due to the economic competition and trade friction with Western countries such as the United Kingdom that unfolded in China and other parts of Asia around the time of World War I, as mentioned earlier. Cotton spinning, sundry goods, shipping, and trading companies fought fierce competition with Britain, the first imperialist country, on the front lines, and the Sino-Japanese War was their main battlefield (see Matsuura, “Murata Shōzō to Jitsugyō Ajia Shugi,” pp. 325-328).

In addition, the Greater Asia Association was joined by Asian independence activists including Indians such as Rash Behari Bose. They formed the *Seinen Ajia Renmei* [Young Men’s Asia League] under the leadership of Nakatani and Shimonaka; and as “witnesses” to the anti-British movement, they worked hard to spread Greater Asianism throughout Japan and in the occupied territories. Buddhist and other religious groups also sponsored them.

As we have seen here, the ideology of the Greater Asianism was not so much an extension of the Pan-Asianism that had existed since the Meiji era, but rather an idea that was the logic of the military special services and the military in the local agencies, the logic of the militant sector of capitalism, and the “narrative of Greater Asianism” which raised and expanded the claims of “Oriental culture” including Indian exiles, and Buddhism. On top of that, a political figure named Konoe Fumimaro got on board. Prime Minister Konoe, who placed great importance on the balance of power, relying on the pro-British Ikeda Shigeaki to carry out and control the Sino-Japanese War, while allowing his influence to grow by inviting Matsui Iwane, a hero of the Sino-Japanese War, and Suetsugu Nobumasa, the number two councilor of the Greater Asia Association, to serve as Minister of the Interior and Cabinet Counselors. With the Sino-Japanese War, Greater Asianism grew, and finally its ideology and its insistence on an anti-British and Axis strengthening stance became national policy. When World War II began and Germany began its advance, Prime Minister Konoe removed Ikeda and others from the Cabinet Council and concluded the Tripartite Pact (Matsuura, *Nitchū Sensō-ki ni okeru Keizai to Seiji*, pp. 265-271).

## Conclusion

On December 8, 1941, Japan landed on the Malay Peninsula and attacked Pearl Harbor to enter the war against the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands. But on December 12, the cabinet decided to refer to the war as the “Greater East Asia War” including the “China Incident.” This is because the “China Incident” was “aimed at overthrowing the Chongqing regime (Chiang Kai-shek’s regime), which had become a puppet of both the United States and Britain, in order to build a new order in Greater East Asia, and its purpose was the same as the current war against the United States and Britain, and its essence was not different” (Matsuura, “*Daitōa Sensō*” wa Naze Okita no ka, pp. 1-16). In the words of Kajitani Kai, Pan-Asianism,

which was initially based on the universalism of helping the weak, became a “monster” as the logic of the strong in the wake of the Manchurian Incident and the establishment of Manchukuo (Kajitani Kai, *Nihon to Chūgoku, “Datsu Kindai” no Yūwaku* [Japan and China: The Seduction of Demodernization], Ōta Shuppan, 2015, pp. 174-195). The “Greater East Asia War,” which became the self-proclaimed name of the growing “monster,” was unlike the Pan-Asianism of the Meiji period and not based on ties to local hometowns and landsmen. After the Manchurian Incident and through the Sino-Japanese War of 1937, the global anti-British imperial logic of the military, colonial and other local interests, industry interests, and independence movements from all over Asia accumulated and expanded into a narrative of “Greater Asia” and “Greater East Asia” disguised as international regionalism. The conflict with the United States, which the Japanese Empire most wanted to avoid, could not be separated from its anti-Britishism.

This paper attempts to trace the Pan-Asianist transformation from a policy perspective. Pan-Asianism began to morph into a new regional order concept amid the changes in the international and regional orders before and after World War I. After the Manchurian Incident, it hatched into an international regionalism, which grew and became a national policy through the Sino-Japanese War of 1937.