SANO MANABU AND THE JAPANESE ADAPTATION OF SOCIALISM

by

Jeffrey Paul Wagner

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
In the Graduate College
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

1978

Copyright 1978 Jeffrey Paul Wagner
I hereby recommend that this dissertation prepared under my direction by Jeffrey Paul Wagner entitled SANO MANABU AND THE JAPANESE ADAPTATION OF SOCIALISM be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dissertation Director: [Signature]  
Date: Aug. 6, 1978

As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read this dissertation and agree that it may be presented for final defense.

[Signatures and dates]

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent on the candidate's adequate performance and defense thereof at the final oral examination.
STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

This dissertation has been submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for an advanced degree at The University of Arizona and is deposited in the University Library to be made available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

Brief quotations from this dissertation are allowable without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgment of source is made. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this manuscript in whole or in part may be granted by the copyright holder.

SIGNED: Jeffrey F. Wagner
In today's world, the concept of a monolithic communist movement led by the Soviet Union is slowly giving way to the realization that communist parties of various countries are increasingly becoming independent from Moscow. Such Marxist-Leninist positions as dictatorship of the proletariat and violent revolution are being abandoned and replaced by principles calling for the autonomy/independence of each communist party and espousal of a democratic advance toward socialism. In light of such trends, there is a need to examine existing notions of the Japanese nationalist movement in the prewar Shōwa period. Most historians have characterized the communists and socialists who became fervent nationalists in that era as "opportunists." According to the popular line of reasoning, one could only profess allegiance to either the emperor system (Japanese nationalism) or the working class (socialism), because these two elements were considered basically incompatible. However, only a thorough analysis of the principal activists of the period will determine whether the attempts to combine nationalism and socialism were opportunistic, or whether they were sincere efforts to achieve socialist ends without indiscriminate imitation of the Russian "model" of communism.

This study could not have been done without the assistance of a number of people. In particular, I would like to extend my thanks to Professor Gail Bernstein, who not only guided me in my research but also
was a constant source of inspiration and ideas. I am indebted to Professor Minoru Yanagihashi and Professor Richard Eaton for carefully reading the manuscript and providing insightful comments, and to Mr. Edward Putzar for checking the translations.

A major part of this research was conducted in Japan during the year of 1976-1977 on a Japan Foundation Dissertation Fellowship. The help and advice that the Foundation provided were greatly appreciated. Professor Itō Takashi of Tokyo University kindly guided my research in Japan and allowed me free access to his extensive private library. Professor Ishida Takeshi gave me invaluable guidance both in Japan and during his year as a visiting scholar at The University of Arizona.

My thanks are also due to Sano Hiroshi, a nephew of Sano Manabu, who spent a great deal of time with me discussing Sano Manabu and his one-state socialism movement. In the same manner, Suematsu Tahei was most gracious in finding time to explain his views on the young officer movement. Takahashi Masae, editor for Misuzu Shobō, and Tani Ichirō, a follower of Sano Manabu, discussed various incidents with me.

The staffs of the Oriental Collection at The University of Arizona Library, the National Diet Library in Tokyo, and the various libraries at Tokyo University were extremely helpful in providing books and other material. Mitani Hiroshi and Kawabata Mitsuko, my research assistants, aided in locating material and translating difficult terms and names. However, my warmest thanks go to my family and especially to my wife who both edited the manuscript and offered helpful suggestions. This dissertation is dedicated to her.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .......................... vii
ABSTRACT ................................ viii
CHAPTER

1. INTRODUCTION ........................ 1

PART I: SANO MANABU--AN INTELLECTUAL BIOGRAPHY 19

2. PATH TO MARXISM ....................... 20
   Attraction to Socialism .................. 24
   Early Marxist Thought ................. 34
   Espousal of Liberation Movements ...... 38

3. CONVERSION TO BOLSHEVISM ............. 47
   Sano in Exile .......................... 49
   Fukumotoism ........................... 54
   Yamakawaism ........................... 59
   Rōdōshaha ............................. 77

4. TENKŌ AND REBIRTH AS A JAPANESE SUBJECT 93
   One-State Socialism .................... 98
   Introspection and Rebirth ............. 110

5. ONE-STATE SOCIALISM IN THE POSTWAR PERIOD .... 125
   The Emperor Institution ............... 126
   National Vanguard Party ............. 128
   The Final Years ....................... 135

PART II: OTHER PROMINENT JAPANESE ADAPTATIONS
   OF SOCIALISM .......................... 143

6. AKAMATSU KATSUHARU .................... 144

7. ASŌ HISASHI ........................... 165
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>THE YOUNG OFFICER MOVEMENT</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Hashimoto&quot; Faction</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Naval&quot; Faction</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Imperial Marxist&quot; Faction</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>CONCLUSION: THE DESIGNATION OFIDEOLOGICAL BOUNDARIES</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A</td>
<td>ACTIVISTS AFFILIATED WITH THE RONÔHA (LABOR-FARMER GROUP) MOVEMENT</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B</td>
<td>ACTIVISTS AFFILIATED WITH THE RODOSHAHA (WORKER'S FACTION) MOVEMENT</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C</td>
<td>ACTIVISTS AFFILIATED WITH THE PRE- AND POSTWAR ONE-STATE SOCIALISM MOVEMENT</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX D</td>
<td>SANO'S 1930 SOCIALIST POLICIES FOR JAPAN</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX E</td>
<td>SANO'S 1946 SOCIALIST POLICIES FOR JAPAN</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>239</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Survey of home occupations of those pupils attending the Army Military Academy from 1920-1936</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

The fact that many Japanese activists born around 1900 were nurtured on Meiji nationalism as children, became fervent Marxists as youths, and converted to rabid nationalism as adults has prompted commentators to write off these men as weak individuals who succumbed to whatever ideology was popular or convenient at the time. At best, however, this characterization is a gross oversimplification which ignores the major goal of these men—to make adaptations of socialism by reconciling the existence of the emperor with the tenets of Marxism-Leninism. In fact, in many cases, the union of nationalism and socialism was achieved without compromising the activists' earnest desire to achieve socialism in Japan and improve the lot of the poor.

In order to exemplify the attempt of the Japanese revolutionary socialist to indigenize Marxism-Leninism, Part I of this study will trace the intellectual development of the political ideas of Sano Manabu. Although Sano's mixture of nationalism and socialism affords the clearest example of a Japanese activist's attempt to reconcile the emperor system with Marxism, it must be emphasized that many others in Sano's generation also felt the need to modify socialism by linking emperor-centered nationalism with egalitarian socialism. Hence, Part II of the study will analyze three other adaptations of socialism that were created by Sano's contemporaries, Asō Hisashi, Akamatsu Katsumaro, and a certain clique of "Imperial Marxists" who participated in the young officer movement.

viii
The material provided in the study highlights the limitations of designating ideological affiliation along the usual right wing (nationalism)-left wing (socialism) political continuum. Instead a new conceptual framework is designed which differentiates right wing and left wing while allowing for the possibility of linkage between nationalism and socialism. In three of the cases studied here, namely that of Sano Manabu, Asō Hisashi, and the "Imperial Marxists," the union of nationalism and socialism was achieved without compromising their ultimate end of reconstructing society by means of socialist policies. However, the possible inconsistencies inherent in mixing nationalism and socialism are illustrated by the case of Akamatsu Katsumaro, whose nationalistic fervor overwhelmed rather than complemented his socialistic leanings to a point where he rejected socialism completely.
Throughout their history, the Japanese have demonstrated a penchant for assimilating foreign institutions, religions, and customs. The most obvious examples of this process were the borrowing of the Chinese T'ang bureaucratic structure from the seventh to twelfth centuries, and the adaptation of Western culture in the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. However, in the study of modern Japanese history, one excellent example of the indigenization process has generally been overlooked—the attempts of many Japanese socialists to make the ideology of Marxism-Leninism more compatible with Japanese national customs and institutions.

Left wing ideologies, including Marxism, became popular in Japan only after World War I. At first, the progressive "foreign" ideals that were touted by scholars and social critics were those of democracy and internationalism. In fact, even political conservatives tended to believe that Japan must be more receptive to foreign ideas and institutions. According to one conservative-minded journalist: "... patriotism must be strengthened, but in these times if a nation does not possess a moral spirit which is nobler than patriotism, it will not receive the respect of the world powers or have a civilization which is trusted by the powers." ¹ Consequently, during the Taishō period...

---

(1912-1926), the spirit of democracy and internationalism so pervaded Japan that this period is often called the era of "Taishō democracy."

The Taishō period was not only characterized by a democratic atmosphere, but also by such pernicious industrial traits as an increasing gap between the rich and poor and ostentatious consumption. Disturbed by this situation, many intellectuals urged a restructuring of the economic, political, and social systems to provide for more general public satisfaction. In the beginning, the dissident movement was led by academics, men like Professor Yoshino Sakuzō and the students of the Shinjinkai (New Men's Association), who cast their reform schemes in terms of democratic ideals. But soon critics found socialism more appealing and numerous journals emerged to disseminate this ideology. As the Japanese intellectual increasingly came to play the role of social critic, Marxism became viewed as the best weapon in the fight against the social ills of society.

In the Japanese context, Marxism-Leninism played upon the themes of social and economic justice for the lower class, rapid and full consumation of democratic freedoms, and realization of popular


3. The first six months of 1919 witnessed the appearance of numerous new journals dedicated to disseminating socialist thought. Among the most notable were Kawakami Hajime's Research in Social Problems (Shakai mondai kenkyū), Arahata Kanson's Japan Labor News (Nihon rōdō shimbun), Sakai Toshihiko and Yamakawa Hitoshi's Studies in Socialism (Shakaishugi kenkyū), and such new left magazines as We (Warera), Reconstruction (Kaizō), and Emancipation (Kaihō).
sovereignty. This socioeconomic philosophy was attractive to the intellectual because it claimed to offer a comprehensive and scientific solution to the prevailing social ills in Japan. While "democracy" connoted a gradual reform of society through parliamentary procedures, Marxism seemed to provide a quick revolution based on scientific reasoning to ameliorate the conditions of the poor. The following statement made in 1933 by a university student illustrates this position:

> Since Marxist philosophy is revolutionary, progressive, and logical, my interest became focused upon the charm of its dialectical materialism, so I continued to study Marxist philosophy. I was surprised to find Marxism logical in every detail. I came to believe that the progress of mankind lay in groping our way in the Marxist direction.

Moreover, the success of the Russian Revolution (1917) and the revolutionary fervor of the Rice Riots in Japan (1918) inspired many students to pay more attention to Marxism-Leninism, since they believed that socialism would become the wave of the future.

Yet, the adoption of Marxism created many problems for the Japanese. First, the Marxian emphasis on class struggle undermined the Japanese holistic ideal of social integration which cast Japan as one big family of the same blood united under the figure of the emperor. Second, under communist doctrine, the leading force of Marxism-Leninism in Japan, the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), was not only a national entity, but was also a branch of the international communist movement.


and thus under the control of the Communist International (Comintern) located in Russia. It was natural then that Comintern orders should often conflict with the demands of nationalism. For example, the Comintern demand that the JCP incorporate a slogan calling for the protection and defense of the Soviet Union meant that the JCP members were being forced by outsiders to side against their homeland in any conflict with Russia. Even more important, the Comintern dictate that the JCP propagandize a slogan calling for the abolition of the monarchy (emperor) conflicted with the most important facet of Japanese nationalism based on loyalty to the emperor. The differences between the Comintern and the JCP on this point were deep-seated. Comintern interpretation of the doctrine of class struggle viewed the monarchy as an autocratic element which must be overthrown in order for history to proceed toward the eventual attainment of a socialist state. However, emperor-based nationalism had been firmly inculcated in the Japanese people through a deliberate program that began during the Meiji era. 6

The new leaders of Meiji Japan, forced to live with the "unequal treaties" that the former Tokugawa rulers had signed with the West and cognizant of the effects of Western imperialism on China, promoted a program which would enable Japan to achieve the goal of becoming a "rich country with a strong military" (fukoku kyōhei). Their overriding

6. Although, prior to this period, the Japanese possessed all the necessary attributes for the development of a nationalist ideology (such as a defined territory, a common culture, language, history, ethnic origin, and so on), it was not until the Meiji era that the spirit of nationalism was actively inculcated in the populace. See Boyd C. Shafer, Faces of Nationalism (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972), pp. 17-20, for the attributes that he considers most essential for the propagation of a nationalist spirit.
concern was for the safety of Japan, because it was apparent to them that if Japan were to survive, it must modernize with a view to becoming as strong as the Western countries.

With this goal in mind, the Meiji leaders sought to imbue the public with a spirit of self-sacrifice for the sake of the nation. The concept of **kokutai** ("national polity") fit their needs perfectly. The term "kokutai" involved a whole range of social values and political myths which, taken together, expressed a world view that bound each Japanese to the emperor as well as to the nation. Perhaps the best explanation in English of what kokutai meant was provided by the Japanese scholar, Nitobe Inazo. He writes:

> Kokutai, then, reduced to its simplest terms, means the retention of the highest social dignity and political powers by the head of the Family which subdued the country [Japan] and has ruled it from the beginning of our history. This family is conceived as embracing the whole nation—since the first ruler brought with him his kith and kin, and it is their descendants who now form the bulk of the population. In a narrower sense, the Family includes the more direct blood relationships of the ruler. The Emperor is thus the representative of the nation and the symbol of its unity. Thus the true nature of the bonds which unite men in government and subjection is, primarily a mythical blood-relationship; secondarily, a moral tie; and thirdly, a legal obligation.⁷

In order to implant and perpetuate this world view in the Japanese people, a morals course (shūshin) was introduced into the school system in 1890.⁸ The objectives of the course were to imprint filial piety, obedience to elders, and, above all, respect for the

---


emperor into the minds of the young. This goal was accomplished by teaching "morals" two hours a week for six years in primary school, and one hour a week for five years in middle school. In addition to the specific shūshin course, moral concepts were also incorporated as much as possible into other subjects such as history, geography, arithmetic, language, and music.⁹

In one analysis of the prewar books on ethics that were used in the first eight grades, it was found that 40 per cent of the material covered in the lessons dealt with Japanese historical figures and events, presented in such a way that it promoted those traditional ideas of virtue regarded as essential to the making of good subjects. The study also considered the specific situations to which each moral concept was applied, and found that in 79 per cent of the cases, "loyalty" was directed toward the nation (nation being synonymous with the emperor); 17 per cent of the time, it was directed to an employer, and only 4 per cent of the time to the self and the individual. "Respect" was targeted 40 per cent of the time at the country (its mores and ideals), 31 per cent of the time at members of the family, 21 per cent of the time at great personalities, and only 8 per cent at the laudable work of others. In 56 per cent of the situations studied, "duty" was directed toward the country, and in 44 per cent of them to

These findings clearly reveal the social priority given to the nation, as opposed to the self or even the family.

The inculcation of national spirit in the schools was not confined to the institution of the morals course. State Shinto, which was based on the belief in imperial divinity, was also closely aligned with the school system in order to strengthen the pupils' loyalty and devotion to the nation. Moreover, frequent ceremonies, excursions to imperial shrines, and constant classroom drill intensified the students' feelings toward the emperor and "magnified their feelings into worship." Thus, the nationalistic spirit of kokutai was propagated by way of the educational process, and self-sacrifice for the state became the highest virtue.

Professor Maruyama Masao has termed the process by which morality originates in affairs of the nation rather than in the consciousness of the individual the "exteriorization of morality." Maruyama argues that Japanese nationalism from the Meiji period consistently found expression in internal values (questions of thought, belief, and morality) rather than in authority deriving its power from external laws (such as a legal system); because the nation included in its national polity (kokutai) all internal values, nothing could exist apart from


11. Passin, p. 155. For further detail concerning the content and distinguishing features of State Shinto, see William Bunce, Rêligions in Japan (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1968).

these national values. Hence, all inner thoughts and outer actions were subordinated to concern for the nation, and, since the personal quality of private affairs could never be openly recognized, people had to legitimize these affairs by trying in one way or another to imbue them with some national significance. 13

Armed with such dedication, Japanese leaders attained their goal of gaining equality with the West within fifty years, for by 1900 the West had abrogated the unequal treaties, and by 1915 Japan had become the dominant power in East Asia. Since such an overriding love of emperor had been successfully imbued in the people, the Comintern directive advocating the abolition of the Japanese emperor system and the subsequent JCP decision to acquiesce in the Comintern's slogan in 1927 had predictable results: the JCP became isolated from the masses and a government crackdown on the communist movement because of its anti-emperor stand led to the eventual collapse of the JCP in the 1930s. In the meantime, the attraction of Marxism-Leninism had peaked in a Japan which was beset by serious internal crises—in particular a depressed agricultural situation and a growing disenchantment with capitalism and parliamentary democracy. In fact, it was in response to these difficulties that the government suppressed the communist movement.

The agricultural sector had been in a state of recession throughout the 1920s, but when the Great Depression hit in 1929, and a series of natural disasters occurred in the early 1930s, the tenant

farmer and the small landowners were reduced to abject poverty, as the following 1932 newspaper account graphically indicates:

With starvation staring them in the face, the impoverished communities of Nagano, Iwate, and Niigata are selling their young girls into prostitution, eating "warabe" (bracken) where such a "delicacy" is still obtainable, cooking bean cake ordinarily used as fertilizer with various kinds of grass as their regular food. . . . In Nagano Prefecture those who can afford to eat barley are very well off. Every tree in the hills is bare, its fruit, however bad it may taste, having been picked by hungry children. . . . In one village, the investigator found that last year the total income of a certain peasant was 130 yen, whilst his losses were 366 yen. In order to make up for such losses peasants and poor farmers are selling off their children. The most unfortunate are girls who are being taken away on payment of 3 to 10 yen on the promise that they will soon be brought home, and sold to unlicensed brothels. The same conditions prevail in Niigata Prefecture. Young women of marriageable age are scarce as most of them have been sold off and there is a growing tendency to sell even primary school children. The prices for children are about 100 yen for third grade pupils and about 400 for those who have finished school. 14

While the agricultural sector stagnated during the years 1930-1936, secondary industries made such great progress that some scholars regard this period as one of transition to a modernized industrial power when the Japanese economy became based on heavy and chemical industries. 15 Despite the world depression, exports increased dramatically due to the availability of extremely cheap labor. One indication of the booming export trade was the tremendous increase in girls being sold to the brothels in the export towns. Far from being unable to afford the cost of obtaining new girls (as would be the case if the


economy were altogether bad), the licensed quarters did their best to slake the seemingly unquenchable thirst that the businessmen had for lots of fresh girls from the starving villages.

Under these circumstances, the prosperous businessman did not find himself a very popular figure. In the 1920s he had been able to defend his position against the foreign "radicalism" of socialism and labor unionism by saying that he worked for traditional "spiritual" compensation (the satisfaction of contributing to society) and not for such Western motives as utilitarianism, individualism, and selfishness. However, by the 1930s the tables had been turned. An emerging right wing had become the champion of traditional values, attacking the businessman for prospering while the farmers were impoverished. As a result, the business elite was put on the defensive and was forced to justify such non-traditional concepts as the competitive pursuit of profit and the importance of private initiative. 16 Such justifications, in turn, only aroused more hatred against the businessman, since it soon became apparent to the common man that the big business sector was prospering the most from governmental policies. Thus both business and government were viewed by the masses as being of one and the same character—corrupt, privileged, and fraudulent. 17

In addition to the agricultural crisis and the anti-capitalist mood, there was a marked decline in "parliamentary spirit" in Shōwa


Japan. Although the leaders of the proletarian movement were encouraged by the passage of the Universal Manhood Suffrage Act in 1925, their "rising expectations" were short-lived, and by 1928, with the extension of the Peace Preservation Law, they despaired of being able to exert influence on the established parties. This was one factor that led some to rely on extra-legal methods to gain power. Another factor was the Depression, for instead of arousing the discontented to the support of the parties, it caused a reduction in financial support, forcing the proletarian parties to run fewer candidates.18

Faced with both economic crises and a growing tendency on the part of the proletarian movement to resort to extra-parliamentary tactics of confrontation, the government made a firm commitment to tackle what it saw as its gravest problem, the eradication of Marxism in Japan. Between March 1928 and April 1929, the government arrested approximately six thousand "communist intellectuals" on charges of espousing the abolition of the emperor system and the destruction of the kokutai.19 The government's hope of winning back these men and women into the nationalist fold through reeducation was aided by the fact that many Japanese Marxists harbored persistent doubts about the Japanese communist movement, particularly with respect to the necessity of taking orders from the Comintern and the sagacity of advocating the abolition of the emperor. These qualms, together with the international


isolation which Japan suffered after the Manchurian Incident of 1931 and the country's subsequent withdrawal from the League of Nations, awoke the dormant nationalism into which they had been socialized since childhood. As a result, many communists defected from the JCP and switched their allegiance to the burgeoning nationalist socialist movement.

The change from communism to national socialism affected by many Japanese activists in the 1930s represented an effort to make Marxism-Leninism more acceptable in the Japanese context by including an affirmation of the emperor system and Japanese nationalism. From the outset, it must be emphasized that Japanese national socialism was completely different from the German variant. The concept of national socialism in Japan referred to any combination of the two ideologies of nationalism and socialism. Basically, the two terms can be viewed as representing different concepts and thus can be combined without one ideology overwhelming the other. That is, nationalism connotes an adherence to the symbols which distinguish one people's customs and culture from another, whereas socialism is an ideology based on reconstructing society in order to eradicate class inequality.

In the Japanese context, those who espoused a combination of nationalism and socialism did so in order to bring about an "ideal" condition of national existence. This ideal condition would be achieved by incorporating those aspects which made Japan distinctly Japanese (the emperor, kokutai, and so on) with the socialist emphasis on destroying

---

20. For a detailed analysis of this difference, see Maruyama Masao, Chapter 2.
the capitalist profit system. In general terms, Japanese national socialists believed that the individualistic basis of the capitalist structure was destroying the integrity of national life and was obstructing the development of the state by advocating such principles as "profit-first" and ruthless competition. It was this competitive spirit that led to social antagonisms and class struggle. In place of capitalism, they hoped to create a controlled economy capable of meeting the needs of the country and of working for the benefit of the nation as a whole, rather than merely for the bourgeoisie (as in capitalism) or the proletariat (as in communism).  

As may be expected, there were as many variants of national socialism as there were participants in the movement. Some leaders stressed socialism more than nationalism, while others reversed the priorities to such an extent that the socialist content of their system was almost negligible. Until the Sino-Japanese War of 1937, all indications seem to point in the direction of the evolution of national socialism into a people's movement geared toward popular demands for reform. However, when confronted with the worsening foreign crisis, the national socialist movement began to emphasize such tenets as foreign expansion and the glorification of a military build-up and war; thus the nationalist element in national socialism predominated, and Japan advanced along the road of Shōwa ultranationalism.


The fact that many Japanese activists born around 1900 were nurtured on Meiji nationalism as children, became fervent Marxists as youths, and converted to rabid nationalism as adults has prompted commentators to write off these men as weak individuals who succumbed to whatever ideology was popular or convenient at the time. At best, however, this characterization is a gross oversimplification which ignores the major goal of these men—to make adaptations of socialism by reconciling the existence of the emperor with the tenets of Marxism-Leninism. In fact, in many cases, the union of nationalism and socialism was achieved without jeopardizing the activist's earnest desire to bring about socialism in Japan and to improve the lot of the masses.

In order to exemplify the attempt of the Japanese revolutionary socialist to nativize Marxism-Leninism, Part I of this study will trace the intellectual development of the political ideas of one of these activists, Sano Manabu (1892-1953). The choice of Sano was dictated by the fact that he provides many clues as to why a major figure in Japan felt the necessity to modify socialism. Educated in traditional Japanese values during his youth, Sano became a leader of the socialist movement during his university days, and was elevated to the chairmanship of the JCP during its crucial struggles against "deviationism" in the early Shōwa period. Then, unexpectedly, in June 1933, he denounced both the JCP and the Comintern in a famous tenkō ("conversion") statement, and announced his own version of Japanese socialism linking the two elements of socialism and Japanese nationalism. His abandonment of the Party immediately influenced hundreds of other members to leave the
JCP, and these mass defections marked the end of the communist movement in prewar Japan.

Because Sano's stance was so influential in the downfall of the communist movement, scholars have tended to treat the problem of his tenkō in terms of a renunciation of his previous political loyalties. According to this line of reasoning, Sano can be viewed as either a sheer opportunist or a "fascist" because his adoption of the emperor system and his "rebirth as a patriotic Japanese subject" illustrated the shallowness of his socialist convictions; that is, one could not consistently profess loyalty to both the working class and to the institution of the emperor. 23

However, upon further examination, it can be demonstrated that Sano Manabu did not completely renounce his early Marxist-Leninist beliefs. Instead, his brand of Japanese revolutionary socialism was the result of a maturation of his pre-tenkō ideas and of the post-tenkō adaptations that he made to Marxism in order to bring this Western philosophy into closer conformity with Japanese national customs and institutions. Thus Sano's tenkō did not represent a complete turnabout from his former position, and he did not become a "fascist." Rather, until his death in 1953, he continued to believe in and propagate

"one-state socialism," for he theorized that this brand of Japanese socialism was especially applicable to postwar Japanese conditions.

Although Sano Manabu's mixture of nationalism and socialism affords the clearest example of a Japanese activist's attempt to reconcile the imperial institution with Marxism, it must be emphasized that many others in Sano's generation also felt the need to indigenize socialism by linking emperor-centered nationalism with egalitarian socialism. In order to grasp the diversity involved in this effort, Part II of the study will analyze three other adaptations of socialism that were created by Sano's contemporaries, Asō Hisashi, Akamatsu Katsumaro, and a certain clique of "Imperial Marxists" who participated in the Young Officers Movement. These men were similar to Sano in that as children they were imbued with the spirit of Meiji nationalism, became attracted to socialism and Marxism in their youth, and as adults, tried to create their own brands of national socialism. However, each approach represented a unique path and experience: Asō Hisashi tried to use the staff officers in the Army to realize his ideal; Akamatsu Katsumaro became so nationalistic that he ultimately abandoned socialism; and the "Imperial Marxist" clique illustrated that even in the "conservative" Japanese military, there was a movement to harmonize the existence of the emperor with a revolutionary socialist scheme.

The fact that Sano and the others have been viewed as "opportunists" and "fascists" only serves to highlight the limitations inherent in designating ideological affiliation along the usual right wing (nationalism)-left wing (socialism) political continuum. Instead, a new conceptual framework must be utilized in order to differentiate right
wing and left wing movements in Japan. This study advances such a framework and demonstrates its applicability to the analysis of the political thought behind all four national socialist movements considered here.

In short, the study aims not only to describe four of the most salient adaptations of socialism that were attempted in Japan in the prewar era, but to demonstrate the feasibility of linking the two ideologies of nationalism and socialism through a profession of allegiance to both the emperor institution and the working class. Since all the schemes analyzed here entailed a process through which the activist tried to make Marxism-Leninism more compatible with the social, political, and economic realities of the host country, it would be most useful to plot each activist's commitment to the lower class against his increasing commitment to the nationalist symbols of his country so as to determine whether the emphasis on nationalism compromised his socialist positions. The diagram below represents one attempt to correlate nationalism and socialism in prewar Japan. The X-axis delineates a class continuum based on the class which the activist is trying to help by his actions. The Y axis, on the other hand, links the two polar extremes of Comintern internationalism and Japanese nationalism.

```
X
lower class

middle class

upper class

Y

Comintern internationalism

A

B

C

D

Japanese nationalism
```
If an activist retained his commitment to the lower class after rejecting Comintern internationalism, then his ideological orientation would have moved from point A to point B. However, if he lost his lower class orientation as he increased his nationalist propensities, his ideological position would have moved from point A to point C (a middle class orientation) or point D (an upper class affinity). This chart will be utilized to show to what extent Sano, Akamatsu, Asō, and the "Imperial Marxists" succeeded in reconciling the two ideologies of nationalism and socialism without compromising the essential attributes of each.
PART I

SANOW MANABU—AN INTELLECTUAL BIOGRAPHY
CHAPTER 2

PATH TO MARXISM

Sano Manabu was born on March 22, 1892, in Oita Prefecture. He was the sixth of seven children and the youngest of three sons. The Sano family was highly esteemed in the province because their paternal lineage included ten generations of han physicians along with numerous priests and men of culture. Furthermore, the Sano household was noted as a center of education and scholarship. Sano's grandfather Hakuyō was a student of the famous Rangaku (Dutch Learning) teacher, Alexander Siebolt, in Nagasaki. In fact, Hakuyō reportedly was the first person taught by Siebolt to cure cow cholera.

While studying in Nagasaki, Hakuyō formed a close friendship with Ogata Kōan, a fellow student under Siebolt who later became head of the famous Tekijuku school for Dutch Learning located in Osaka. Hakuyō sent his son Shuntatsu (the future father of Manabu) to Kōan's school to be trained in medicine and the French language. Shuntatsu went on to become a han doctor for the daimyō Matsudairā Kitsuki. However, Sano's father and grandfather did not neglect the "Eastern" side of their education, for both men continued to study Chinese Learning.

1. Sano's brothers and sisters in chronological order were: Hyōta, the eldest brother who became a medical doctor and head of the Sano Byōin in Surugadai, Tokyo; sisters Michi, Hide, and Toku; elder brother Tsune, who became a doctor of agriculture; and younger sister Misao.

throughout their lives. Growing up in such an atmosphere, Sano was introduced early in life to Western ways and Confucian morality, and soon became imbued with a hunger for scholarship.

Sano's nephew recalled that he was always a precocious child. Although he excelled at all subjects, his favorites were literature and history. Sano entered the prefecture-run Kitsuki Middle School in 1905 and in his third or fourth year there received a prize for an article he contributed to the noted weekly journal Universal Morning Report (Yorozu chōhō). Sano not only excelled in his studies, but he also exhibited leadership qualities and an anti-establishment character during his middle school days. In his fourth year of middle school, his father sent him to live in a boarding school run by the school's principal, who happened to be a close friend of the elder Sano. It seems that Manabu was becoming too egotistical and his father wished to curb this undesirable trait. However, Sano rebelled even more at what he saw as the "feudalistic conduct" of the school principal and eventually led a strike of his classmates to demand better treatment. At first the principal was at a loss to determine who was the leader of the students, but after a week, one student informed him that Sano was the leader. This betrayal had two unfortunate outcomes for Sano: first, he was expelled from school, and secondly, in his demand for satisfaction from the "traitor," he fought a duel with the student and,


4. Ibid.
in the process, received a head wound. Sano had no trouble telling his parents about the expulsion, but could not bring himself to reveal the cause of the wound; instead, he told them that he received the cut when he accidentally fell off a bluff.\(^5\)

After Sano was forced to leave his local middle school, he transferred into the fifth year of the Tokyo Azabu Middle School. The following year, he returned to Kyushu and entered the Seventh Higher School in Kagoshima. The Seventh Higher School was not Sano's first choice, and he was greatly disappointed that he was not accepted at the First Higher School in Tokyo. His vexation was expressed in letters, such as the one he wrote to Shishi Bunroku, one of his friends at the Azabu Middle School and later a novelist. In this letter Sano stated that he was acting out "the lazy Southerner"; further, instead of using the proper Chinese characters for Zōshikan (the name of his dormitory), he used similarly pronounced characters signifying "Resembling a House of Death."\(^6\)

Sano, however, did not fret away his three years in Kagoshima. During his Seventh Higher days, he became known as a boatsman as well as a scholar.\(^7\) While the other boys were engaged in amorous adventures, he preferred to immerse himself in historical literature and

---

\(^5\) Ibid. It is perhaps interesting that Sano, Akamatsu Katsumaro, and Asō Hisashi, all leaders in the revolutionary socialist movement, were expelled from middle school for leading strikes.

\(^6\) Shishi Bunroku, "Kaiko," Kokumin hyōron (June 1953), p. 36.

philosophical books. Sano was especially interested in Japanese literature and he set himself the goal of reading through representative Japanese works from the Nara period through the Meiji Restoration. During his excursion through Japanese literature, he became fond of the kabuki theater, and soon filled his room with kabuki paraphernalia. In fact, his passion for this Tokugawa merchant class theater was so great that even when he was later writing tracts for the Japanese Communist party (JCP), he made sure to allot some time for himself to publish a few articles on the subject.  

When Sano graduated from the Seventh Higher School in 1914, he was basically apolitical and unconcerned with socialism. Yet, two interests which he cultivated during his adolescent days would remain with him and serve him as guides later in life. The first was the profound impression made on him by philosophers such as Nietzsche who wrote about the importance of human spirit. The second was a deep interest in Japanese history—an interest which forced him later to come to terms with his own Japanese identity.

After graduation from the Seventh Higher School, Sano returned to Tokyo for the second time; this time he was admitted to the school of his first choice, Tokyo Imperial University. Sano entered the literature department of the university because he was still attracted to Japanese literature. One classmate recalled that he and the others in the department regarded Sano as "an aesthete with regard to literature, idolizing Chikamatsu, admiring Nagai Kafū and also having an interest

in kabuki and ongyoku (songs accompanied by samisen music)." Yet, Sano remained in the literature department for only one year before he changed to the political science department of the Faculty of Laws. It was his introduction to the social thought of Tolstoi that lay behind this change of interest.

Attraction to Socialism

Moved by Tolstoi's writings, Sano decided to spend his remaining two years at the university absorbing whatever socialist literature was available to him in the library. Through his reading of history, literature, and philosophy, he became acquainted with humanism and other world views, and these in turn, led him toward analyses of society, economics, and politics. Soon he began to read socialist and anarchist writers like Marx and Kropotkin, but in his last year at the university he was drawn mainly to Neo-Kantian idealism and Gomplowiczian sociology. Despite all his reading, Sano did not barricade himself up in the library and cut himself off from the socialist movement occurring on the outside. Rather, he mingled with a wide range of progressive Japanese thinkers of all persuasions, from socialists like Sakai Toshihiko, to anarchists like Ōsugi Sakae, and Marxists like Takabatake Motoyuki.


11. It was not until 1918 that Takabatake switched from Marxism to national socialism.
By the time Sano graduated from Tokyo Imperial University in 1917, he was assured of an upper class status in society. Not only was he a descendant of a prominent family of samurai stock, a nephew of Kinoshita Kenjirō (a Seiyūkai Diet member), and a relative of Count Gotō Shimpei (through his eldest brother Hyōta who married an adopted daughter of Gotō), but now he had graduated from the most prestigious university in Japan and was awarded a silver watch given by the emperor in appreciation of his academic excellence. Soon he would become son-in-law of Dr. Kaneko Umaji, literature professor at Waseda University, and would himself become a lecturer at Waseda’s Department of Commercial Science. With all these expectations of future greatness, why would Sano risk everything to become involved in the newly arising socialist movement?

Perhaps one can gain some insight into this question by analyzing why other activists of Sano’s generation became involved in the socialist movement. The most significant experience that led many young men to socialism was a sense of shame or guilt originating in contact with poverty. These feelings could develop out of personal deprivations, family misfortunes, or contact with less fortunate people, such as poor classmates or manual workers. Two examples of this process of moral development can be seen in the lives of Asō Hisashi and Kamei Katsuichirō. When Asō was born, his father was a poor farmer, but later he became a wealthy saké merchant. However, Asō remembered the poverty
of his childhood days, and, when forced to collect rent from poor farmers, he developed a sense of guilt and a hatred of money. Kamei also experienced the same kind of guilt when confronted by the notion of poverty. He was born into a wealthy family, but was embarrassed by the deference that everyone in the town paid him. Soon he developed a "feeling of guilt at being rich" and went so far as to wear shabby clothes in his desire to "ascend to the level of the poor." This sense of guilt or sensitivity to social injustice was also experienced by many students who later became involved in the Shinjinkai (New Men's Association). It was because of their perceptions that young men became determined to do something—anything—to rid their society of poverty. Whether this was altruism or merely a way to overcome guilt feelings is not the important question here. What is significant is that they were stirred to do something or at least arrived at the decision that something should be done. They came to realize that their society was not just and that reform was necessary.

As Erik H. Erikson aptly sums up the role of youth in history:

To enter history, each generation of youth must find an identity consonant with its own childhood and consonant with an ideological promise in the perceptible historical process. But in youth the tables of childhood dependence begin slowly to turn: no longer is it merely for the old to teach the young the meaning of life, whether individual or collective. It is the young who, by their responses and actions, tell


the old whether life as represented by the old and as presented to the young has meaning, and it is the young who carry in them the power to confirm those who confirm them and, joining the issues, to renew and to regenerate, or to reform and to rebel.  

Sano was to enter the socialist movement for these very reasons. Although he came from an upper class family, he was moved by the inequalities inherent in Japanese society and thus felt the need to rid his society of severe exploitation. He was not excited by his expectations of wealth and fame; rather he was stimulated by the political turbulence of 1917-1918, the year of his graduation from the university, to become fully involved in the movement and dedicate his life to the abolition of inequality. Later, when asked why he became involved in the socialist movement, he was able to answer:

From the days of my youth, my nature has been such that I felt the great inequality of the powerful suppressing the weak. In my life as a student and especially as a university student, I was disappointed with the education for civil service which lacked the spirit of free inquiry and so at the library I read left wing sociologists such as Oppenheimer and the writings of Marx and Engels; gradually I came to embrace the ideas of socialism. Then about 1917, when I graduated from school, I was moved by the Russian Revolution, the Rice Riots, the frequent strikes, the struggles of the peasants and other social incidents so that gradually I took part in actual movements. . . .  

After Sano graduated, he decided to continue his education in an effort to better understand the cycles of recession that were


plaguing the agrarian sector. To this end, he spent the next two years doing graduate work in agronomy under Dr. Yahagi Eizō of Tokyo University. From this point until his death in 1953, Sano immersed himself in the social movement—first in a number of reform-minded groups, then in the JCP, and lastly in his own one-state socialist movement.

The first group Sano became involved in was the Yūaikai (Friendly Societies). The Yūaikai was organized by Suzuki Bunji in 1912 as a moderate welfare organization for labor based on the principle of harmony between labor and capital. Suzuki was a Christian humanist who rejected radical movements and instead propagated ideas such as self-help, self-reliance, and self-respect. Sano joined the Yūaikai in 1917, and for the next year he occasionally gave some guest lectures on the agrarian problem. However, he soon came to see the society as too tame and decided to set out on a more activist course.

After becoming disenchanted with the Yūaikai, Sano went to work as a researcher at the Southern Manchurian Railroad East Asian Economic Research Bureau (Mantetsu Tō-A Keizai Chōsakyo). During this time, the East Asian Bureau was concerned with vital surveys, especially

17. According to Sano's eldest brother, Sano worked for an industrial bank for a short time after his graduation. The head of the bank was so pleased with his work that he encouraged Sano to stay on when Sano announced that he would be leaving the bank. However, Sano never referred to this job in any of his writings or records—perhaps out of embarrassment. See Sano Hiroshi, "Kakumeika Sano Manabu," p. 117.

18. Nabeyama Sadachika, who became a member of the Yūaikai in 1915, characterized this society as more of a cultural circle than a labor union. For his remarks, see Nabeyama Sadachika, Watakushi wa kyōsantō suteta—jiyū to sokoku o motome (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1950), p. 24.
on political, economic, and international conditions. Since it enjoyed substantial government support, it was the most well-staffed survey organ in Japan.\textsuperscript{19} When Sano joined it, full-scale research was being conducted on the progress of the Russian Revolution. However, a split soon developed in the East Asian Bureau: one faction revolved around Sano and Okanoe Morimichi, and the other around Ōkawa Shūmei.\textsuperscript{20}

Sano and Okanoe became fast friends while at the East Asian Bureau, and Okanoe introduced Sano to another young man who was keenly interested in the progress of the Russian Revolution, Asō Hisashi. These three men decided to pool their research notes and publish a book entitled \textit{The Bolsheviks} (Kagekiha), which was to be one of the earliest volumes on the Russian Revolution in Japan.\textsuperscript{21} Instead of using their real names, the book was published under the pseudonyms of "Asayama Kaisuke" (Asō), "Kuroda Reiji" (Okanoe), and "Katashima Shin" (Sano). In addition to his work on the Russian Revolution, Sano began to study Dutch as well as continuing his own independent research on Japanese

\textsuperscript{19} Kawakami Jōtarō, \textit{Asō Hisashi den} (Tokyo: Asō Hisashi den kankō i-inkai, 1958), p. 79.

\textsuperscript{20} Okanoe was a Russophile who loathed Japanese traditions, while Ōkawa was an extreme nationalist and later a leading ultra-nationalist. See Chapter 8 for Ōkawa's connection with one young officer group.

\textsuperscript{21} Smith, p. 42. There is some discrepancy as to when Sano was actually employed in the Research Bureau. Sano Hiroshi ("Kakumeika Sano Manabu," p. 117), Bessho Keita (p. 83), and the Sano Manabu chronology in the \textit{Sano Manabu chosakushū} (Tokyo: Sano Manabu chosakushū kankōkai, 1957). Henceforth this work will be cited as \textit{SMC}, V, all place Sano as working in the organization in 1919. I have chosen to use Smith's account because the dates he cites are more logical when referring to Sano's introduction to Okanoe and Asō.
history, particularly on the Tokugawa period and the general economic and social history of Japan.

While working at the East Asian Bureau, Sano's search for a more active way to channel his energy also led him to become a part of the burgeoning student movement. After Okanoe introduced Sano to Asō, Asō invited Sano to become part of a group which met at Asō's house. The group called itself the "Wednesday Society" because it met every Wednesday for about one year from 1918-1919. The members were concerned with social problems and were especially interested in the Russian Revolution. At first Asō, Yamana Yoshitsuru, Tanahashi Kotoru, Kishii Jurō, and Kawai Eizō met together. Later Nosaka Sanzō, Akamatsu Katsumaro, Okanoe, and Sano joined in the discussions.22 Asō quickly was drawn to Sano, for both men hailed from the same county in Ōita and shared the common experience of being expelled for leading a strike in middle school. Upon meeting Sano, Asō wrote: "At first meeting, this young man appeared somehow melancholy and reticent. Although his face has an extremely sober expression, his character is just the opposite."23

In early 1919, the Wednesday Society decided to become involved in the labor movement by organizing the workers who were concentrated together on the small island of Tsukishima near Tokyo Bay. Asō, Yamana, Tanahashi, and Sano moved into this section and were imbued with a fervor "to make Tsukishima a Japanese Kronstadt..."

22. Kawakami Jōtarō, pp. 73-75.
23. Ibid., p. 79.
Tsukishima is the Kronstadt facing Petrograd. Although this effort failed to establish a concrete labor union, it did inspire other students to join the masses and soon this clique became known in the Yūaikai as the "radicals of Tsukishima."

The Wednesday Society broke up soon after the Tsukishima experience. There were two primary reasons for the group's disintegration. The first reason was ideological: one faction, composed of Sano, Nosaka, and Akamatsu, wanted to concentrate on a political movement and later joined the JCP, while the other group was more interested in forming a concrete labor union movement. The second reason was that the Wednesday Society was becoming absorbed in the Shinjinkai.

The Shinjinkai was established in 1918 as an amalgamation of smaller student groups centered around student leaders such as Asō and Akamatsu at Tokyo Imperial University. The movement had the goal of instituting wide-scale socioeconomic and political reforms in Japan, but its guiding principle can be best described as a vague mixture of simplistic revolutionary socialism. This ideological mixture was reflected in the literature that the early Shinjinkai members read most often: that is, the writings of Tolstoi, Marx, Lenin, Kropotkin, Rousseau, Lincoln, and Rosa Luxemburg. However, the students were most serious in their endeavor. Shinjinkai lodging houses were set up so that the members could live in a communal atmosphere which one

24. Ibid., p. 91.

25. Hanzawa Hiroshi and Sanuki Sōetsu, p. 70.
researcher described as being "puritanical, physically demanding, and intensely serious."\textsuperscript{26} Sano became a leader in the Shinjinkai when it was formed, and he took an active role in one lodging house inhabited by himself, Akamatsu, Miyazaki Ryūsuke, Taira Teizō, and Shimmei Masamichi.\textsuperscript{27} After Sano moved to Tsukishima, the members of his lodge paid him frequent visits and he taught them about various socialist theories and the history of the socialist movement.

In 1919 Sano also began to play an active role in the new movement of disseminating socialist ideas through the use of journals. With the help of Aso and Akamatsu, he was chief editor of the progressive journal \textit{Emancipation} (Kaihō) until he was forced to flee the country in 1923.\textsuperscript{28} Moreover he contributed articles on socialism to other left wing magazines such as \textit{We} (Warera), \textit{Reconstruction} (Kaizō), and the Shinjinkai journals \textit{Pioneer} (Senku), \textit{Brothers} (Dōhō), and \textit{Narod} (Narodo).\textsuperscript{29}

Sano quit the Southern Manchurian Railroad East Asian Economic Research Bureau in the spring of 1920 upon being offered a position at Waseda University teaching economics and economic history. At the time Sano joined the faculty, there were five major teachers of socialist orientation—Ōyama Ikuo, Kitazawa Shinjirō, Inomata Tsunao, Oyama Ikuo, Kitazawa Shinjirō, Inomata Tsunao,

\textsuperscript{26} Smith, p. 179.

\textsuperscript{27} Miwa Jusō, "Oshii hitono shi," \textit{Kokumin hyōron} (June 1953), p. 17.

\textsuperscript{28} Bessho Keita, p. 83.

\textsuperscript{29} Sano used his family name when he wrote for the national journals, but he used the pennames of Katashima Shin and Arakawa Shin for his articles in the Shinjinkai journals,
Abe Isoo, and Sano, Age seemed to be the determining factor in distinguishing these men, for the eldest (Abe) espoused moderate socialism, the middle group (Ōyama and Kitazawa) advocated a more activist socialism, but the youngest (Sano and Inomata) were disciples of communism. Former students of Sano have related how deeply influenced they were by his lectures on Japanese history taught from the standpoint of historical materialism and by his sense of purity and sincerity. In addition to his teaching, Sano also threw himself into the student movement at Waseda, becoming an advisor to both the Bunkakai (Cultural Society) and the Kensetsusha Dōmei (Builder's League).

Although Sano was primarily interested in a political movement, he also believed that a concrete labor movement was necessary, and thus he channeled his energy toward this endeavor while lecturing at Waseda. He participated with Asō, Kawai Eizō, and Ishiwatari Haruo in the creation of the National Mineworkers Union and brought it into the mines section of the Yūaikai under the name of National Federation of Miners (Zenkoku Kōfu Rengōkai). He also helped to organize the


31. Ibid., and Kokumin hyōron (June 1953), p. 49. Sano analyzed Japanese history according to the following Marxist historical stages: (1) period of primitive agrarian communist society (pre-Yamato period); (2) period of divine patriarchal slave state (Yamato through Nara periods); (3) rise of a feudal state (Heian); (4) development of a feudal state (Kamakura through Muromachi); (5) full maturation and decay of the feudal state (Tokugawa); and (6) period of a capitalist state (Meiji through Shōwa). In his analysis of each stage, Sano stressed the socioeconomic conditions, class relationships, transfer of political power, connections between social contradictions and social change, and the influence of international conditions.
Japanese Peasant Union and the Suiheisha (Leveler's Society). These energetic efforts on behalf of the working class made Sano one of the most active participants in the socialist movement, and he was rewarded by receiving an invitation from Arahata Kanson to join the JCP in 1922.  

Early Marxist Thought

During his early period of activism, Sano, like many other future leaders of the JCP, flirted with anarcho-syndicalism before being won over to the creed of Marxism-Leninism. Although Sano never considered himself a committed anarchist or a follower of Ōsugi Sakae, he did have some anarchist tendencies; specifically, an addiction to violence and opposition to parliamentary participation and universal suffrage. Actually these two views were linked. Sano believed that universal suffrage was a system invented by the bourgeois class and could serve the purposes of the bourgeoisie alone. In his words: "The explanation that a parliament is a representative organ of all the people is an eighteenth century illusion. . . . Today's society is formed by class struggle. Hence, people who believe in the omnipotence of universal suffrage are people who try to brew sake by mixing together water and oil." Only by using violence could ends be achieved, for

32. Sano was called by two names in the JCP: Hanada was his Party name, and "professor" was the nickname he received because of his affiliation with Waseda. See Takabatake Michitoshi, p. 175.

33. Other future leaders include Yamakawa Hitoshi, Arahata Kanson, and Nabeyama Sadachika.

"violence is a mysterious creative power which completes all great and glorious historical endeavors." Thus, Sano preached that activists should not retreat from violence, but rather must unconditionally surrender to it.

Sano's interest in anarcho-syndicalism quickly passed and he was won over to the Marxist creed after reading the Manifesto of the Communist Party and other early works by Marx. The principal reason for this change was his attraction to the totality of Marxism which he viewed as scientific and forward-looking; further, he welcomed the forecast of victory for the working class. "Communism is not an ideological theory," he wrote, "but a scientific conclusion concerning the direction of societal development, and its principles of conduct are rooted in the demands of the working class." Again, he wrote: "The social revolution is an inevitable process of societal progress which should confront today's capitalist society. Society is always in a state of progress or change. The status quo cannot remain in a society."

Sano was not alone in his attraction to the optimistic and scientific qualities of Marxism. Studies of other Japanese activists have demonstrated that a whole generation of post-World War I reformists were intoxicated with Marxism, for they saw it as the most scientific


36. "Sano Manabu yoshin jimmon chōsho," p. 188.

analysis of poverty and social injustice. While some such as Kawakami Hajime, Yamakawa Hitoshi, and Kamei Katsuichirō had grown dissatisfied with Christian humanism or utopian socialism because it was too subjective in its analysis of the ills of society, others such as Sano, Tsuboi Shigeki, and Nabeyama Sadachika were disillusioned with anarchism because it lacked the hope and practical application that became associated with Marxism-Leninism. In sum, it was the concept of historical materialism which attracted these men to Marxism because they viewed this concept as scientific and thus "truth."

The concept of historical materialism lies at the very heart of orthodox Marxism or Scientific Socialism. Briefly stated, in an effort to be scientific in his analysis of society, Marx endeavored to find historical laws which, being based on the principles of natural science, would be objective, unbiased, and eternal. By modifying Hegel's law of the dialectic to apply to the physical (not mental) forces of society, Marx postulated that materialistic productive power (economics) was the motive force in history, and that this motive force took concrete shape in class antagonisms. In other words, Marx assured his followers that society would progress through a number of stages until there was an eventual victory of the working class over the bourgeois class in the socialist revolution.

Marx's "scientific" prognostication perfectly fit Sano's intellectual proclivities, for he believed that exploitation was rampant in human society and that the only way to eliminate it was to ensure a victory of the peasants and manual workers. It was essential for the masses to take control, because, in Sano's words, "they had no desire to exploit others." However, he cautioned the masses to be on their guard against "pseudo-socialism" or "middle class socialism." These kinds of socialism were typified by the Mensheviks in Russia and Fascists in Italy. In the former case, proletarian socialism was undermined because the intelligentsia feared a proletarian dictatorship and preferred to run the country alone. In the latter case, the revolution was subverted because the Fascists were a patriotic socialist movement based on the middle class. The only true kind of socialism for Sano was one "that was based on the doctrines of class struggle, historical materialism and surplus value, not 'prejudicial nationalism' or 'libertine internationalism'."40

Yet, it is important to note that Sano was not ready to attack the intelligentsia and all middle class elements as enemies of the proletariat. In fact, he strenuously argued against the French syndicalist position of pure proletarianism which attacked the intelligentsia as useless; instead, he saw intellectuals as "a useful guerilla unit" in the socialist revolution in which the motive force


must be the proletariat. Sano also believed that it was necessary for the proletariat to use its power to "proletarianize" certain segments of the middle class (for example, expert technicians) which were attached to neither the capitalists nor the proletariat. By using such tactics, he theorized that the masses could quicken the progress of history and allow for a smooth turnover of power when they took charge.

It must be noted at this point that Sano, as well as other pre- and postwar communists in Japan, tried faithfully to apply Marxist rhetoric to Japanese reality. Unfortunately, this characterization led to certain anomalies, such as lumping landless farm workers, tenant farmers, and small landholders all under the general category of "peasantry." In the same manner, Sano's use of the terms "bourgeoisie" and "proletariat" also caused him some semantic problems, as in his above effort to characterize expert technicians as middle class, but not as capitalists. Yet, as a firm believer in Marxism-Leninism, Sano continued to use Marxist rhetoric until his tenkō of 1933 when he began to indigenize Marxism in order to make it more applicable to Japanese reality.

Espousal of Liberation Movements

Sano Manabu's goal of achieving a society free from exploitation and inequality led him to espouse various liberation movements. Basically, he concentrated his efforts on propagating the Burakumin,


women's, peasant, and colonial movements. The Burakumin, or "untouchables," were a group of Japanese who were forced outside of normal society because their occupations were related to death and animal products. While early Shinto rites involved sacrifices of animals, fish, and birds, the Shinto concept of "uncleanness" meant that those who dealt with blood, death, and the necessary activities relating to death were regarded as defiled. Moreover, it was believed that individuals who came into close contact with these defiled people were also to be treated as polluted, since defilement was thought to be contagious. In early Japanese history, the Burakumin were primarily engaged in slaughtering animals, butchering, tanning hides, and disposing of defiled objects from temple grounds; then, after the introduction of Buddhism (which reinforced the feeling of defilement against those engaged in occupations related to death and animal products), various positions such as public executioners, morticians, and nightsoil traders became open to them. The terms "eta" (full of filth) or "yotsu" (four-legged) given to these people indicated their lowly status.

Although the Burakumin were freed from hereditary restrictions by the new Meiji government in 1871, little progress was made in the next fifty years toward alleviating their plight. Sano, as editor of the progressive journal Emancipation, thought that greater attention should be paid to their struggle, and to this end, in May, 1921, he

43. This general treatment of the Burakumin is based on George DeVos and Hiroshi Wagatsuma, Japan's Invisible Race (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), Chapter 1.
wrote an article entitled "On the Emancipation of the Tokushū Burakumin." In this and other articles, he stressed that their libera-
tion movement was as equally important as the worker and peasant move-
ments because it was a people's movement seeking to reconstruct the
whole society. For this reason he urged their leaders to join in the
greater communist movement and to withdraw from all religious movements
which tended toward compromise with tradition. Only by enacting a
comprehensive social movement could they acquire complete freedom and
achieve the same status as all common people, since "racial discrimina-
tion will remain as before unless the bigoted historical traditions are
done away by a thorough social reconstruction."44 Through Sano's
urgings the Suiheisha (Leveler's Society) was formed in early 1922, and
his article "On the Emancipation of the Tokushū Burakumin" was speci-
fically given credit for starting the movement.

Sano's emphasis on a thorough social reconstruction also lay
at the heart of his analysis of the women's movement. He wrote that in
a capitalist society, there are three types of exploitation: sexual,
religious, and economic.45 In Japan, sexual and economic exploitation
were linked in that women were excluded from the private property system

44. Sano Manabu, "Minzoku undō ka shakai undō ka?" in
Sano Manabu, Tōsō ni yorite kaihō e (Tokyo: Waseda taibunsha, 1923),
p. 156; originally published in Hyōron (October 1922).

45. For example, see Sano Manabu, "Jochū no shakaiteki igi," in
Sano Manabu, Tōsō ni yorite kaihō e (Tokyo: Waseda taibunsha, 1923),
pp. 261-262; originally published in Fujin kōron (July 1922). Also,
Sano Manabu, "Shakaishugi shakai ni okeru fujin," in Sano Manabu,
Shakaishugi zakkō (Tokyo: Hakuyōsha, 1927), pp. 105-115; originally
published in Fujin kōron (July 1923).
and thus occupied a servile position, for "without economic freedom there can be no personal freedom." For this reason, women and men must work together in a movement to change Japanese social institutions and create a new society in which women would have equal rights, and marriage would be based on progressive laws, not private property. Sano believed that only at this point would women be freed from household labor and be allowed to participate in the industrial life of the state. With these goals in mind, he helped to form a study group at the Tokyo Women's College to instill the women with ideological fervor.

The peasant movement was the third type of domestic people's movement in which Sano became involved. He helped to found the Japanese Peasant Union in 1920 because, from his graduate studies, he found that "the people who can resolve the many difficult problems in Japanese agriculture are not the landlords, Diet representatives, or the workers in the Ministry of Agriculture, but must be the peasants themselves." He theorized that the peasant movement of the late teens and early twenties sprang to life due to capitalist inroads into the village; that is, capital and land were being accumulated into the hands of a few, and the majority of owner-farmers were falling into a class which he termed the "agrarian proletariat." Since the peasantry was being subjected to the detrimental influences of capitalist merchandising and land accumulation as well as the irrationality of the traditional

46. Sano Manabu, "Shakaishugi shakai ni okeru fujin," p. 108,

production and historical land systems, Sano theorized that the peasant movement must be both economic and political, and in the future, must form a united front with the urban labor class.

With respect to the proper tactics that the peasant movement should employ, Sano urged pragmatism. He thought that the movement should be led by the poor peasant youth since they were the most revolutionary and brave, but it must also include the middle peasants as well as the elders and heads of families if the movement hoped to achieve mass backing. He also stressed that the movement should change its specific tactics according to whether the particular locale was purely rural or partially urbanized, but in any case, educational techniques must be utilized to break the traditional, conservative spirit which prevails in the agrarian areas.

Lastly, Sano warned the proletariat not to alienate the peasantry by demanding collectivization of land too quickly. Drawing upon his knowledge of the French Revolution and the counter-revolution of the Vendée, he reasoned:

"... the time when the peasant class is most significant is the period of social revolution, the time when the proletariat seizes political power from the bourgeoisie. Without the support of the peasantry for the social revolution, the urban workers' struggle cannot succeed no matter how bravely they fight. In a period of social revolution, the thing which produces the most important social consequences is food. An..."

48. For example, see Sano Manabu, "Nōmin undō to shinshakai no kensetsu," in Sano Manabu, Tōsō ni yorite kaihō e (Tokyo: Waseda taibunsha, 1923), pp. 76-84; originally published in Nōsei kenkyū (February 1923).
abundance of foodstuffs is especially necessary for the urban workers and the military who protect the revolution.49

To Sano, the only way to ensure that the peasantry would not turn against the revolution was to call for the confiscation of large landholdings while allowing small land ownership to be left intact during this crucial period. Only later after the decisive battle with the bourgeoisie was won should the proletariat attempt to break down the small owner's desire for private land ownership by first developing the productive power to bring land under large-scale management in order to collectivize it and second, developing a revolutionary class consciousness in the peasantry.

The last type of liberation movement that Sano crusaded for was an independence movement for the Japanese colonies. Echoing Lenin's theory on imperialism, he emphasized that there were two different kinds of oppression existing in the capitalist world—class oppression of the propertied class against the proletariat, and national oppression of the stronger peoples against the weaker peoples.50 These types of oppression were linked in that the bourgeoisie was the cause of both; Sano's realization of this point led him to conclude that "[t]he proletariat of the exploiting nation and the proletariat of the exploited nation are class brothers. They are a united enemy of capital. This


interest unites them in class." As an example, he pointed to the movement for a Taiwanese Diet. He believed that the Japanese proletariat must take an active role in this movement for national self-determination because "it is our duty to support it" as class brothers. However, he went on to caution:

We do not believe that the nature of the Taiwanese National Assembly is fully satisfactory. The Assembly is no more than the first step of national self-determination of the Taiwanese people. In the future national oppression must be eliminated at the same time as class oppression. There is no difference in class oppression, it is the same in Taiwan as it is in Japan. We must not allow the propertied class of Taiwan to oppress its proletariat.52

Finally, two important points must be noted concerning Sano's beliefs during this early stage of his activism. The first was a persistent doubt he harbored in regard to historical materialism. Although he firmly believed in the law of the dialectic and the necessity of class struggle to move history, he never was completely comfortable with the economic determinism inherent in historical materialism. The reason for his skepticism was that he felt economic determinism minimized the importance of human effort. In this vein, as early as 1920, Sano wrote:

[I am] absolutely opposed to Marx's economic, intellectualistic, fatalistic notion of societal progress based on a natural scientific concept. There is a difference in the inorganic and living worlds. . . . Marx surrenders to laws


which govern the material world, and ignores the intuition and actions which burn deeply in the souls of human beings.\(^53\)

In other words, Sano believed that the human mind was the fertile ground that compelled men to action even though materialistic productive power (economics) was the motive force in history. Man reacts to economic phenomena, but the specific reaction is the product of the mind, and must be analyzed as such.\(^54\) Hence, Sano theorized that Marx was incorrect in categorically stating that human society could be treated like natural phenomena, and instead espoused his own version of how to conceive of and analyze society:

Society is the conscious fusion of humans and is not a mere accumulation of cells. We cannot think of a society which does not have a relationship to consciousness. Concepts, ideals, interests, desires, beliefs, values and societal manners, customs, traditions and rules can all be analyzed psychologically. That is, the essence of human social life and the biological nature of the human being himself cannot be fully explained by only the external environment; instead, the function of the mind is the most fundamental thing.\(^55\)

His emphasis on the role of human effort is important because it represents an enduring element which began during his higher school days and later served as a springboard for the modifications that he made to Marxism-Leninism after his tenkō in 1933.


\(^{54}\) Sano was not the only Asian communist to emphasize human effort; Mao Tse-tung similarly touted the role of human will in moving history. See Frederic E. Wakeman, History and Will: Philosophical Perspective of Mao Tse-tung's Thought (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

The second point that must be noted concerning Sano's beliefs is his views on the emperor system. He was selected to the Central Committee of the JCP at the Ichigawa Conference in February, 1923, and given the positions of international affairs secretary and chairman of the education department. However, prior to the March, 1923, meeting at Shakujii, he was also appointed chairman of a special committee that was to deal with the draft platform that the Comintern had drawn up for Japan. Within this platform, the leaders of the JCP were confronted by a Comintern proposal calling for the JCP to propagandize the slogan "overthrow the Mikado government and abolish the monarchy." Sano opposed this position for two reasons. First, he thought that it was a bad tactic that would bring the wrath of the government down on them and result in the destruction of the communist movement. Second, he believed that the slogan was basically unnecessary because the Japanese monarch was unique among the world's monarchs. Sano was not alone in this assessment; he was strongly supported at the Shakujii meeting by Yamamoto Kenzō, Watanabe Masanosuke, Sugiura Keiichi, and Sakai Toshihiko. Although Sano's positive attitude toward the emperor system drastically changed after his trip to Russia and consequent conversion to Bolshevism in 1923, it reappeared with his tenkō and remained until his death in 1953.

56. Bessho Keita, p. 84; confirmed in a private interview with Sano Hiroshi in Tokyo, February 19, 1977.
Although Sano had become a JCP member in 1922, he had not yet become a Bolshevist; that is, he had not fully committed himself to the political meaning of Lenin's doctrines. The first stepping stone on his path to Bolshevism occurred in the summer of 1923 when he became involved in a series of events culminating in the First Japanese Communist Party Incident. The government at this time proposed a sweeping plan of military reductions, but to make the plan more palatable to both the military and to the conservative elements of society, it also decided to introduce military instruction in middle and higher schools. When the Waseda University campus learned of the government's policy, Sano and Inomata Tsunao immediately met with a Waseda student organization called the Cultural League (Bunka Dōmei), which decided to stage protest demonstrations against the measures. In retaliation, the rightist students of the Military Study Group (Gunji Kenkyūkai) along with members of the Jūō Club (an off-campus right wing group composed of Waseda alumni) attacked the leftist students with the silent support of the police and the Army.¹ This bloody brawl occurred on May 10, 1923, and became known as the Waseda University Military Study Group Incident.

¹ For an account of this incident, see Takase Kiyoshi, "Daini no taigyaku jiken," Jiyū (October 1962), p. 130.
After this violent confrontation, the University administration forced the Cultural League to disband and the League's four leading advisers, Ōyama Ikuo, Kitazawa Shinjirō, Sano, and Inomata, came under investigation. Sano, who was keeping secret JCP documents in his private study at Waseda, already knew he was under investigation by the police because of his Party activity, and so decided to move those documents out of his study and hide them in the house of Shibuya Mokutarō of the Miner's Federation. Shibuya worked at the Yubari Coal Mine and, unknown to Sano or the JCP, was also employed as a police spy. Shibuya dutifully handed over the JCP-related papers (its constitution, the draft platform, and the attendance list and minutes of the Shakujii Conference) to the police who then prepared to round up and arrest all those implicated. Sano could not believe that Shibuya was a spy; at the time he preferred to believe the story that Shibuya attracted police attention only when he began to sing some radical songs while drunk, and that a subsequent search of Shibuya's house by the police turned up the evidence.

In any event, a group of miners from the Ashio Mines began to fear for Sano's safety (he was still an adviser to the National Federation of Miners) and decided to keep at hand some cases of dynamite for his protection. The Party also sensed arrests were imminent and consequently ordered him to flee the country. Sano managed to escape in

---


early June before the mass arrests of June 5, when fifty JCP members were apprehended.  

Sano in Exile

In the latter part of June, Sano arrived in Peking where he was introduced to Li Ta-chao, one of the early leaders of the Chinese Communist party (CCP). Sano later told his friends that he was greatly impressed by Li and the other leaders of the CCP. From Peking Sano journeyed to Shanghai where he received a letter from the Russian ambassador allowing him entry into Russia. He spent the remaining months of 1923 in Vladivostok with a JCP exile community composed of Yamamoto Kenzō, Kondo Eizō, Takatsu Seidō, and Tsujii Taminosuke, after which he proceeded to Moscow in the winter of 1923-1924. On his arrival there, he sent a formal letter of resignation to Waseda University. From June to July, 1924, he attended the Fifth Comintern Congress. Katayama Sen, Kondo Eizō, and Sano were the official JCP representatives who also participated in a special committee dealing with Japanese problems. The Comintern Executive Committee had earlier expressed absolute opposition to the February dissolution of the JCP and, in keeping with this view, the special committee on Japan

4. After Sano escaped, the miners took the dynamite to Asō Hisashi's house, where it was hidden under his floor. However, there was some danger that Asō's house would be searched by the police because of his connection to Sano and Shibuya (Asō was the leader of the Miner's Federation); thus the explosives were entrusted to Asō's friend, Kishii Jurō, until it was finally deemed safe to return it to the mines. See Kawakami Jōtarō, pp. 256-257.

instructed Sano to return to Shanghai with Gregory Voitinsky to work on a program for rebuilding the Party. 6

Sano left Moscow in September, arriving in Shanghai in January, 1925. Immediately he, Arahata Kanson, Sano Fumio, Aono Suekichi, Tokuda Kyūichi, and Voitinsky held a conference concerned with rebuilding the Party and decided on a policy which became known as the Shanghai Theses. 7 Four months later, in May, Sano, Tokuda, Watanabe Masanosuke, and the Profintern (Red International of Labor Unions) representative Joseph Heller convened another conference dealing with the drafting of theses on the labor movement; these drafts became known as the Heller Theses. In general terms, both documents criticized the first JCP for its opportunism, factionalism, and alienation from the masses. On a more positive note, they outlined a set of practical tactics which would allow a Communist Bureau to establish a second JCP and called for a labor movement which would address itself to the daily needs of the workers. By taking these steps, it was hoped that the second JCP, unlike the first one, would be more of a political party and less of a "study group."

While Sano was in Shanghai, he renewed his acquaintance with Li Ta-chao, who introduced him to Mao Tse-tung and Ch'en Tu-hsiu. Meeting frequently with these Chinese communist leaders, he soon began to write a series of articles for the CCP organ Guide Weekly (Hsiang-tao chou-pao) dealing with cooperation between the Japanese and Chinese


7. For the full text of this document, see Beckmann and Okubo Genji, Appendix B, pp. 283-292.
proletariat. 8 Included among these were "Japanese Imperialism and China," "In Support of the Chinese Comrades," and "The Workers of Japan." In 1925, when the Chinese demonstrated against the Japanese and British in the famous May 30 Incident, Sano collaborated with the CCP leadership in Shanghai and continued to write articles expressing the view of the Japanese proletariat on this incident. Even after he returned to Japan to reestablish a communist political movement, he continued to keep in touch with the revolutionary movement in China, and contributed a few topical items about it to the JCP organ The Proletarian News (Musansha shimbun). For example, upon learning that Li had been sentenced to death by the warlord Chang Tso-lin, he wrote two impassioned articles in the organ's April 9, 1927, edition. These articles were entitled "We Must Oppose the Death Penalty of Li Ta-chao" and "The Chinese Revolution and the Japanese Proletarian Class." Again, after Mao established his soviet government in the mountains of Ching-kang-shan, Sano exultingly proclaimed in the December 20, 1927, edition: "Chinese Workers and Peasant Masses Facing the Establishment of a Soviet Government."

Thus, Sano's stay in Russia and China had a dramatic influence on his intellectual development, for he became fully converted to Bolshevism during this exile period. He wrote that he was inspired to convert because he was overwhelmed by the revolutionary commitment of the Russian and Chinese communists: "[A]fter the First Communist Party Incident, I went to Russia and China where I saw the

self-sacrificing struggle of the communists in both countries' revolutions. I was deeply impressed by this spirit and resolved to study the theory and practice of the communist movement in both these states."

His determination to study the theory and practice of Bolshevism then led him to a thorough study of Lenin's works, an endeavor which awakened him to what he called "pure Marxism": "From university graduation until the First Communist Party arrests of 1923, my writings on economic history, sociology, and philosophy were influenced by simple philosophy and sociology to the point of not being pure Marxism. However, during my exile in Russia, I read Lenin and this opened my eyes."10

Sano returned to Japan in July, 1925, armed with the ideological fervor of Bolshevism and with Comintern instructions to establish a concrete proletarian movement. In August he, Arahata Kanson, Tokuda Kyūichi, Kitaura Sentarō, and Watanabe Masanosuke helped form the Communist Bureau; then in September he organized and edited Musansha shimbun.11 As soon as he was assured that preparations for reestablishment were well underway, he surrendered to the police and began serving the ten-month sentence which had been meted out to him in absentia during the First Japanese Communist Party Incident.


10. Ibid.

11. Bessho Keita, p. 85. Nabeyama Sadachika cited Sano's return to Japan and the publication of The Proletarian News as important influences on the labor, peasant, and student movements, and critical factors in the rebuilding of the Party; see Nabeyama Sadachika, Watakushi wa kyōsantō o suteta, p. 98.
Fortunately for Sano, he had argued persuasively against the "abolition of the monarchy" slogan in the Shakujii Conference of 1923; if the JCP leadership had endorsed that slogan, he would have been given not a ten-month prison term, but either a life sentence or the death penalty. As it was, Sano entered jail on March 1, 1926, and passed his time reading works on the Marxian world view and sociology. These readings complemented his earlier readings on Leninist political theories and revolutionary doctrines and, by the time he left prison, he felt that he had completed a comprehensive analysis of Marxism-Leninism.

The second JCP was formally established on December 4, 1926, at the Goshiki spa in Yamagata Prefecture. Although Sano could not attend because he was still in prison (he was released on New Year's Eve), he was elected to the Central Committee as editor-in-chief of Musansha shimbun. Sano's staff was composed of Arahata Kanson (assistant), Tokuda, Kitaura (who had become editor while Sano was in prison), Koreeda Kyōji, Inokuchi Masao, Tadokoro Teruaki, Goto Ikio, and Watanabe. However, for the next year, Sano stayed away from Party activity and, at one point, almost quit the Party. The reason for this was his opposition to the new power figure in the Party, Fukumoto Kazuo.

12. It is interesting to note that the prison authorities allowed political prisoners to read Marxist literature.


14. From the Sano Manabu chronology in SMC, V, 204.
Fukumotoism

Fukumoto Kazuo was born in Tottori Prefecture in July, 1894, the second son of a "middle class" landlord. After attending a local grade and middle school, he moved to Tokyo to attend the First Higher School and, later, Tokyo Imperial University's Department of Law, where he studied under Yoshino Sakuzō and Nitobe Inazo. He graduated from the university in the spring of 1920, worked as a government official for the Ministry of the Interior in Shimane Prefecture, and then accepted a position as a lecturer, teaching law and economics at Matsue Higher School. After a short interval, he took a leave of absence from teaching and studied overseas in Europe and America for two and one-half years on a Ministry of Education grant.

While in Europe, Fukumoto became attracted to Marxist theory, and immersed himself in tracts written by Marx, Engles, Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, and other European socialist theorists. From these studies, Fukumoto was able to compose his three major works, *The Structure of Society and the Process of Social Change* (Shakai no kosei narabi ni hankaku no katei), *Methodology of Economic Criticism* (Keizaigaku hihon no hōhōron), and *The Study of Party Organization* (Tō soshikiron kenkyū). By the time he returned to Japan, he seemed to feel that he was the only one in the entire Japanese left wing movement who truly understood the theoretical intricacies of Marxism-Leninism. This arrogant disposition was evident in his scathing attacks on the dean of Japanese Marxism, Kawakami Hajime, as well as in statements he made to scholars, such as

Robert Scalapino, to the effect that Yamakawa Hitoshi, Sakai Toshihiko, and Arahata Kanson could not be considered communists because they did not fully understand Marxism-Leninism. Whether this attitude was sheer bombast or not is not the question; what is important is that many in the student movement believed that he was exceptionally well-informed on Marxism. For example, Hayashi Fusao, a leader in the Shinjinkai and later a member of the second JCP, wrote:

The one thing which could not be doubted was his [Fukumoto's] extreme erudition. The passages he quoted were all critical lines which I had never once read. Neither Yamakawa, nor Sakai nor Inomata nor Sano Manabu nor Sano Fumio nor Aono Suekichi had once quoted these for us. These fresh contents forced me to realize the ignorance of Japanese Marxists—or at least so I, as a student theorist, thought.

On his return to Japan in 1924, Fukumoto resumed his former position at Matsue Higher School. Three months later he published his first article in the journal Marxism (Marukushugi), entitled "A Discussion of the Scope of Marx's Capital in Terms of his Economic Critique" (Keizai hihan no uchi ni okeru Marukusu Shihonron no han'i o ronzu). He described this first publication in a Marxist journal as his "crossing of the Rubicon," for afterward he published in every...
edition from February through December 1925. Among those articles, there were ten devoted to economics and historical materialism, and five on party organization and class.

Fukumoto's involvement with Marxism and the communist movement resulted in his transfer in January, 1925, to the Yamaguchi Higher Commercial School; he finally resigned this post in March, 1926, to go to Tokyo and participate in the movement to rebuild the JCP. At first he worked only as an assistant editor of Marxism, but by October, 1926, he had become its chief editor. He used this position as a forum for spreading his ideas and criticizing opponents such as Sakai, Yamakawa, Shiga Yoshio, Aono, Kōno Mitsuru, Kushida Tamizō, Akamatsu Katsumaro, Suzuki Mosaburō, Takano Minoru, and Urata Takeo.

Basically, Fukumoto argued that Japanese capitalism had entered the stage of imperialism despite the fact that the absolute monarch had not become and would not become a constitutional monarch. However, since Japanese capital was in a period of decline, Fukumoto believed that the bourgeois democratic revolution against absolute autocratic power would internally, through the inevitable dialectic, transform itself into a socialist revolution and result in the destruction of the bourgeois rulers as well. For instance, he wrote: "The coming revolution will swell up as a bourgeois democratic revolution. Yet, we should not let it end at this point like a half-finished


somersault, but must cause it to quickly change into the proletarian revolution."^20

Fukumoto stressed that the key to a successful transition to a proletarian revolution in Japan could be found in Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?*, and centered on Lenin's advocacy of a tightly organized vanguard party of professional revolutionaries who would instill in the proletariat a "genuine class consciousness." Guided by Lenin's dictum that "before people unite themselves, they must separate themselves cleanly," Fukumoto concluded that the conditions necessary for the establishment of one national political party follow two determined courses: "First, even though it is unpleasant, we must separate the Marxist elements and crystalize them. Second, the struggle with this principle must be restricted within the bounds of a temporary theoretical struggle."^21

In other words, Fukumoto advocated a "unity through separation" principle to ensure that only the most revolutionary elements of society would be admitted to the JCP. This goal could best be accomplished by means of a theoretical struggle to determine purity. Once the reformist elements were weeded out, the revolutionaries could then go to the masses and correctly guide them through theoretical struggle to experience genuine class consciousness. After this initial stage was accomplished, the Japanese proletariat could quickly turn the

---

20. Fukumoto Kazuo, p. 54.

bourgeois democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. These tactics became the core of what was known as "Fukumotoism."

While the second JCP was being organized at the Goshiki Conference in 1926, Sano, Arahata, Ichikawa, and Tokuda were in prison, and others took advantage of their absence to establish Fukumotoism as the philosophy of the Party. Sano was personally opposed to Fukumotoism on the grounds that it neglected action and practice while giving serious consideration to consciousness and ideology alone. "Fukumoto offered many correct Marxist-Leninist ideas in a generalized, abstract and piecemeal fashion," Sano later asserted, "but he almost completely ignored the objective conditions pertaining to concrete, real, practical problems."  

Sano also objected to the Party's action in dismissing Kitaura Sentarō for the sole reason that he had attacked Fukumotoism openly. In fact, Sano became so incensed that he began discussions with Yamakawa, Sakai, Arahata, and Kitaura concerning the possibility of joining them in a publication to attack Fukumoto. However, the Party lured him back by assuring him that he could continue as editor of Musansha shimbun. Although he remained in the Party, for many years he harbored guilt feelings about not speaking out against Fukumotoism until it became popular to do so.


Meanwhile Janson, the Comintern representative in Japan, set the wheels in motion to purge Fukumotoism from the Party. He sent Nabeyama to Moscow in 1926 to report to Bukharin and the Comintern Executive Committee concerning the disruptions that Fukumotoism was causing within the Party. At the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the Comintern Executive Committee, Bukharin attacked Fukumotoism as "a Trotskyite-type of left wing extremism" and "a caricature of Leninism" which "must be eradicated." To this end, Fukumoto was dropped from the Central Committee of the JCP, and a new committee was elected in December, 1927. Sano was made Chairman of the Party, head of the peasant union department, co-chairman of the policy committee, and editor-in-chief of Musansha shimbun. Under Sano on the paper were Koreeda Kyōji, Sekine Etsurō, Toyoda Sunao, Ueda Shigeki, Inokuchi Masao, Sunama Kazuyoshi, Andō Toshio, and Ishidō Kiyotomo. Sano thus rose to the top position in the Party at probably the most crucial time in the Party's prewar history, for the Party soon became locked in a decisive struggle with Yamakawa and his Ronōha (Labor-Farmer faction) over the direction that the communist movement should take in Japan.

Yamakawaism

Yamakawa Hitoshi was born in Okayama Prefecture on December 20, 1880. He attended Dōshisha Middle School in Kyoto where he


26. For background information on Yamakawa, see Yamakawa Kikue and Sakisaka Itsurō, eds., Yamakawa Hitoshi jiden--aru bonjin no kiroku, sono ta (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1961).
initially became interested in Christianity, but soon he became disillusioned with religion and turned his interest toward socialist literature. Yamakawa then dropped out of school and took part in a number of anarchist incidents which resulted in his being jailed three times.

Shortly before the Russian Revolution, Yamakawa slowly began to reject anarchism for Marxism and began writing articles for Marxist journals such as New Society (Shin shakai), New Social Review (Shin shakai hyoron), and Studies in Socialism (Shakaishugi kenkyū). However, the major influence on his life was the Russian Revolution. "When the monarchy fell during the Revolution, we became extremely encouraged," he wrote. "The influence of the Russian Revolution on Japan was great. I can even say that it was the most influential event in my entire life." 27

Swept up in the euphoria that permeated Japan after the Russian Revolution, Yamakawa became firmly convinced of the effectiveness of revolutionary Marxism-Leninism. Because of this conviction, he participated in organizing the Socialist League (Shakaishugi Dōmei) in 1920, and then the JCP in 1922. As theoretical leader of the first JCP, Yamakawa began to make certain doctrinal adaptations with respect to the

27. Ibid., pp. 369-370. At first there was much confusion about the meaning and circumstances of the Revolution. Yamakawa recounted: "Some people mistook Lenin for the name of a drug or some such thing, and most people had never heard of the name." In ibid., p. 369. For an excellent account of the Revolution's impact on the socialist movement in Japan, see Gail Lee Bernstein, "The Russian Revolution, the Early Japanese Socialists, and the Problem of Dogmatism," Studies in Comparative Communism, Vol. IX, No. 4 (Winter 1976), pp. 327-348.
movement's proper strategies for action. These adaptations formed the basis of what became known as "Yamakawaism." Specifically, Yamakawa's "Change of Direction in the Proletarian Movement" (Musan kaikyū undo no hokō tenkan) and his united front organizational doctrines, which stressed the need for gaining mass support for the movement, became the two pillars of Yamakawaism.

The genesis of Yamakawa's "Change of Direction" doctrine can be detected as far back as 1919 when he wrote certain articles illustrating his inclination toward pragmatic politics. For example, in his article "Marx and Marxism," he extolled the virtues of patience and flexibility: "We are to be led to a new society, not by violent revolution, but through continual progress. We can live comfortably in a house only by making constant alterations on our present residence. Marxist doctrine must be revised!" However, his immediate reasons for writing the "Change of Direction" article were to counter the small number of anarcho-syndicalists who were dominating the labor unions in 1921-1922 and to reverse his previous antiparliamentary tactics. He was especially cognizant of the fact that the JCP was becoming alienated from the needs and aspirations of the masses. Realizing this, he wrote his famous piece in the September-October edition of Vanguard (Zen'ei).

Yamakawa's "Change of Direction" article stressed the need for the communist movement to return to the masses even if it meant demanding immediate improvements in living conditions to the exclusion

of the demand for the abolition of capitalism. He argued that the movement must seek partial victories in working for the immediate improvement of proletarian living conditions. In response to the charge that he was advocating reformism, Yamakawa retorted that "a revolutionary movement cannot be separated from a mass movement, and a mass movement cannot be separated from the real demands of the masses." If a gap did appear, then it would be impossible to successfully promote a revolution.

Yamakawa came to feel that the best way to gain mass support was through legitimate political action. He believed that the illegal and drastic activities in which the JCP was involved were counterproductive in light of the fact that the proletarian class was not yet ideologically mature; that is, it did not have a clear political consciousness in regard to socialism or capitalism, it was politically subservient to the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois movements, and it did not view itself as a political entity—as a revolutionary class. Until the labor movement was strengthened, indoctrinated, and propagandized, a vanguard party such as the JCP could not hope to achieve success.

Hence, Yamakawa called for the dissolution of the JCP in 1924 and turned his attention to forming a "single proletarian class party" or a "united front party" to increase class struggle in the Diet and deny political power to the bourgeoisie. Only when this was

29. Yamakawa Kikue and Sakisaka Itsurō, p. 411.

achieved could the united front party turn into a vanguard party. Yamakawa thought that the united front party should include the organized urban proletariat (industrial laborers), organized proletarian elements in agricultural areas (tenant farmers), unorganized proletariat and proletarian elements, semi-proletarian elements, and elements which had defected from other classes. However, he also stressed that the first two groups must play the leading part in the party to ensure its revolutionary consciousness.\textsuperscript{31} As for the general plans of the party, he wrote:

The party's creed and methods should express to the greatest extent the revolutionary demands of the proletariat. There should be no first principle that abstractly embraces institutions and political policies necessary for bringing about a new society; rather, it should represent to the fullest the present interests and demands of all elements of the proletariat.\textsuperscript{32}

Finally, Yamakawa stressed the need for expressing democratic demands in slogans such as "democratize political organs," "abolish the feudal social system," "demand suffrage and political freedom," and "oppose militarism and militarist institutions" as well as class slogans like "oppose the system and political parties which protect the economic interests of capitalists and landlords" and "fight against imperialist political parties."\textsuperscript{33}

When the second JCP was being organized, Arahata approached Yamakawa and asked him if he would participate in the endeavor.

\textsuperscript{31} Koyama Hirotake, "Nihon Marukusushugi no keisei," p. 90.

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., p. 91.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
Yamakawa declined because he believed that the Party was wrong in so many ways that it could never be successful in its ventures. "Resurrecting a movement like that does not at all conform to my writings on the 'Change of Direction' doctrine," he told Arahata, "and therefore I think I will proceed on my own path." 34 Ya makawa was not alone in rejecting the formation of the second JCP, for such veteran JCP members as Suzuki Mosaburō, Kuroda Hisao, Ōmori Yoshitarō, Okada Sōji, and Itō Yoshimichi abandoned the Party and attacked its policies in the magazine The Masses (Taishū).

The split between the pro- and anti-JCP forces came to a head when the second JCP embraced the so-called 1927 Theses. The 1927 Theses were a series of Comintern-inspired documents which stressed the need for Japan to overthrow the emperor to bring about a bourgeois-democratic state in a two-stage revolution. According to the Comintern, Japan was a modernized nation which still had powerful feudal remnants within it; these feudal remnants were the monarchy and its economic foundation, the landlord class. The Comintern theorized that the first task of the JCP was to overthrow those feudal elements in order to create a bourgeois-democratic nation. Once this was achieved, there would evolve a clear-cut distinction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and Japan would be in a favorable position for a second or proletarian revolution. 35

34. Yamakawa Kikue and Sakisaka Itsurō, pp. 423-424.

35. See Beckmann and Okubo Genjii, Appendix D, pp. 295-308 for the whole text.
When the second JCP started using the slogan "abolish the monarchy" in 1927, Yamakawa attacked this tactic as theoretically incorrect. He asserted that there was no need for a bourgeois-democratic revolution, because the feudal remnants in Japan (the landlords) had all been absorbed by the bourgeois class. Thus only the second stage of the revolution (the proletarian revolution) was necessary, for the bourgeoisie was the real power holder in Japan. In promoting his argument that the emperor system was neither a feudal remnant nor an element aligned with the capitalist class, he was able to avoid the necessity of attacking it. Yamakawa's position became a rallying point for others, such as the staff of Taishū (which folded in 1926), Sakai Toshihiko, Arahata Kanson, Inōmata Tsunao, Aono Sukekichi, and Kobori Jinji, who opposed the tactics of the second JCP, and thus these men together with twenty-seven other ex-JCP members joined Yamakawa in forming the Rōnōha (Labor-Farmer faction). In summing up the guiding principle of the faction, Yamakawa stressed that the Rōnōha was not specifically anticommunist; instead, "[w]e fought with the Communist Party because it stood in the way of our views and objectives, but in the same way, we also fought with the right wing elements of the proletarian political parties."  

Sano Manabu, as chief theoretician of the second JCP, found himself the main defender of the JCP and the Comintern against the Rōnōha "menace" which threatened to divide the Japanese communist

36. Yamakawa Kikue and Sakisaka Itsurō, p. 437. The term "Rōnōha" was used because the members of this faction published a journal called Rōnō (Labor-Farmer). See Appendix A for a list of those who were associated with the group.
movement and cut off the JCP from the masses. The ensuing theoretical struggle between Sano and the Rōnōha focused upon four basic areas of contention: (1) the significance of Bolshevism, the Comintern, and the 1927 Theses; (2) the tactical objectives of the proletariat and the subsequent dispute over capitalism; (3) the organization of a political vanguard party and attitudes toward the proletarian political party; and (4) the organization and tactics of the labor union movement.

Because the differences between Sano and the Rōnōha were narrowed after his 1933 defection from the JCP, a thorough analysis of their pre-1933 disagreements is necessary in order to isolate later the crucial elements of change and continuity in Sano's political thought. Their antagonistic positions ran somewhat as follows:

1. The significance of Bolshevism, the Comintern, and the 1927 Theses.

Rōnōha position: Bolshevism, a theory developed from experiences unique to conditions in Russia, departs from original Marxism and consequently is largely a Russian phenomenon. In the same way, each country's revolutionary movement must develop its own revolutionary theory. There is no doubt that in the future, social revolutions will arise under conditions different from imperial Russia and thus have theoretical bases deviating from Bolshevism. The duty of the socialist

37. Others who wrote influential pieces against the Rōnōha were Murayama Toshiro (Two Literary Pieces Concerning Political Strategy and Tactics [Seijiteki senryaku senjitsu ni tsuite no nidansho]), Takahashi Sadaki (Questions Concerning the Japanese Proletariat [Nihon puretoriato no mondai]), and Nabeyama Sadachika (Struggle with Social Democracy [Shakai minshushugi to no tōsō]).
movement in Japan is the discovery and establishment of a practical revolutionary theory applicable to Japan. To this end, activists should not imitate German Social Democracy or Russian Bolshevism which are developments of Marxism adapted to specific times, places, and conditions, but it is essential that they go back to Marx and then depart from that point.

Since the socialist revolution of each country varies according to the country's conditions, the revolutionary party in each country has the responsibility to take autonomous actions for developing its socialist movement and should not be led from one center of the world (Moscow). The international socialist movement cannot have a realistic form in a unified world party, but must consist of the rigorous international cooperation of each country's autonomous socialist movement. Hence, the 1927 Theses, which were produced by Russians, should be accepted only as a guide and not a blueprint for the communist movement in Japan.38

Sano's position: Bolshevism is an elaboration of Marx's theory by Lenin and is "true" Marxism in its advocacy of the principles of proletarian hegemony, political class struggle, centralization of power, total reconstruction of society, and internationalism.39 The universal validity of Bolshevism has been proved not only by its successes in the Russian Revolution, but also by such subsequent developments as its

38. The above argument is a condensed version of the same given in Yamakawa Kikue and Sakisaka Itsurō, pp. 428-429.

demonstrated ability consistently to predict the social conditions and class relationships that exist in each respective country.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 246-250.} The task of formulating the most appropriate strategies based on these predictions then falls to the Comintern, which is the most democratic, most revolutionary, and most international of organizations, composed as it is of communist parties from all over the world.\footnote{"Sano Manabu yoshin jimmon chōsho," p. 247.} The 1927 Theses provide such a formulation. This document issues a stern warning to the Japanese proletarian movement. The problem is this: who knows better the correct meaning of the warning—the syndicalists (Rōnōha) or the JCP? The Rōnōha has become a slave to the wording of the theses and thus has ended up espousing a kind of private revisionism. It is the duty of the JCP members to refuse to become slaves to the wording of the 1927 Theses, and to learn and elaborate upon their correct meanings.\footnote{Sano Manabu, "Kōnminterun no hihan o yomu," pp. 4-5.}

2. The tactical objectives of the proletariat and the subsequent dispute over capitalism.

Rōnōha position: The political goal of the proletariat is to gain political power from the imperialistic bourgeoisie. In Japan, where the bourgeois-democratic revolution has not completely occurred, many feudal relics such as the emperor system remain. However, these feudal elements are not an autonomous political force, but have been absorbed and assimilated into the political power of the bourgeoisie
which uses them as tools to strengthen its own dominance. Through this process, the landlord class is becoming more bourgeois and the societal foundations of absolutism, which oppose the political power of the bourgeoisie, are fast disappearing. Thus, the coming revolution will not be a bourgeois-democratic one that transfers political supremacy to the bourgeoisie, but rather will be a socialist revolution in which the proletariat, not the bourgeoisie, will seize power. In this struggle, the proletariat's aim should be the enlargement of political freedom and rights so that democracy, which cannot be achieved under the bourgeoisie, may be realized.

Sano's position: The prospects of the Japanese revolution hinge on an internal change from a bourgeois-democratic revolutionary struggle to a socialist revolutionary struggle. This internal change is necessary because of the unique nature of the ruling class in Japan; that is, the rulers are not pure capitalists (the Rōnōha's contention), but are a political bloc formed of both landlords and capitalists. The formation of such a power bloc can be seen in the events which followed the Meiji Restoration.

The Restoration was an incomplete bourgeois revolution, for the Charter Oath advocated a legislature composed of fixed members from each han (thus extolling "landlord power"). While the hanbatsu

43. The above is based on Yamakawa Kikue and Sakisako Itsurō, pp. 430-431. Note the absence of a definitive position regarding the question of the role of the emperor system during the struggle.

44. This analysis is based on Sano Manabu, "Rekishi Katei no tembo," in Sano Manabu, Seijiron (Tokyo: Kibōkaku, 1930), pp. 43-61; originally published in Marukusushugi, 45 (January 1928).
government after the Restoration ensured the continuation of a landlord government, it also discarded the old feudalistic productive system and introduced a unified state organization and a bourgeois productive system. This change permitted the growth of a nascent bourgeoisie which soon became strong enough to challenge the landlords in the People's Rights Movement (jiyū minken undō). The ensuing struggle resulted in the transfer of one part of the landlord power to the bourgeoisie. In this very short period, the bourgeoisie thus played the role of a revolutionary bourgeoisie which was breaking down the feudal system.

Yet, from the Sino-Japanese War through the Russo-Japanese War, bourgeois ruling power increasingly established a solid foundation, stopped struggling with the landlords, and began compromising with them. After World War I, the Japanese bourgeoisie literally arrived at the stage of finance capitalism. Its political power was no longer on a par with the landlords', but superior to it. At the present stage of Japanese history, the bourgeoisie are no longer compromising with the landlords to establish its own power, but rather have formed a new union with the conservative landlords to protect its imperialistic control and suppress the opposition of the workers and peasants. When the landlords lost their leading political role, some landlords undoubtedly became part of the bourgeoisie; however, many still retain their unique existence as feudal remnants.

It is thus the duty of the proletariat to unite with the peasantry to seize state power from the hands of the capitalist-landlord union. The proletariat must not abandon the peasants, for
"the agrarian movement today has arisen as a rural reaction against feudal roots remaining in the villages of the capitalist society; it is capable of advancing the grand struggle against capitalism itself."  

Only when the agrarian revolution resolves the land problem and eliminates the landlords as a ruling segment can the proletariat wage a "pure struggle" against the bourgeoisie.

There is one last problem which cannot be ignored, and that is the emperor system. In Japan, the monarch does not use the capitalists and landlords as political tools; instead, it is the capitalists and landlords who have risen politically through the monarch. In fact, the monarch has functioned as an organ of the "bourgeois-landlord-imperialist" class in the following ways: (1) as the controller of both the military and the enormous bureaucracy; (2) as the suppressor of the worker-peasant revolutionary movement; (3) as the upholder of "feudal" institutions such as the daimyō-like governors, genrō (elder statesmen), and the Privy Council, and of "feudal" practices, such as police torture and discrimination against women and Burakumin; (4) as the promoter of colonial, Chinese, and imperialistic war policies; and (5) as an organ concealing class opposition.

The struggle against the monarchy has largely been ignored during the interim period between the first and second JCP, and this


has been a great blunder. It is impossible to overthrow the bourgeois state structure without overthrowing the monarch. Although the liquidationist Inomata, who betrayed the Party to the Rōnōha, says that the monarchy merely represents a tradition, can any tradition in the world exist without a class basis? In the same manner, one of the old liquidationists, Sakai, who also betrayed the Party, termed the slogan "overthrow the monarch" anarchistic, but is the necessity of abolishing the monarchy really anarchistic? It may be taken that the Rōnōha leaders, presently masquerading as followers of Marx and Lenin, are really no different from capitalist thinkers such as Takabatake Motoyuki and Fukuda Tokuzō.

3. The organization of a political vanguard party and attitudes toward a proletarian political party.

Rōnōha position: For the common man, choosing between capitalism and socialism is not an immediate, realistic problem. Because of this, a mass political party must be established to bring together in an antibourgeois front all social classes whose interests are antithetical to the interests of the bourgeoisie. In Japan, which has not had the tradition or practice of mass, revolutionary, political movements, such a position is absolutely necessary and, for the effective functioning of such a political party, legality is a prerequisite.

48. Sano's position on the Rōnōha and the emperor system stated above were taken from his "Nihon puroretaria no seijiteki oyobi soshikiteki nimmu" (The Political and Organizational Tasks of the Japanese Proletariat) which was written in January, 1929, under the pseudonym Kato Ichirō (in Bessho Keita, pp. 109-110), and from an untitled piece he did in the January 5, 1928, edition of Musansha shimbun (in Sano Manabu, Seijiron [Tokyo: Kibōkaku, 1930], p. 422).
The legal mode should not be avoided; rather, the scope of political activity should be effectively enlarged. At the present time, the primary role Marxists should play lies in the organization of such a political party; that is, the formation of an antibourgeois, unified proletarian political party combining a wide range of social interests into a united political front. In the struggle of this political party, the communists should adhere to the masses and enlarge the latter's power to lead. 49

Sano's position: The majority of the Japanese people are "naive" in their political consciousness. This naiveté stems from the fact that they have had little experience with decisive political struggles and have been blocked by the autocratic government from participating completely in politics. 50 What is needed in this situation is a Leninist vanguard-type party of professional revolutionaries which will correctly interpret all the objective conditions pertaining to the proletarian masses and fight for the formation and actualization of the proletarian class movement. The existence of an illegal vanguard party is essential, for without such a communist party, there can be no victory for the working class. 51 Yamakawa's claim that a party of professional revolutionaries will result in alienation from the masses is

49. The Rōnōha position is taken from Yamakawa Kikue and Sakisaka Itsurō, pp. 432-433.


51. "Sano Manabe yoshin jimmon chōsho," p. 188.
incorrect in that his hypothesis ignores the reciprocal relationship between the vanguard and the masses; furthermore, the absence of vanguard leadership in his political strategy will result in the formation of proletarian parties which advocate principles of vague mass unification and compromise.  

On the other hand, if the proletarian parties have guidance from the vanguard elements, they can sharpen basic class opposition by developing a united mass struggle for political freedom by means of a "true" united front. That is, the goal of the proletariat is to win over the petit-bourgeoisie composed of: small owners in business, factory, and agricultural sectors (the old middle class); white-collar workers such as engineers, bureaucrats, and salaried men (the new middle class); and the intelligentsia. Yet, at the same time, the proletariat must guard against petit-bourgeois ideologies such as reformism, pacifism, and opportunism, and petit-bourgeois types of parties espousing radicalism, democracy, republicanism, and social democracy.

4. The organization and tactics of the labor union movement.

Rōnōha position: The Rōnōha strongly advocates the unification of the labor front under the slogans "national unification of labor unions" and "formation of a united political front." It is essential that the labor movement remain free from Profintern control and realize


53. Sano Manabu, "'Shuki' no naka yori," pp. 254-259. Sano frequently wrote about the need for a united front and its relationship with the JCP. For example, he wrote twenty-three articles for Musansha shimbun from September, 1925, through February, 1928, on this topic.
that economic struggles do not necessarily have to be used for developing the political consciousness of the laboring class or promoting Marxist political struggles.  

Sano's position: The vanguard elements must use all possible legal opportunities to unify and enlarge the mass movement in the spirit of the class struggle. The catchwords used in the labor union movement should be realistic, novel, honest, and comprehensive, and should entice the masses into the present struggles. It is generally possible to separate political and economic slogans, but political meaning should be attached even to economic slogans. For example, labor should strike, demonstrate and agitate for the right to unionize as well as for freedom of speech, assembly and association. Labor unions, then, should serve as engines for the everyday struggles of the masses, as links between the vanguard group and the unorganized masses, and as organs of class struggle, since "compromise and harmony are the well-springs of proletarian class degradation."

On the other hand, the vanguard elements must guard against those right wing elements of mass groups which make clear their

54. This argument is taken from Yamakawa Kikue and Sakisaka Itsuro, pp. 433-434.


representation of the interests of the "labor aristocracy" by engaging in unconstructive political struggles, trying to turn the eyes of the masses toward only economic struggles and promoting an ideology of "class cooperativism" and nationalism. These right wing tactics can best be countered by constantly denouncing the right wing leaders to the masses as class traitors and by exposing them through practical struggles and policies, by winning mass support through brave actions and appropriate policies, and by continually organizing within all labor unions (both right and left wing) and espousing a united front.  

As can be seen, the theoretical debate carried on between Sano and the Rōnōha centered on the general goals and specific tactics appropriate for the communist movement in Japan. Whereas Yamakawa emphasized the need to modify Bolshevism, avoid an anti-emperor strategy, promote a legal, mass political party, and concentrate on the economic needs of the proletariat, Sano urged the opposite policies of obeying Bolshevist doctrines, abolishing the monarchy, organizing an illegal vanguard party, and promoting both political and economic actions by the masses. Sano believed that Yamakawa's policies would ultimately result in the deterioration of the communist movement, while his strategies would eventually lead to the establishment of an ideal "Soviet"-type state in Japan; that is, a state based on the principles of nationalizing all major industrial, transportation, communication, 

and banking organs; collectivizing all land; and institutionalizing progressive labor laws and internationalist policies. However, if the communist movement ever succumbed to the "revisionist" tendencies of Yamakawaism, Sano warned that the ideal socialist state would never be achieved in Japan.

Rodōshaha

Sano continued to lead both the second JCP and the fight against the Rōnōha until the March 15, 1928, mass arrest of communist members and sympathizers. The government had been secretly planning this mass round up for some time and was armed with the Peace Preservation Law as its major weapon to fight the JCP. The Peace Preservation Law was enacted in 1925 to guard against "subversive ideas" and to check any radical proletarian trends which might be unleashed by the Universal Manhood Suffrage Act of the same year. Basically, the law stipulated a maximum ten-year prison sentence for all those who advocated a change in either the kokutai or the private property system.

On the morning of March 15, 1928, several thousand policemen arrested over one thousand left-wingers throughout Japan. Among those captured were Tokuda Kyūichi, Nosaka Sanzō, Shiga Yoshio, Sugiura Keiichi, Kawada Kenji, Yamamoto Kenzō, Mizuno Shigeo, and Karasawa Seihachi.

59. Sano's version of the ideal "Soviet"-type state in Japan was expressed while in prison after he was captured in 1929. For a detailed outline of his Japanese socialist system, see Appendix D.

Sano, for the second time in his life, narrowly escaped arrest; this time it was through the sheer good fortune of having left Japan one day before the incident occurred. As Chairman of the Party, he had been instructed to meet in Shanghai with the Far Eastern Representative of the Comintern, Jacob Janson, in order to discuss various theses promulgated by the Party in preparation for the Party Conference; he was then to proceed to Moscow to attend the Sixth Comintern Congress due to take place in July. Sano arrived in Moscow in June and was joined there by the other JCP representatives, Ichikawa Shōichi, Yamamoto Kenzō (who had been released by the police because of poor health), and Takahashi Sadaki. At the Congress, he was elected a member of the Comintern Executive Committee and, using the pseudonym Kato Ichirō, he served on two committees: the Committee dealing with International Matters, and the Comintern Platform Committee. By now, Sano was so influential in the Comintern that the Russian delegates considered him second only to the venerable Katayama Sen within the Japanese communist movement.  

Sano remained in Moscow until December to help formulate a set of new policies (the 1928 Theses) for the JCP which had been decimated by the March 15 Incident. In fact, he petitioned the presidium of the Executive Committee of the Comintern to allow his return to Japan to rebuild the Party, but his request was vetoed by Kuusinen, Chairman of the Far Eastern Bureau of the Committee, who feared that Sano's return

---

would only result in his arrest. Instead, Sano was sent to Shanghai to head the overseas JCP reorganization movement which was operating out of the Comintern Far Eastern Bureau in the French concession area.

Leaving Moscow in December, Sano took the opportunity to travel to Europe and India before arriving in Shanghai in March, 1929. While in Shanghai, he again mingled with Chou En-lai and other CCP leaders and wrote some articles for their Party organ, *Red Flag* (Hung-ch'i). However, on June 16, 1929, he was arrested by seven or eight Shanghai security policemen who accosted him with drawn pistols. His arrest came as a result of his being betrayed during the third mass arrest of communists in Japan, the so-called April 16, 1929, Incident. The Party and the Comintern had arranged for Ichikawa to come to Shanghai and report to Sano on conditions in Japan; this plan backfired when Ichikawa was captured in the April 16 Incident and told the authorities of his upcoming rendezvous with Sano. When Sano arrived at the meeting, he was met by the police.

Three months later Sano was extradited to Japan and formally charged with violating the Peace Preservation Law. In prison once again, he was elected one of the seven members of the Courtroom Committee to represent the 201 JCP defendants who had been arrested in the March 15 and April 16 Incidents and who were all to be tried together.

---


on the same charge (see pages 91-92). However, before the trial began in June, 1931, the JCP was faced with another internal imbroglio. Just as in 1927 when Yamakawa and the Rōnōha had called for a dissolution of the Party, so now another group within the Party, the "JCP Worker's faction" (Nihon Kyōsantō Rōdōshaha), began calling for the dissolution of the Party.

The Rōdōshaha was led by four young men—Kawai Etsuzō, Mizuno Shigeo, Asano Akira, and Kadoya Hiroshi—who had known each other in the second JCP and had been arrested during or shortly after the March 15 Incident. After about one year in prison, they all began to experience doubts concerning the direction in which the JCP was heading and the value of its political role. The most concrete and shocking incident which led them and their later followers to break with the JCP was the so-called "Geisha Pleasure Seeking Incident" (machiai yūkyō jiken)—which occurred on April 18, 1929. This event involved the arrest of two leaders of the JCP, Nabeyama Sadachika and Mitamura Shirō, in the red-light Akasaka district of Tokyo. As Toyoda Sunao wrote:

65. For background information on Kawai Etsuzō, see Beckmann and Okubo Genji, p. 369; for Mizuno Shigeo, see Matsura Gyōshin, Ningen Mizuno Shigeo (Tokyo: Sankei shimbunsha shuppankyoku, 1973); for Asano Akira, see Matsuzawa Tetsunari and Suzuki Masasetsu, Shōwa shi o aruku (Tokyo: Daisan bunmeisha, 1976) and Asano Akira, Shugi ni ugoku mono (Tokyo: Nihon kyōbunsha, 1955); and for Kadoya Hiroshi, see Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Kōki Shinjinkai-in: Hayashi Fusao to Ōya Sōichi," in SKK, pp. 122-124.

66. In his biography, Nabeyama contradicted the rumors that he wantonly spent money on the favors of a geisha. He wrote that "... because the room I rented was being watched along with the houses of all my friends and acquaintances, I went to Mitamura's hideout in the beginning of April in order to duck the tight police cordon; this hideout happened to be a geisha house in Akasaka." See Nabeyama Sadachika, Watakushi wa kyōsantō o suteta, p. 129.
The incident which most upset my tranquil prison life was the so-called "pleasure seeking" affair.

When I first heard about this incident from the prosecuting attorney last year, I did not worry about it, assuming that it was just a ploy used by him to weaken my trust in the Central Committee of the Party. However, later the words and investigations of many comrades put the matter of this incident beyond doubt. 67

For Kawai, this incident was one manifestation of the corruption permeating the whole Party:

[The communist movement in Japan] has had a tradition of the worst kind of degradation!! Since the March 15 Incident, the Geisha Pleasure Seeking Incident has been publicized. The incident involved the embezzlement of several thousand yen of Party dues to pay for a rendezvous with a geisha. . . . These leaders represent the epitome of the decrepit tradition of the Party. . . . Just imagine, even in the Executive Committee, they are deceiving their colleagues, squandering travel money which should go towards representing the Party in Russia and instead buying the favors of a geisha. . . 68

Racked by such doubts, these men decided to make a clean break from the Party and the Comintern and start their own patriotic proletarian movement. Asano summed up the feelings of the others when he stated that the attitude of the JCP was completely incorrect and that the communist movement was a failure because it had committed grave political errors. Furthermore, he believed that it was disgraceful for the vanguard party of the proletariat to display such moral degradation. In his opinion, the only way totally to eradicate this evil was immediately to dismantle the Party: "I think we must renounce the Communist


68. From "Nihon kyōsantō dattō ni saishi tōin shokun ni" (To my Fellow Party Members at the Time of My Withdrawal from the JCP) (May 23, 1929); reprinted in ibid., p. 156.
Party, destroy its tradition of putrid degradation, establish a correct political policy and truly promote a working class party which will lead to the liberation of the masses."  

The four men reasoned that the Party was imbued with Marxist formalism which led the members to an overly theoretical utopianism (Mizuno called this trend "Don Quixotism"). Furthermore, the penchant of the Japanese Marxists for mechanically imitating the Russian Revolution and unswervingly following the Comintern's dictates led them to glorify an illegal, underground existence and an ideological struggle based on universal doctrines. All of this had caused the Party to become alienated from the masses.

Although the leaders of the Rōdōshaha movement were once fervent Fukumotoists, they now thought that Fukumotoism accelerated the rate at which the Party moved away from the proletariat. Looking back at the JCP under Fukumotoism, Asano recalled that "the JCP in those days carried out theoretical debate through regular meetings of study groups and could not be said to be a mass political party of the proletariat."  

These four men believed that the only way to remedy the situation was to keep the "spirit" of the JCP alive while changing its name and separating it from the Comintern so that it could make its own appropriate policies to deal with the Japanese situation. Again, to quote Asano:

69. From his interrogatory transcript, July 26, 1929; reprinted in Tsurumi Shunsuke, p. 125.

70. From his jōshinsho dated August 7, 1929; reprinted in Shimane Kiyoshi, p. 158.
The name "JCP" is only understood in the Japanese people's minds as a "group which receives money and theses from Russia and seeks changes in the Japanese kokutai," or "a group whose leadership plays with Russian money." The fact that the Party is an avowed class political party of the proletariat and is the true and unparalleled leading party of all the people of Japan is totally ignored. We should therefore discard the name "JCP" which has become useless. The omission of that name will allow the sparkling and indestructible essence of the Party, its spiritual and class tradition, to be revived.\footnote{From his interrogatory transcript, August 7, 1929; reprinted in Tsurumi Shunsuke, p. 126.}

A major reason for the group's decision to break with the Comintern (and precluded its chances of cooperating with the Rōnōha) was its wholehearted support for the emperor system. The most determined exponent of this view was Mizuno. While in prison he experienced a spiritual conversion and his "hitherto blank perception of Japan gradually took clear shape. Of course, my awakening to this Japanism was neither a kowtow to the bourgeoisie nor a return to bourgeois consciousness."\footnote{Matsuura Gyōshin, p. 270.} He was able to trace the seeds of his "rebirth as a Japanese" to a point before his imprisonment, but realized that his inability to confront this problem while a Party member was due to the fact that it was "too easy to be uncompromising" in the midst of political struggles and underground living. In prison he was finally given a chance to resolve these problems and "confront the solution with a proper perspective."\footnote{Ibid.}

Mizuno began by asking himself three questions: (1) Do the Japanese masses really feel that they cannot advance even one step in
their liberation without overthrowing the monarchy? (2) Looking objectively at it, is the monarchy really the yoke of the masses and an absolute obstacle to their liberation? (3) Can the Japanese emperor system possibly become a yoke for the masses in the future? Mizuno's answer to all three questions was an unqualified no. He reasoned that the Japanese people had been ingrained with a love of the emperor for the last 2,500 years and that the imperial family did not have any economic or political power. Hence, the imperial line differed decisively from other monarchies like Czarist Russia.

Convinced of this unique situation, Mizuno attacked the JCP slogans of "abolish the monarchy" and "confiscate the land of the imperial family" as being irrelevant and contributing to the alienation of the masses. Conversely, he stressed the need for adopting a new policy of "imperial centrism" (kōshitsu chūshinshugi) or "all the people and one leader" (ikkun-banmin). These slogans were clearly illustrated in his attempt to call the new party the "party for the Restoration of the Workers and Farmers under the Emperor" (Kōshitsu Chūshin Rōnō Ishintō). Finally, Mizuno stressed the need to rid the throne of the corrupt elements that surrounded it. "In short," he said, "do not lay emphasis on the duration of the monarchy, but rather on the removal of the wicked Court. If this is done, our imperial

74. From Shimane Kiyoshi, pp. 152-153.

75. Ibid., p. 153.
centrism will never become conservative and will never lose its revolutionary tone."  

These pro-emperor positions were echoed and expanded upon by other leaders of the movement. For example, Murao Satsuo argued that the Japanese monarch had historically represented the unity of the state and remained unchanged despite historical developments. In the same vein, Asano said that the monarchy could cooperate with the proletarian dictatorship just as it cooperates with the bourgeois dictatorship. As for the question of how to reform society, Kadoya emphasized the need to democratize politics instead of abolishing the monarchy, while Kawai simply stated that they must get rid of the wickedness of the Court in order to better the lives of the Japanese masses.  

Buoyed by their desires to create a communist party based on loyalty to the emperor, Mizuno and the other leaders founded the JCP Worker's faction when they were released from prison on bail toward the end of June, 1930.  

Around March, 1931, they formed a central committee, announced a "Draft Political Thesis" and began publication of a newspaper called The Red Flag (Akahata—not to be confused with the newspaper of the same name that was put out by the JCP). By 1932, however, the faction was beginning to lose its credibility since certain JCP members, while in prison, had used the Rōdōshahha by falsely

76. Ibid.  

77. Kawai's statement was taken from ibid.; the other excerpts were from Sano Manabu, Sano Manabu jōshinō—kaitōha ni tsuite (1931) (Tokyo: Sankō bunken kondankai, 1962), pp. 27-28.  

78. For a list of those who participated in this faction, see Appendix B.
professing loyalty to the monarch for the express purpose of escaping from their jail terms. Those who remained true to the faction joined factories after their release from jail and individually instigated strikes. The movement officially disbanded in 1935 when everyone surrendered to the police in keeping with the trial schedule.

The Rōdōsha's cry for the dissolution of the Party in 1930 posed a very serious threat for Sano and the other major figures in the Party. Although the JCP members had entered prison full of zeal and vigor, many were beginning to show signs of wavering. Realizing this, Sano decided to write a tract with the aim of attacking the Rōdōsha as representative of a new type of "social fascism," and at the same time, reinstilling a spirit of resolve in the Party members. From February 23 through March 11, 1931, he worked on an essay entitled, "On the Party Calling for Dissolution" (Kaitō ni tsuite). The tone of the manuscript was set from the very beginning when he pointed out that the most bitter enemies of the JCP were comrades who had once belonged to the Party. In his opinion, these "comrades" for some reason deviated from the anti-left wing oppositional path usually followed by "social fascists." Instead of becoming social democrats, espousing legalism and denying violent revolution (such as the Rōnōsha), they had adopted ideas vividly illustrative of the new "social democratic-social fascists," ideas such as anti-internationalism, colonialism, and

79. Matsuzawa Tetsunari and Suzuki Masasetsu, Shōwa shi o aruku, p. 121.
monarchism. Sano concluded that "this type of tragedy will occur in any country which experiences mass imprisonments."^80

Having read the jōshinsho (written statements presented to the Court) of the leaders of the Rōdōsha, Sano severely attacked what he saw as the four major tenets of this group: support for the monarchy; separation from the Comintern, dissolution of the Party, and denial of violent revolution. In countering the Rōdōsha's position that the monarchy was above politics and not a threat to the socialist movement, Sano asserted that the Imperial Household, along with everything else, had evolved in accordance with historical changes in the class relationships that characterized Japanese society. As proof of this, he cited the fact that though the monarchy had not been a political force for six hundred years prior to the Meiji Restoration, after the Restoration the emperor had been placed by the bourgeoisie at the center of state power and had been linked to the kokutai to ensure bourgeois control.\(^81\)

Moreover, although the monarchy was supposed to be above class, it was in reality affiliated with the landlord class since its financial basis rested on its extensive lands and private property. Sano theorized that since the landlord-capitalist class equated "change of kokutai" with "abolition of the monarchy," it was necessary for the JCP to adhere to the latter phrase if it hoped to achieve its final goal of proletarian dictatorship.

\(^80\) Sano Manabu, Sano Manabu jōshinsho, p. 1.

\(^81\) Ibid., p. 31.
As for the question of separating from the Comintern, Sano asserted that: "Internationalism is not at all an abstract, dogmatic, ideological matter. It can be represented and accomplished through its most concrete organization, the Comintern and the Communist Party." Therefore, it is essential that the JCP abide by its internationalist duty of following Comintern orders and sending dispatches and representatives to the Comintern to exchange Party opinions concerning problems affecting both the Party and the international communist movement. Sano also warned Party members that they must work to their utmost to convince the masses that the Rōdōshaha slogan of "in the interests of the Japanese people" was nothing but social fascism, the source of friction between the Japanese people and those of Korea, Taiwan, and China. Echoing Lenin's thesis, he stated: "One of the most important tactical standards of today's international communist movement is the linking together of the mass revolutionary movements of colonial peoples and the proletarian movement of the various capitalist countries." To accomplish this, Sano advocated a revolutionary front of Japanese, Korean, and Taiwanese workers and peasants united in the struggle against social democracy which he accused of spreading xenophobic influences among the masses. Summing up his ideas on proletarian internationalism, he wrote:

The goal of worldwide revolution is worldwide proletarian solidarity. Without this, the proletariat of each state cannot be finally liberated. . . . The politics and economics

82. Ibid., p. 14.
83. Ibid., p. 22.
of each state cannot be fully independent from international politics and economics. Similarly, revolutions in each state cannot be culminated in that one country alone.\textsuperscript{84}

After tackling the problems of the monarchy and the Comintern, Sano defended the need for an illegal JCP. He reasoned that the question of legality was a minor one for: "The people do not care very much if the JCP is legal or illegal. The problem is whether or not it can fight as the representative of their true interests."\textsuperscript{85} In fact, he said if it were practical, he also would have liked to have a legal party. However, because of conditions in Japan, it was necessary for the Party to combine legal and illegal actions. For example, its legal actions included working with labor unions, participating in everyday struggles, electing representatives of JCP views to the Diet, working for the formation of worker-peasant struggle leagues, and running Party newspapers and magazines (such as \textit{The Proletarian News} and \textit{Marxism}).

As for the Rōdōshaha's charge that illegality causes alienation from the masses, Sano retorted that the JCP's alienation was wholly caused by the "sectarian, formalistic, theoretical deviationism" which had permeated the Party after it was reorganized in 1927; hence, these practices must quickly be eliminated to ensure reunification with the workers. The policies he cited as being able to ameliorate this condition were the instilling of an unconditionally self-sacrificing spirit in Party members through the practice of democratic elections of party posts, strict observance of Party rules, complete protection of Party

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., p. 13; emphasis mine. Sano's tenkō statement was a direct contradiction of this assertion.

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., p. 62.
Finally, in countering the Rōdōsha's opposition to violent revolution, Sano asserted that this faction did not distinguish between Marxism-Leninism and anarchistic terrorism, extreme left wing insurrectionism, and risky adventurism. For him, the proletariat could only acquire power through organized mass uprisings timed to suit revolutionary conditions; power could not be acquired through social democratic parliamentarianism. Sano reasoned that since the bourgeois political organ could not be a proletarian political organ, when the proletariat seized political power, it had to destroy the existing state organs and create new ones such as soviets (instead of the Diet), a Red Army (instead of the bourgeois military), and a people's police (instead of the bourgeois police). As for the general nature of the armed uprisings, he believed that it must reflect controlled violence on the part of the organized masses, thus differing from individualistic terrorism and mob violence. During the revolutionary stage, mass movements such as strikes and demonstrations would increase and climax in a general strike. Though Sano cautioned that the goal of the armed uprisings was not to shed blood, he also maintained that since the capitalists would protect their government and property to the bitter end, it was impossible for the workers to take these away without violence. In other words, he warned of the necessity of violence, for

86. Ibid., pp. 80-81.
87. Ibid., p. 57.
"if the Japanese proletariat cannot have an effective armed uprising during the revolutionary stage, order will be returned in the form of an extreme fascist dictatorship (Italy) or a military dictatorship (Poland)." 88

During the combined trial of the 201 JCP defendants which began on June 25, 1931, Sano continued his attack on the Rōdōshaha as well as on the Rōnōha and what he characterized as other exponents of social democracy, such as Akamatsu Katsumaro, Asō Hisashi, and Ōyama Ikuo. The trial arguments were made in the following order: the first speaker was Sano who made some general remarks and specifically welcomed the opportunity to discuss the communist struggle in a public forum. Nabeyama followed with a speech dealing with the Party organization. Then, Ichikawa Shōichi discussed Party history, Sugiura Keiichi spoke on guidance and policy toward the labor unions, Kokuryō Goichirō on the labor union movement, Takahashi Sadaki on guidance and policy toward the peasant problem, and Tokuda Kyūichi on guidance and policy toward the youth movement; finally, Mitamura Shirō refuted the Peace Preservation Law. Sano then gave a summation of the statements of the Courtroom Committee representatives. Together, these presentations consumed twenty-two trial dates, from June 25 to September 29, 1931.

In general terms, Sano did not present anything new at the trial, but simply reaffirmed former positions that he had expressed in his fight against the Rōnōha and the Rōdōshaha—such as "the JCP would never come under the absolute control of the Comintern," "the Comintern

88. Ibid., p. 58.
is the most democratic body in the world," and "a revolution cannot occur by the grace of God." He emphasized that these points epitomized the difference between the Comintern's and social democrat's views concerning the possibility of revolution. Basically, he tried to show that, as the vanguard of the Japanese working class, the defendants were all political prisoners of class, and that they were trying to do "the greatest good in this age" by struggling with the bourgeois and landlord political power in an effort to create a new society based on a proletarian dictatorship.

Although Sano and the JCP reached a wide audience because of the trial, his efforts failed to convince the judge. In October, 1932, the first trial judgment was handed down, and four leaders—Sano, Nabeyama, Mitamura, and Ichikawa—were given life sentences; the others received from two to fifteen-year prison terms.

89. "Nihon kyōsantō kōhan tōsō daihyō chijnjutsu sokkiroku (1931)," in Gendai shi shiryō (Tokyo: Misuzu shobō, 1966), XVII, 50-53. Sano was to repudiate the former two statements in his tenkō in 1933.
Nine months after his October, 1932, conviction for breaking the Peace Preservation Law, Sano startled the Japanese people by announcing his rejection of both the Comintern and the JCP. Scholars of Japanese history and culture refer to such a "conversion" or "turnabout" as tenkō, a term which connotes a change from an antinationalist ideology to a nationalist one; that is tenkō is used specifically to refer to the renunciation of a universalistic ideology like Marxism and the return to the particularistic culture and traditions of Japan.¹ In Sano's case, the roots of his tenkō can be traced back to certain incidents which occurred during his second exile period in Russia (1928-1929) when he first experienced doubts concerning the international communist movement.

When Sano was attending the Sixth Comintern Congress in Moscow (1928), he was immediately struck by the "siege mentality" which engulfed Russia. As he quickly learned, Stalin was in the midst of a bitter power struggle against Trotsky, and Stalin's ruthlessness in

¹ For an excellent analysis of the tenkō phenomenon in prewar Japan, see Patricia Steinhoff, "Tenkō: Ideology and Social Integration in Prewar Japan" (Ph. D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1969).
purging those who opposed him shocked Sano. Moreover, Sano was also offended by Stalin's refusal to allow any language other than Russian to be used at the Conference. These two observations of the workings of international communism led Sano to ponder the very meaning of internationalism in the communist context. Whereas his first exile in Russia (1923-1925) had produced in him an internationalist fervor, this second exile awakened his nationalist feelings, although he suppressed them at the time:

While returning to Shanghai in 1929, I repeatedly had the unexpected feeling that I was not a communist. When the Comintern delegates and the Chinese Communist leaders--trustworthy men such as Hsiang Chung-fa and Li Li-san--gathered together and produced a stratagem for the communization of East Asia, I often wondered: "Was it proper to do this without Japan?" Since I was used to seeing Russians and Chinese, I realized that the character of peoples is unique and immutable, and that the most respected communists of each country somehow unconsciously move according to their own national interests. The greatest lesson I learned in Moscow was realism. . . . My nationalist feelings were gradually strengthened in Shanghai. However, as a believer in internationalism, I intellectually suppressed such a feeling.

Sano continued to hide his reservations about international communism after he was jailed in 1929. The thought of dying in prison while urging his comrades on to action inspired him with a renewed sense of fanaticism and a desire to fight. Yet, after the struggle of the trial, these reservations returned to haunt Sano as he sat in prison and


5. Ibid.
pondered the fate of the JCP. He was particularly disturbed by what he called the "inner degradations" of the Party—the preponderance of intellectuals instead of workers, the Ōmori Gang Incident (a daring bank robbery performed by JCP members in 1932) and continual spy incidents. He deplored the departure of workers from the Party, the Party's loss of control over the masses, and the growing influence of members of the petit-bourgeois class. After much contemplation, he "finally perceived that these conditions were based on the errors of leadership and theory of the Third International, and that the Japanese revolution could not be accomplished under a communist party controlled by the Third International."  

The final straw for Sano came when he saw a copy of the 1932 Theses. Up to this point, the Comintern had attacked the Japanese monarch as a semifeudal landlord (the 1922 and 1927 Theses), but when the Japanese Army in Manchuria threatened the Soviet Union by marching northward in late 1931, the Comintern devised a new conceptual

6. By indicating the family status of those JCP members who were arrested in the March 15 and April 16 Incidents, the following table illustrates that the membership in the Party shifted dramatically in the period 1928-1929 from those of poor background to those of middle class background:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rich background</th>
<th>Middle class background</th>
<th>Poor background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 15, 1928, Incident</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>72.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 16, 1929, Incident</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Tokyo chihō saibansho kenjikyoku chōsa (Survey from the Tokyo Prosecutor's Office), included in Tsurumi Shunsuke, p. 134.

definition of the emperor. Now the emperor was not regarded as merely a semifuedal landlord, but was also treated as an actual supporter of imperialism and thus the archenemy of the people. Sano was jolted by this attack on the emperor and his long dormant feelings for Japan were ignited. In his own words: "I grew up loving the classical literature of Japan and having a personal Confucian world view. Thus, at some time, I was fated to depart from Marxism."

Determined at last to have a confrontation with the Party, Sano arranged a meeting with a fellow JCP leader whom he had closely worked with since 1927, Nabeyama Sadachika. Unlike Sano, Nabeyama was born to a poor family and worked as a laborer. He was attracted to communism from an emotional anti-establishment standpoint, not through belief in Marxist scientific principles. To him, the Russian Revolution meant the gaining of political power by the workers and the implementation of socialism by the communist party which then liberated the workers. In other words, his commitment to the Party and to Marxism in general was tenuous. Yet, it took all of Sano's drive to break the Party's hold on Nabeyama.

Sano first approached Nabeyama at the end of January, 1933. Nabeyama described the encounter as follows: "At first it was difficult for him [Sano] to speak, but then his words gushed forth about the fate


10. For background information on Nabeyama, see Nabeyama Sadachika, Watakushi wa kyōsantō o suteta, and Ishidō Kikotomo and Gomikawa Junpei, p. 225.
of the country confronted as it was by tragic crises, the degeneration of the Communist Party, and the subordination of the Comintern to the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{11}

At this meeting Nabeyama disagreed with Sano, but later he realized that he was also subconsciously feeling the same doubts. He remembered an embarrassing incident in which he had been involved while visiting Russia in 1926-1927. The incident had centered on the wisdom of utilizing the "abolish the monarchy" slogan. During the meeting with N. I. Bukharin, the Comintern representative who drew up the 1927 Theses, Nabeyama had blurted out: "Why must we publicize the 'abolish the monarch' slogan?" Bukharin had then retorted: "Are you a communist? Why do you shrink from such things as abolishing the emperor system? If you are so nationalistic to believe that the emperor system is different from Western monarchies, then this is a grave problem!"

The next day they had met again and Bukharin had pointed out to Nabeyama: "You are a communist, but it is difficult to understand how you can indulge in national sentiment like that. If you adhere to nationalist sentiment, how can the revolution occur in Japan?\textsuperscript{12}

Then Nabeyama thought about the Gang Incident that had occurred a year earlier and the appalling behavior of the JCP. In regard to the Gang Incident, he later wrote:

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{11}] Nabeyama Sadachika, "Yūfun no shisōka," \textit{Kokumin hyōron} (June 1953), p. 7.
\item[\textsuperscript{12}] This anecdote was taken from Ishidō Kiyotomo and Gomikawa Junpei, p. 245.
\end{itemize}
... this is not the way to promote a revolution; that is certain. However, someone decided that it was necessary. It was the Party. That is, it was us. Even if we saw the necessity, could we stoop so low? To tell the truth, the "Party" and "communism" are not almighty. They are simply the means for making humanity more secure. Yet, unnoticed by anyone, the means became the end, and if you create justifications such as "for the Party" or "for communism," then you become a victim of an illusion and will do anything. This is dangerous. I myself constantly fall into hallucinations like that. The Gang Incident was a graphic representation of this, and even I was greatly shocked. ... I had to take another look at myself and communism.\textsuperscript{13}

At this point Nabeyama indicated to Sano that he agreed with Sano's positions and both men started to write and compare notes. Having written down their ideas in a coherent manner, they decided to reveal them immediately to all the Party members. Since the text of their confession (tenkō) was too long to publish in the Party's organs, they disclosed it publicly instead.\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{One-State Socialism}

The Sano-Nabeyama tenkō statement of June, 1933, suggested a new path for the achievement of the Japanese socialist revolution. The new path was termed "one-state socialism" (ikkoku shakaishugi). Sano had picked up this phrase in Russia where Stalin was utilizing it in his struggle against Trotsky. However, whereas Stalin used the slogan to inspire the masses in Russia to build socialism in their own country, Sano's application of the term to the Japanese context was somewhat different: "I was deeply moved by Stalin's idea of one-state socialism. This concept united the three elements of state, people, and socialism.

\textsuperscript{13} Nabeyama Sadachika, \textit{Watakushi wa kyōsantō o suteta}, p. 150.

\textsuperscript{14} Nabeyama Sadachika, "Yūfun no shisōka," p. 8.
If the communists of each country adopted this concept in their own country, then they would not have to become defenders of the Soviet Union."15

Indeed, state (kokka), people (minzoku), and socialism (shakai-shugi) became the central themes of Sano's one-state socialism. He emphasized the role of the state because he believed that it had a vital function to perform in the present historical development of the world. That is, he thought that the internationalism preached by the Comintern to the effect that the workers have no fatherland (except for the Soviet Union) might sound exhilarating in theory, but was impossible in practice. Yet, he also believed that there was an internationalist trend which was leading to unity in the world, and thus he warned; "If a people (nation) stands aloof from this worldwide trend, it will atrophy. Therefore, the socialist movement of each country must include the idea of world revolution. But, the revolution in practice must occur as a crystallization of the energy of the people out of its own national plans."16

"State" also denoted nationalism for Sano, and he constantly pointed out that the working class deeply loves its country. This realization, in turn, led him to reassess his opinion regarding the emperor system. Just as he had done in March, 1923, when he argued that the JCP should not adopt the "abolish the monarchy" slogan because the Japanese emperor was unique among the world's monarchs, Sano again came


to see the Japanese emperor institution as different from Western monarchies. He now saw the emperor system as an "expression of national unity which lessened the brutality of domestic class opposition, brought equilibrium to social life and facilitated change as society underwent reforms." It was not like Czarism and other monarchies because it did not have the power of oppressive exploitation.

For these reasons, he came to see kokutai not as cant, but as a true description of Japanese psychological and historical reality. Firm in his belief, he attacked the JCP/Comintern slogan of overthrowing the monarchy as a "stupid regulation," a "fundamental error" that "separates the people from the Party." Since he saw the emperor as rising above politics, and thus not a threat to the revolution, he concluded that the Japanese revolution would be completely different from the Russian Revolution and must be applicable to the traditional, national, and sociopsychological factors of Japan alone. To this end, he emphasized the need for a "patriotic communists party" and "communism without the Comintern" to bring the socialist revolution to Japan.

Since neither the JCP nor the Comintern was able to perceive the uniqueness of the Japanese situation, Sano called on the Party members to abandon the JCP and separate from the Comintern. He argued that the Comintern was committing a basic error in applying the experience of the Russian Revolution to Japan, for the Russian Revolution was based on

17. Takabatake Michitoshi, p. 166.


19. Takabatake Michitoshi, p. 166.
Russian (European) conditions which had little relevance for Japan. Moreover, the Comintern was no longer functioning along the lines of "true" internationalism, but instead had assumed the character of an organ charged with executing the national policy of the Soviet Union. As for the JCP, Sano described it as "a modern representative of Machiavellianism, never questioning the means used to achieve the ends, lying, slandering people, deceiving the masses, and making the labor unions a springboard for seizing power." Hence, it was imperative that the communist movement free itself from the "perverted" policies of the Comintern and its agent in Japan, the JCP.

Apart from the concept of "state," the concept of "people" (minzoku) was also a central theme in Sano's one-state socialism. The word "people" had two separate meanings for him. First, he theorized that while the concept of "class" was a legitimate Marxist category, it would be wrong to overemphasize "class" to the detriment of the "people." In other words, the concept of "people" for Sano was superior to that of "class," because "people" denoted living beings while "class" represented abstract categories:

Because modern socialism is built on the occurrence of class conflict between the bourgeoisie and proletariat, ignoring this process would not be socialistic. However, designating


21. Sano Manabu, Gokuchū ki, p. 68. Sano's new position was ironic: in his earlier attack on the Rōnōha members, he had argued that to be a communist, one must be a Party member; thus he had opposed the Rōnōha notion that one could be a communist without being a Party member—a position he now held after his tenkō. See "Sano Manabu Yoshin jimmon chōsho," p. 218.
only class as being absolutely supreme imbues historical fact with subjective desires. Moreover, it conveniently removes a living power such as the people, and, in the final analysis, is abstract idealism. The socialist revolution can succeed only as a widespread people's revolution and must pull together the toiling peasants and urban petit-bourgeoisie as allies; it has no room for selfish sentiments like proletarian dictatorship.

Second, the concept of "people" for Sano was linked to the idea of love of fellow nationals. Not only was Sano proud to be a Japanese, but he also praised Japan as being the home of a superior people, a belief that led him to certain chauvinistic positions. His faith in Japan's superiority was based on the fact that the Japanese people had never been enslaved or colonized, shared a devotion to the nation, and experienced popular unity and fraternity. Thus, Japanese were "different from Persians and Afghans who, as peoples of weak spirit, could only bring benefits to their people and contribute to the world revolution by sweeping away the uniqueness of their people."

Sano's propensity for enunciating such national chauvinistic statements was paradoxical. On the one hand, he continued to propose a social-economic-political bloc uniting the peoples of Japan, Taiwan, and Korea under the principles of non-discrimination, non-exploitation, and socialist revolution. He believed that only countries with similar social, economic, and political systems could form such blocs. In the

23. Later Sano was to empathize with the Chief Secretary of the Polish Communist Party, Gromulka, when he said that he desired to be a Pole first before being a Communist. See ibid., p. 71.
case of East Asia, he envisioned a time when both Japan and her colonies would become socialist countries, and since they all shared a common cultural tradition, the formation of an "enlarged one-state socialist bloc" would be desirable and beneficial for the peoples of each state. Furthermore, he believed that such a union would make East Asia the leader of a socialist internationalism which was based on equality of all the participants, not a superior-inferior relationship such as Russia was imposing on the Comintern.

Yet, on the other hand, Sano made references to the superior leadership qualities of the Japanese in guiding their weaker Asian neighbors. Moreover, he now opposed the principle of national self-determination for Taiwan and Korea, for he believed that the conservative elements in society would easily take control:

As a matter of fact, the outcome of practicing popular self-determination in the Russian Revolution can be seen in such things as the creation of a conservative Poland, the mimicking of Franco-British capitalism in the Baltic coastal nations, and so on. In the same manner, the outcome of practicing popular self-determination by the Versailles Treaty only reaped conservative results, such as the creation of Central European segmented states suited to the Middle Ages. . . . If the peoples of Japan, Taiwan and Korea are allowed national dissolution along the principle of functional popular self-determination as required by the Comintern, the result will be a collection of weak conservative nations controlled by the bourgeoisie as has happened before. . . .

It must be noted, to Sano's credit, that he rejected the idea of including Manchuria in this bloc, because he felt that to include it would

be to affirm imperialistic conquest, Manchuria being in his opinion an integral part of China.  

Socialism (shakaishugi) was the last element in Sano's one-state socialist trilogy of state, people, and socialism. Sano continually asserted that he "believed in Marxism-Leninism and thought about Japan and the worldwide communist revolution." He denounced social democracy, imperial centrism, and all other reformist ideologies as antirevolutionary, and therefore detrimental to the working class:  

We never thought of espousing parliamentarianism or reformism. We believed that the problems of war, China and the colonies must all be combined with the revolution. We never lost our convictions regarding our deep hatred of bourgeois society, our belief in a party of the toiling masses, and the impossibility of achieving a new social stage if we did not use radical means.

However, Sano strongly believed that socialism should be made applicable to the Japanese condition. The indigenization of socialism was to be accomplished by following an independent socialist road, for "Western socialists, through a desperate effort, created socialist doctrines which were most appropriate to their own respective countries and Western environments. We too must acquire the socialist thought and action which is most appropriate to Japan and the East." For the

29. Ibid., pp. 57-58.
rest of his life, Sano dedicated himself to the achievement of this Japanization of socialism.

The Sano-Nabeyama tenkō created a furor within Japan. Social critic Kimura Ki, writing in the progressive magazine Reconstruction, went so far as to equate their ideological "volte-face" with the "conversions" of Trotsky and Gide, exalting them as "the three great tenkō of this half-century." 30 Many Party members, both in and out of prison, emulated Sano and Nabeyama and tenkōed. The majority did so for a variety of reasons. 31 A small percentage, however, was attracted to Sano's idea of a revolutionary socialism compatible with Japanese customs and institutions.

Approximately forty-five persons eventually joined Sano's one-state socialism movement and all had occupied either Central Committee or middle echelon positions in the Party. 32 The first to join were four former members of the JCP Central Committee, namely Mitamura Shiro, Nakao Katsuo, Sugiura Keiichi, and Takahashi Sadaki, along with the


31. In one survey, 544 convicted or accused political prisoners gave the following reasons for their 1933 tenkō:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sano-Nabeyama statement</td>
<td>24 (4.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>familial love</td>
<td>217 (39.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reflection during imprisonment</td>
<td>141 (25.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading books</td>
<td>55 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exhaltations</td>
<td>25 (4.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>life, health, or personality</td>
<td>58 (10.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>situational or national consciousness</td>
<td>24 (4.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reported in Takabatake Michitoshi, p. 197 n, 78.

32. See Appendix C.
three men who had become Party leaders after the April 16 Incident—Tanaka Seigen, Kazama Jōkichi, and Sano Hiroshi. A comparison of the socioideological backgrounds of these men illustrates the cross-sectional appeal of Sano's new ideology to Party members: his followers included not only rich and poor, but also Fukumotoists and anti-Fukumotoists. The following listing compares the seven men in terms of social background and ideology:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age as of 1933</th>
<th>Academic career</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Fukumotoism status</th>
<th>Family status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sano Hiroshi</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>International Lenin school</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>anti</td>
<td>middle class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakao Katsuo</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Commercial school</td>
<td>printer</td>
<td>pro</td>
<td>lower class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitamura Shirō</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Commercial school</td>
<td>laborer/</td>
<td>pro</td>
<td>lower class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugiyama Keiichi</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Elementary school</td>
<td>laborer</td>
<td>anti</td>
<td>poor farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takahashi Sadaki</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>International Lenin school</td>
<td>literary profession</td>
<td>anti</td>
<td>middle class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanaka Seigen</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Tokyo Univ. drop-out</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>upper class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazama Jōkichi</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Soviet Far East</td>
<td>Labor College</td>
<td>apprentice</td>
<td>middle class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33. Created by Takabatake Michitoshi, p. 193 n. 13. For further background information on Mitamura, see Mitamura Shirō, also Makise Kikue, Kutsumi Fusako no koyomi (Tokyo: Shisō no kagakusha, 1975); for Kazama, see Kazama Jōkichi's Mosukō to tsunagaru Nihon kyōsantō no rekishi and Zassō no gotoku (Tokyo: Keizai Ōrashia, 1968); and for Sano Hiroshi, see Sano Hiroshi's "Takumeika Sano Manabu" and Nihon kyōsantō wa kokumin taishū ni nani o ataeta ka.
Since most of these early followers of Sano remained in prison, the movement did not officially begin on the outside until Nakao was released on bail in 1934. He quickly got together with Nishimura Saiki to create a central bureau, wrote a "Draft of the One-State Socialism Theses," and arranged for a national meeting. In 1935, the two men began publication of a legal organ called The Japan Political Newspaper (Nihon seiji shimbun), a theoretical journal called Advance (Zenshin), and a newspaper called News (Shōshuku). The one-state socialism clique met once each month during its existence. Its members were in the midst of preparing a comprehensive set of general plans and declarations when the February 26, 1936, Incident broke out (see Chapter 8 for an account of this incident). At first they were jubilant, thinking that this rebellion was the first step in the socialist revolution. But three days after the incident began, the members of the one-state socialism clique were rounded up and jailed as potential subversives, and the movement subsequently collapsed.

Meanwhile, as might be expected, when Sano and Nabeyama first announced their tenkō and called for those in the Party to join them in their endeavor, the new leadership of the JCP violently attacked them.

34. Kutsumi Fusako (Mitamura Shirō's wife) listed the organizers of the national movement as Nakao, Nishimura, Kawachi Ushinosuke, Amamori Tokusaburo, Katayama Mineto, and Watanabe Taeko. Tani Ichirō (a faithful follower of Sano both in 1933 and after the war) gave a slightly different list of names: Nakao, Nishimura, Watanabe Taeko, Tateyama Toshitada, Takeuchi Bunji, and himself. For Kutsumi's version, see Makise Kikue, p. 101; Tani's version is based on a personal interview with the author in Tokyo, February 19, 1977.

The Party's official answer to Sano's plea came in the June 16, 1933, copy of *Red Flag* which stated:

We must condemn with mass indignation the traitorous spies Sano and Nabeyama who, with the illicit help of the terroristic political policies of the emperor system government, are making desperate efforts to destroy the Party! We must crush this imperialistic fascist policy which challenges proletarian internationalism and praises the thieving war of the bourgeois-landlords.36

The JCP also criticized the one-state socialism concept as being similar to Ishiwara Kanji's East Asian League idea;37 and from Moscow, Katayama Sen, Nosaka Sanzō, and Yamamoto Kenzō angrily wrote: "We must attack Sano and Nabeyama, traitors unparalleled in the world."38

Yamakawa Hitoshi, too, severely criticized the new movement. Although he applauded Sano and Nabeyama's views on the Party's alienation from the masses, the Comintern's gross errors of judgment, and the need to create tactics and strategies appropriate to Japan, he chided the two for espousing a type of nationalism (minzokushugi) which approximated "Akamatsu-type pronouncements of Japanism."39 In fact, Yamakawa was not always so gentle in his criticism, and in one of his

---

37. *Kokumin hyoron*, p. 83. Ishiwara Kanji was the Army officer who is often given credit for the planning and execution of the Manchurian Incident. For an excellent analysis of his East Asian League concept, see Mark R. Peattie, *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan's Confrontation with the West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).


more vitriolic moments, he wrote that Sano and Nabeyama were "social fascists who advocate a social democracy that is nothing but worm-eaten bourgeois pacifism and parliamentarism." 40

However, as the reader may have observed, Sano's idea of one-state socialism bore a striking resemblance to Yamakawa's Rōnōha ideology. Sano's ideology was also akin to that of another former rival, the Rōdōshaha. This similarity did not escape his contemporaries, for both Party members and the judge of the Tokyo Criminal Cases Chiho Court commented on it. 41 For example, all three systems rejected the Marxist-Leninist advocacy of violent revolution, of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of affiliation with the Comintern, and of an illegal JCP. Yet, Sano's new system also differed from the others in a number of crucial areas, best illustrated in the form of the following list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude toward:</th>
<th>Sano</th>
<th>Rōnōha</th>
<th>Rōdōshaha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emperor</td>
<td>pro</td>
<td>ignore</td>
<td>pro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agrarian revolution</td>
<td>pro</td>
<td>anti</td>
<td>anti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanguard party</td>
<td>pro</td>
<td>anti</td>
<td>anti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalism</td>
<td>pro</td>
<td>pro</td>
<td>anti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonies</td>
<td>socialist</td>
<td>total</td>
<td>acquisi-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bloc formation</td>
<td>liberation</td>
<td>tion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of socialism</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Imperial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Socialism</td>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>Centrism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

40. Takabatake Michitoshi, p. 169.

Perhaps the assessment of Sano Hiroshi, Sano Manabu's nephew and closest follower, best summed up the differences between Sano's ideas and those of the Rōnōha and Rōdōshaha. He postulated that, on the one hand, the major disparity between Sano and the Rōnōha was one of originality; while the reformist vision of the Rōnōha merely followed the lead of European Social Democracy, Sano's goal was to create a uniquely Japanese-type of socialism that was based on Japanese conditions instead of European or Russian conditions. On the other hand, the basic difference between Sano's ideas and those of the Rōdōshaha involved the question of the emperor; the Rōdōshaha was vague on specific socialist policies and instead professed loyalty to the emperor as its main focus, while Sano's pro-emperor position was only one of many points, and was not even considered the chief point in his socialist system. In other words, Sano's emphasis was on the enactment of a socialist revolution through the effort of a vanguard party leading the toiling masses. The emperor was merely a symbol representing the unity of Japan and because he was above politics, he was therefore an "object of manipulation" (sosa no taisho).

Introspection and Rebirth

Although Sano's trial ended in 1932 with his conviction, he remained in the fairly lax Ichigaya Prison until December, 1934, when he was transferred to Kosuge Penitentiary. The change caused him much inner turbulence and required a great deal of adjustment. His entrance

43. Quoted in Takabatake Michitoshi, p. 185.
into Kosuge Prison marked the beginning of his isolation from the outside world, except for occasional visits from his wife and children. He later recalled:

Here, from the start, I wore my red prison clothes, shaved my head, and had one bowl of soup for breakfast and dinner and one plate of vegetables for lunch. My links with the world, of which there were a few while I was still unconvicted [at Ichigaya prison], suddenly vanished. The gray, concrete walls, the solitary two-mat cell, the iron grating, the wooden floor, and so on, gave me a gloomy, threatened, stark feeling.  

Sano's first reaction to this change in environment was one of anger. His resentment toward the "base and brutal conservative government" was re-ignited, and, to add to his distress, he felt "defeated, ashamed and stupid, hating the haughty prison officials." After a period of time, his rage at the outside world waned, and began a period of introspection. The internal struggle that he experienced left him emotionally weak and psychologically depressed as he tried to come to grips with such fundamental questions as the meaning of nature, kami, self, nation, revolution, people, class, and socialism.

Sano was not alone in experiencing mental torment and depression after his tenkō and subsequent transfer to Kosuge: Nabeyama lost both his wife and his self-esteem as a result of the tenkō. According to his own account, when his wife read about his tenkō in the newspaper, she clutched the paper and in an agitated state hurried to meet him, exclaiming, "These are lies and defamations, aren't they?" But when she realized that they were not, she asked incredulously: "You really

44. Sano Manabu, Gokuchū ki, p. 81.
45. Ibid., pp. 57 and 82.
wrote such a thing?" This encounter, says Nabeyama, left them both drained and gradually they fell out of love and were divorced. As Nabeyama dwelled morosely on thoughts of his lost wife and friends, loneliness and anguish overtook him. Of one particularly low point, he had this to say: "When I went there [Kosuge], I was truly isolated, . . . I felt as if I was nothing but an object [mono]. An object is always alone. An object has neither a wife nor friends."

Both Sano and Nabeyama gradually recovered from the depths of their mental despair through a process of immersing themselves in the study of Japanese culture and religion. Sano's introspection led him to believe that his 1933 tenkō was incomplete since it was basically political and not at all spiritual. He therefore decided to undertake a search for the well springs of Japanese and Asian spirit, to cleanse his soul, and make a fresh start. He began by studying the history and classics of India and China in order to understand their influence on

---

46. Nabeyama Sadachika, Watakushi wa kyōsantō o suteta, pp. 159-160. It must be noted here that Nabeyama's wife did not fit the stereotype of a typical Japanese woman. She was highly politicized, fell in love with Nabeyama because of his political views, and after her "love marriage" to him, participated in many Party functions. It was due to these circumstances that his tenkō was such a shock to her.

47. Ibid., p. 170.

48. Sano equated his experience with that of Dostoevsky, since both men reached a stage of enlightenment during their imprisonments; see Sano Manabu, Gokuchūki, p. 81.
the Japanese spirit. However, neither the Indian Buddhist canons nor the Chinese Confucian classics offered much inspiration.49

It was in the Japanese classics that he reaped the rewards of his search. Even though he realized that the classics were being utilized by ultranationalists to promote xenophobia and militarism, he still asserted that, for better or worse, the classics illustrated the spiritual past of the Japanese people:

Precious things which are created by man and time perish, but in order to preserve them as much as possible, they are transmitted to future generations as classics and traditions. Even if the classics were created a long time ago, the fresh life of the people flows in them and the eternity of the present rests there. When engaging in historical research, it is important first to deal with the original texts in order to receive a direct impression [of the times]. In searching for the spiritual roots of our people, we must turn our efforts to the classics.50

The most important of the classics for Sano were the Kojiki (old legends of Japan), Nihon shoki (ancient chronicles of Japan), Norito (Shinto ritual prayers), Manyōshū (compilation of old poems), Semmyō (ancient imperial proclamations), and Kogo shūi (gleanings of old proverbs). Others that he also found useful for discovering the roots of the Japanese spirit were the Engishiki (collection of imperial regulations and customs), Fudoki (reports describing old village customs), Shinsen shōjiroku (register of ancient families), and Takahashi ujibumi (records of an ancient family).51

49. Sano Manabu, "Gokuchū koten ni yorite kokoro o arau (1940)," SMC, I, 45.
50. Ibid., p. 44.
51. Ibid., p. 45.
According to Sano, these readings taught him certain critical lessons about the essence of Japanese nature as it was exhibited in the lives of those living during the "Golden Era" of Japanese History. The most important element for Sano was an affirmation of life. To him, the ancients lived in complete tranquility because they expressed a unity of nature and humanity as well as a healthy realism in their actions. Their old ballads fearlessly praised life and carried no hint of such "depressing" things as asceticism, rationalism, and intellectualism. The ancients, Sano believed, knew the true order of things and worshipped kami (gods) as representations of the great seimei (soul, life) of the universe. From this realization, he concluded that the Japanese must never lose sight of the Japanese spirit, for if they do, then their existence would be a hollow one.

Armed now with a deeper understanding of the ancient Japanese worldview, Sano felt better prepared to evaluate Marxism-Leninism and its compatibility with a Japanese form of socialism. He reread Capital and then proceeded to read a five volume anthology of Lenin (in German) and The Complete Works of Marx and Engels (which took about one year to read); finally, he supplemented these works with anthologies of Nietzsche, Machiavelli, Hegel, Marcuse, Weber, Veblen, and Keynes. All this research had a dramatic result: after 1938 Sano stopped referring to himself as a communist or Marxist.

52. Sano Manabu, Gokuchūki, pp. 86-87.
53. Ibid., pp. 91 and 94.
After becoming imbued with the Japanese world view, Sano's re-
analysis of Marxism-Leninism had shown him that the concept of
historical materialism was basically incompatible with the Japanese
spirit and hence with Japanese socialism. Although he continued to
praise Marx's power to synthesize, his treatment of materialistic pro-
ductive power as a motive force in history, his use of the dialectic,
and his appreciation of class as an important, living, historical
entity, Sano now totally rejected the Marxist principles of economic
determinism and the supremacy of class and class struggle.

Sano published his criticism of Marxism-Leninism in his magnum
opus, Critique of Historical Materialism (Yuibutsu-shikan hihan). His
goal of indigenizing socialism was made clear in the book's introduction
where he stressed: "With the aim of realizing socialism in Japan, we
should be selective in our study of Marxism—borrowing what is appro-
priate and discarding the rest. The fundamental goal is to build a
theory and policy of socialism that will be most appropriate for
Japan." 54

As a rationale for making changes in Marxist-Leninist dogma,
Sano argued that Marxism was a political philosophy rather than a
scientific principle and thus certain aspects could be changed without
detriment to the whole. He saw Marx as a genius endowed with the
ability to predict, for Marx had insight and intuition into the general
course of future humanity. However, he asserted that Marx's most
familiar, most concrete, and consequently most important predictions

concerning the course of capitalism were generally incorrect: specifically, the destruction of capitalism; the movement to communism through socialism; the extinction of the state and classes; and the disappearance of all coercion. Why were these assumptions incorrect? The answer, in Sano's opinion, lay in Marx's overemphasis on such erroneous, vacuous laws as historical materialism and class supremacy, and in Marx's "severely frenzied condition" of anger and hatred against the bourgeois system which stifled his power of intuition.55

After attacking the "scientific" and "unbiased" premises of Marxism, Sano went on to point out what he considered to be the major error in Marx's theory of historical materialism and class struggle—the omission of human will and creativity as important elements in history. He theorized that Marx's preoccupation with intellectually diagramming the change and structure of society caused him to rely on economic factors in constructing a principle of predetermined necessity. Because Marx saw history only in terms of materialistic achievements, he denied the subjectivity of humans as leading actors in history. Sano believed Marx's negation of human will and creativity was a major blunder, for Sano viewed history as the accumulation of the creative life of the people. Human nature, social psychology, human goodness, spiritual culture and politics, as well as economics, were all powerful historical factors which must equally be taken into consideration when analyzing society.56

55. Ibid., pp. 138-145.
56. Ibid., pp. 183-377.
Sano's emphasis on the "people" was also the basis for his attack on Marx's concept of class struggle. He argued that the notion of rigid distinctions between classes was erroneous. People do not live solely within class boundaries because there are cross-cutting influences, agreements, and ties in class relationships. Thus, instead of trying to achieve socialism by putting one's faith in the predetermined necessity of class hatred, Sano theorized that socialism could only be attained through the active will of "great men" (the vanguard) leading the masses.

In emphasizing the need of a vanguard party and the significance of an elite in leading it, Sano agreed with many of Lenin's ideas on the subject, such as the indivisibility of the vanguard and the political party; the reciprocal relationship between the natural growth of the mass movement and the purposeful intentions of the vanguard's activity resulting in the vanguard eventually leading the masses; the organizational network based on operational cells; and the political and spiritual capacity of the vanguard which is imbued with the moral qualities of self-sacrifice, heroic struggle, bravery, and endurance. The one basic change that Sano called for was the scrapping of Lenin's idea of a class vanguard, and the advocacy instead of a national vanguard. He claimed that "the true vanguard can only be a vanguard of the people or nationals (minzoku, kokumin), since class cannot exist apart from people or nationals." 57

57. Ibid., p. 410.
Sano went on to explain that it is the vanguard which brings about the realization of historical necessity. Historical necessity does not just happen by itself, but "is realized through people; if there were no suitable people, it would not happen." In other words, he proposed a scenario in which the masses submit to the leader(s), the leader(s) inspires the energy of the masses, and this mutual relationship accomplishes what is needed in that historical period.

Since Sano laid so much stress on the leaders, he thought it necessary to enumerate those leadership qualities which would best attract the masses and instill devotion in them. The most important quality, he believed, was a "national" (kokuminteki) orientation: to have a leader who represented only bourgeois or proletarian interests would be to ignore the fact that the "people" are the most fundamental unit of society; such an action would be "anti-national" in character. Moreover, a leader should not be divorced from reality nor lacking in good ideas. He should be intelligent, welcome danger and pain without fear of self-sacrifice, scorn worldly affairs, and love the pure and simple life. He should also understand his own position in relation to the cosmos, human nature, life and death, keep his distance qualitatively from the masses but have a boundless confidence in them, and finally have the greatest contempt for cowards, self-deprecators, and liars.  

58. Ibid., p. 414,

59. Ibid., pp. 409-430,
Thus, Sano attempted to indigenize Marxism-Leninism by borrowing what he saw as the aspects most relevant to the Japanese spirit and world view and discarding the rest. Among the elements which Sano found most applicable were the treatment of materialistic productive power as a motive force in history, the working of the dialectic, the role of class as a historical entity, and the need for a vanguard. However, Sano theorized that the principles of economic determinism and class supremacy were not needed because they did not take into account the role of the "people" or human activism. In sum, Sano's 1938 emphasis on human will and creativity can be seen as the culmination of the doubts that he first experienced concerning economic determinism when he entered the socialist movement in the early 1920s, and which gained momentum and direction with his denial of class supremacy in his 1933 *tenkō* statement.

One may legitimately ask, in the light of the foregoing discussion, to what extent Sano remained a Marxist? He blurred class distinctions in emphasizing his concept of "the people," and he even slighted the notion of historical necessity by stating that it could not happen by itself (it needed "great men" to occur). In Sano's defense, it must be noted that he stopped calling himself a Marxist because of these modifications. His goal was to make socialism more appealing to the masses by incorporating Marxist-Leninist concepts which were familiar to the Japanese world view. For example, Sano's treatment of the vanguard as an elite leading the people was resonant with the Confucian ideal that educated, moral men should lead society. For these
reasons, Sano cannot accurately be called a Marxist after 1938, but rather a Japanese socialist.

Sano spent the years between 1936 and 1939 working on his major work, *Critique of Historical Materialism*, and mingling with the other political prisoners in Kosuge. He knew many of the leftists who had been affiliated with the JCP and who were now jailed with him. Among those with whom he usually spent some time were Nabeyama, Mitamura Shirō, Kawakami Hajime, Takahashi Sadaki, Nakao Katsuo, Andō Toshio, Tanaka Seigen, Kazama Jōkichi, Kuki Katsuichi, and Nishishiro Yoshiji.  

Sano also conversed with "right wing" prisoners, such as those who had been involved in the May 15, Blood Brotherhood, and February 26 Incidents (for an analysis of these incidents, see Chapter 8). Generally, he had a low opinion of these men, believing them to be basically unintelligent, vulgar hooligans who disliked mental activity and so could never be as astute as the "left wing" prisoners. He did make some exceptions; for instance, he found the military prisoners to be interesting, sympathetic, and well-schooled in East Asian thought, although they were still somewhat feudal in their orientation.

From 1939-1940, the routine into which Sano's life had fallen was severely disrupted by a physical as well as a spiritual crisis. He had been suffering from neuralgia since 1938, and in 1939 he suffered bouts of migraine headaches and several relapses due to chronic

---


diabetes. The prison doctor warned him of a possible cerebral hemorrhage and indicated to him death might be imminent. In order to lift him out of his mental depression, the prison authorities moved him to the prison farm in May, 1940. Sano rejoiced at his reunion with nature. In his prison diary, he wrote: "Tomatoes, onions, Irish potatoes, cabbage, taro, daikon, carrots, and so on, all became my friends." But the key to his recovery from this physical and mental state lay in what he termed his "religious awakening" and "return to the emperor." He cited an awakened belief in humanity, fatherland, and kami as well as the joy and consciousness of being a subject of the emperor as factors giving him the spiritual power to overcome his sufferings. His early Confucian and Japanese family influences re-emerged, and he wrote: "I, a grandson of a samurai, should commit righteous seppuku for the disloyalty and lack of filial piety towards my house." The feeling of divine mercy in being "born again" as a Japanese was so overwhelming in Sano that upon his release after fourteen years and three months of imprisonment, he immediately visited the most sacred spots in Tokyo:

64. Sano Manabu, "Kokoro no ato--tenkō seiimei igo," Shisō geppō, Vol. 106 (September 1943), p. 10. In the same manner, Nabeyama wrote that he "awoke" to the realization that he was the grandson of a samurai and that "this new awareness of my ancestral blood running through my veins allowed me to subdue and ridicule modern liberal and capitalist world views which are founded on the principle of selfish desires." From Nabeyama Sadachika, "Nabeyama Sadachika shuki," Shisō geppō, Vol. 106 (September 1943), p. 114.
I reverently bowed in front of the Imperial Palace, worshipped the solemn spirit residing there, and apologized for my past sins and disloyalty. If one reflects on the fact that people like me who did not die in prison could be reborn revering the sun, a wonderful thankfulness overwhelms my being. This is a magnificent imperial favor to us.

On the following day, I visited the Meiji and Yasukuni Shrines and I prayed for divine aid on my road to a new life. The radiant, awe-inspiring light of the divine mirror in the interior of the sacred places drives away the demon from every nook and cranny of my heart.

Sano's new patriotic spirit led him openly to support the war efforts, first against the Chinese Nationalists and then against the United States and Britain. He believed that every true Japanese must be a patriot, and, fervently hoping for victory, was "second to none in feeling anxious about losing the war." As early as his tenkō statement of 1933, he had set the stage for a prowar attitude by expressing the view that he would support "progressive" wars against traditional oppressors and imperialists. Adhering to this line, he conceived of the Chinese Nationalists as traditional oppressors, while the Western powers were imperialists. Apparently, the fact that the Japanese too were imperialists did not bother Sano, because he hoped somehow to convert the Japanese imperialistic character of the war into a revolutionary situation. For example, he wrote: "The aim was not war, it was revolution. It was my aim to create a condition leading to revolution through a sharpening of internal contradictions (food shortages, war

67. For example, see Sano Manabu, "Shina jihen ni yosu," Bungei shunjū, No. 13 (October 1937), pp. 231-234.
profiteering, and so on) caused by the war. However, the shallowness of such a strategy became evident to him only after the war. Reflecting on the whimsicalness of his revolutionary hopes during the war, Sano wrote:

I thought that the change from war to revolution was to be accomplished not through antiwar activity such as Lenin did, but through participation in the war. Thinking about this stance today, I see it as a risky kind of opportunism. . . . [But] even if my intention of exacerbating internal contradictions through war as a means of leading it to a revolution was a childish, subjective hope, I am not ashamed that it came from a revolutionary consciousness.

Sano and Nabeyama were both released from prison on October 2, 1943. While Sano was in prison, his mother, father-in-law, second elder brother, and one of his younger brothers-in-law had died. On the other hand, he now had about ten new nephews and nieces to meet. And so, on the night of his release from Kosuge, his elder brother and sister, uncles, wife and children, cousins, nephews, and nieces all gathered at his elder brother's house in the Koishimachi section of Tokyo to welcome him home at long last.

The euphoria of being released from prison and being home again with his loved ones was soon tempered by the reality that he must help out with the household expenses. At first he did some translating of English and German books, but four months later he became very ill with diabetes. He spent two months from June, 1944, in his elder brother's hospital in Kanda, and then in November went to recuperate at the hot

70. Ibid., p. 119.
spring spas in Kagoshima. He remained there until March, 1945, when he returned to Tokyo and experienced the devastating fire bombings of that city. For the next five months until the end of the war, Sano busied himself organizing his neighbors so that they would have some form of protection against starvation and against the constant air raids.

In what began as his "prison diary," Sano wrote a detailed account of these activities and illnesses from the time he was released from prison up to the end of the war. He had a specific reason for detailing his activities: he hoped to refute the JCP accusation that he had been sent to China during the war to work for the surrender of the Chinese Communists to the Japanese Army. Sano's facts have been corroborated by both Sano Hiroshi and Nabeyama Sadachika. Although Sano did support the war effort, he was not at all involved in any maneuverings in China. He was much too weak and emaciated from his prison ordeal to become involved in major activities after his release. It was only after the war that he could again play an active role in the socialist movement.

71. Private interview with Sano Hiroshi in Tokyō, February 19, 1977; and Nabeyama Sadachika, Watakushi wa kyōsantō o suteta. In fact, it was Nabeyama who went to China three times between February, 1944, and the end of the war, and there were many rumors that he was working with the Japanese Army authorities there. On the other hand, Nabeyama wrote that he was trying to work out an alliance between the Japanese military and the Chinese Communists to ensure a victory of the latter against the Nationalists. For the rumors that Nabeyama worked for the secret Cherry Organ (Sakura kikan) of the Army, see Makise Kikue, p. 103; for Nabeyama's side of the affair, see Nabeyama Sadachika, Watakushi wa kyōsantō o suteta, pp. 202-213.

72. Unfortunately, Beckmann only used the JCP account in his short biography of Sano; see Beckmann and Okubo Genji, p. 382.
CHAPTER 5

ONE-STATE SOCIALISM IN THE POSTWAR PERIOD

The twin calamities of Japan's first defeat at the end of World War II and the emperor's renunciation of his divinity severely jolted the psyche of the Japanese people. The popular feeling was that 2,600 years of Japanese history had been undone. In the gloomy atmosphere that enveloped Japan, only a few people remained optimistic and excited. One of them was Sano Manabu.

Sano was jubilant because he felt that Japan had finally entered a revolutionary period. He believed that the immediate postwar period would see changes on a scale and significance that would equal the other revolutionary eras in Japanese history—the Taika Reform (645), creation of military power by Minamoto Yoritomo (1180), and the Meiji Restoration (1868) periods. The Japanese should not despair, he wrote; instead, they should rejoice because the revolution had come:

The revolution is a panacea. The people who had reached a state of senility and corruption [under the old system] are rejuvenated by the revolution and have a new spiritual energy. Look at Russia, Imperial Russia, which was decaying, was overthrown by the 1917 Revolution and a socialist nation was newly created. Under the great leadership of Lenin and Stalin, it has gone through the struggles of its thirty year history and has now become a major power overflowing with vitality. Look at neighboring China. The 1911 Chinese Revolution overthrew the corrupt Ch'ing rule and under the leadership of Sun Yat-sen, Chiang K'ai-shek, and Mao Tse- tung, China has in half a century risen above its semicolonial, servile condition bearing the banner of democracy and nationalism [minzokushugi]. [Now] it has defeated Japanese imperialism and has arisen as a major Asian power.
Japan, in order to rid itself of internal decay, was defeated from the outside. Now the revolution has come. . . . Defeat in war did not stop the progress of the history of the Japanese people. The nation experienced great unhappiness because of the war defeat, but this experience has become a starting point of a new history.  

As evidence for the fortuitous situation in which Japan had fallen, Sano pointed to the fact that the conservative elements which had formerly held a monopoly of political power (the military, senior statesmen, nobility, big business, and the landlords) were in disgrace and, moreover, the rampant self-interest of the capitalist profit system and the spiritual emperor system were both crumbling. Now that these three major impediments to the socialist revolution were under attack, the Japanese people needed a new system which would bring prosperity and dignity to Japan and relieve the sufferings of the people. Sano's answer was again to propagandize his one-state socialism ideology.

The Emperor Institution

In plotting a strategy for the successful achievement of a socialist revolution, Sano reiterated many of the same themes that he had stressed in the prewar period. He continued to believe that a need existed for the emperor system in Japan. He acknowledged that the masses still had no emotional attachment to the emperor and that the emperor still served a useful purpose as a symbol of state representing national independence, not ultranationalism. Furthermore, the emperor embodied two basic concepts that Sano thought were essential to the Japanese spirit—ancestor worship and patriarchal respect. For these

1. Sano Manabu, Minzoku to shakaishugi, SMC, II, 3-4; originally published by Kyōdō shuppansha in 1946.
reasons, he opposed what he termed "petit-bourgeois" positions which called for the abolition of the emperor institution.²

Yet, Sano did not want to retain the prewar emperor system. In his opinion, this system contained too many defects for it to be of use to the socialist revolution. The worst defect, to his mind, was that the imperial institution had become wedded to the conservative forces of society. Whereas the Meiji emperor had represented the will of the productive masses, the Taishō and Shōwa emperors had become "class emperors" and "militaristic emperors" who were separated from the people and a source of immorality in that Japanese soldiers were allowed to commit many atrocities in the Shōwa emperor's name during World War II.³

Sano was also dissatisfied with the nature of the emperor system, itself. For example, he saw the theory of imperial divinity as promoting "extreme spiritualism" in the people which not only prevented their maturation as individuals, but also impeded scientific thinking. In addition, he criticized the Imperial Household for its extensive landholdings, the Court for its meddling in politics, and the principle of imperial detachment from political responsibility for its separation of the emperor from the people.

Sano's solution was to change the former militaristic and class emperor to a "popular emperor" or a "national emperor" so that the emperor system would become compatible with Japanese socialism. He

² The discussion on the emperor system is based on Sano Manabu, Tennōsei to shakaishugi, SMC, II, 381-393; originally published by Kyōdō shuppansha in 1946.
³ See Maruyama Masao, pp. 11-21, for an interesting interpretation of this phenomenon.
believed that this transformation could best be accomplished by removing the feudalistic mechanisms from the system, treating the emperor as a person instead of a god, reducing the emperor's powers (especially in decisions involving war and peace), and removing the political remnants of the Court to ensure that the emperor would be an organ representing the will of the masses. Sano went on to state that the Shōwa emperor should abdicate, and that the next emperor should become a socialist. This step was essential to his plan since, in the process of moving the state from a period of bourgeois-democracy to one of socialism, "the power of the people becomes more and more distinct. The emperor, as their organ of power, becomes a guarantor of socialism and must endeavor to lead the state in this direction... This is the reason for sustaining the Imperial Household."⁴ According to Sano's way of thinking, once the socialist emperor had guided the nation into socialism, he would have completed his historical role as a political leader and could henceforth concentrate solely on religious affairs in Ise. However, Sano was not at all clear on how this fanciful scheme would actually be achieved.

**National Vanguard Party**

In addition to his espousal of the emperor system in the post-war period, Sano also continued to stress the need for a bourgeois-democratic and socialist revolution in Japan. Although many feudal elements had been destroyed in the war, Sano thought that Japan could not fully progress unless "the remaining deep roots of feudalistic

---

influence which are standing in the path of political and economic progress are completely destroyed." In order to complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution and bring the socialist revolution to Japan, he emphasized that the establishment and leadership of a national vanguard party was essential.

In keeping with his belief that "people" were the most important elements in society, Sano stated that a national vanguard party must be "a party of the progressive class." The term "progressive class" did not connote a restrictive, Marxian class category such as the proletariat, but instead included all productive masses, such as industrial and white-collar workers, students, and middle and lower class housewives. With such a mass base, the party could undertake its major function of moving the country away from policies founded on the old militarism, imperial centrism, and military discipline, and could instill in the nation a spirit of pacifism, "popular centrism" and individual consciousness.

In order for the national vanguard party to move Japan out of the bourgeois-democratic stage and into the socialist stage of history, Sano stressed that the party must espouse revolutionary political, economic, and social policies. Generally, his postwar policies for a socialist Japan were the same as the policies he had set forth during his Bolshevist period in the late 1920s; that is, he continued to urge

6. Ibid., pp. 70-90.
7. For a detailed outline of these policies, see Appendix E.
the nationalization of major industrial, transportation, and banking organs, the collectivization of all land, and the institutionalization of progressive labor and social laws as well as internationalist policies.

However, there were a number of salient differences between Sano's 1946 and 1930 socialist policies. The most noticeable difference was his substitution of the concept of the "productive masses" for his previous emphasis on the "proletariat," a change which was in keeping with his post-tenkō pronouncements on the "people." In fact, Sano was now hoping to establish a united front of all democratic groups and individuals who were not affiliated with any political party. The ultimate aim of the front was to win this group over to his national vanguard party.

Sano's emphasis on democratic groups was tied to his continuing hatred of international communism. Whereas "democracy" connoted a free and open society to him, "communism" meant "autocracy" and characteristics such as a tendency to resort to slander in public opinion organs, an amoral thirst for power, involvement in Machiavellian plots and deceptions, and espousal of primitive Marxian world views based on

8. Sano's espousal of a democratic united front owed much to Yamakawa's prewar notion of a united front (to'itsu sensen). However, after the war, Yamakawa called for a democratic people's front which would include the JCP, while Sano vehemently refused to allow the JCP to enter his "national salvation united front" (kyūkoku to'itsu sensen). See Sano Manabu, Minzoku to minshushugi, SMC, II, 164; originally published by Kyūshū shobō in 1947.
historical materialism, class selfishness, and ideological internationalism.\(^9\) His fear and dislike of both international communism and the JCP reached an emotional peak with the outbreak of the Korean War.

In the years between the end of World War II and the beginning of the Korean War, Sano had advocated total disarmament for Japan. He thought that Japan had a chance to make its mark on world history by "charging ahead of the other [nations] in achieving real democracy, embracing socialism and showing itself to be a peaceful state possessing the highest level of morality without need of arms."\(^{10}\) He believed that only a state which throws away its own armaments has the right to turn to the great powers and request them to do the same. This dream of an unarmed Japan turned into a nightmare with the outbreak of hostilities leading to the Korean War, for Sano saw this war in terms of Soviet expansion. Fearful of the possible ramifications of the war, he wrote: "International communism, led by the Soviet Union, has as its main goal the capture of Germany in the West and Japan in the East East."\(^{11}\)

Sano retraced the emergence of a Soviet expansionist policy to the experience of World War II which taught Stalin to rely heavily on military might. This war experience combined with Stalin's innate feeling of "narrow-minded nationalism" to produce an overall change from

---

9. See Sano Manabu, Rōdōsha to seitō, SMC, II, pp. 529-552; originally published by Rōdō shuppansha in 1948; Sano Manabu, "Kyōsanshugi to seinen (1952)," SMC, I, 983-984; and Sano Manabu, "Roshia kakumei · Reninshugi · kyōsantō (1948)," SMC, I, 621.


Leninist communism to Stalinist imperialism. As examples of Stalinist imperialism, Sano cited Russia's satellization of Eastern Europe, attempts at sabotage in both Western Europe and Asia, and domination of China to the extent of making it a puppet. But what irked Sano the most was what he saw as Stalin's effort to make Japan a satellite of the Soviet Union. To Sano, Stalin's action represented a "vindication of Russia's loss in the Russo-Japanese War." The process began with Stalin's effort to gain a foothold in Hokkaido first at the Yalta Conference and then again during the Allied Occupation. Since both of these efforts had been thwarted, Sano was convinced that Stalin was employing a different tactic aimed at encircling Japan by stationing military garrisons in Vladivostok, North Korea, Manchuria, Sakhalin, and the Kurile Islands. In these circumstances, Sano could not help but castigate anyone who would deal with the JCP or be drawn to international communism, for, in his words, "communism is now not the goal, but only the means of an expansionist political policy."

To protect and defend Japan from the Russian menace, Sano rejected his former notion of "a country without arms," and instead advocated what he termed "a progressive rearmament view"—a self-defense militia based on socialism:

Independence requires a fixed self-defense armed might. As long as the armed might of the state is utilized correctly, it is a

12. Ibid., p. 853.
13. Ibid., p. 878.
15. Ibid., p. 853.
guarantor of peace. . . in order for Japan to regain its spiritual health, a standing self-defensive rearmed [force] is necessary. The new force should not have an imperialistic character like the former military, nor should it be an Army composed of mercenaries from another country [United States]. It must protect the freedom, independence and honor of the fatherland.16

To Sano, it was essential that the national militia possess a social consciousness; that is, the goal was to create a democratic army by eliminating the feudal influences which had characterized the old military (such as its connection to the emperor system) and by basing the militia on the workers and peasants.17

As for the guiding principles of the national militia, Sano stressed that war must be avoided as much as possible, but if it did break out, it was the duty of the militia to wage a defensive war in order to protect the homeland. He also urged moral support for all Asian wars of independence and advanced the view of resolving conflicts through a democratic peace founded on the principles of no annexation and no indemnities. Finally, as the ultimate position which underscored his hatred of Russia, Sano warned that if a war breaks out between the United States and the Soviet Union, Japan should side with the democratic camp (the former).18 Again, his reason for siding against the socialist side was that he feared Russian expansionism and believed that international communism was the greatest threat to world peace.19

17. Ibid., pp. 872-873.
19. For a further explanation of this point, see Sano Manabu, Minzoku to kaikyū, SMC, II, 255; originally published by Rōdō jihōsha in 1949.
Sano not only preached that Japan should side with America against Russia, but also urged Japan to utilize American capital and technology in the rebuilding of Japan's industries which were destroyed during the war. He realized that Japan had no alternative but to import capital and know-how from foreign countries in order to manufacture products of high quality for export to the advanced nations. Foreign exchange earnings were vital to the procurement of necessities for the people. Since the Japanese economy, for better or worse, had been linked to the American economy for a fairly long time, and since the United States possessed the highest standard of technology in the world, Sano theorized that it was only appropriate that Japan should take advantage of American capital and technology in order to revive the country. 20

One last point should be mentioned concerning Sano's 1946 policies for a socialist Japan—his notion of an East Asian bloc. Throughout his life as an activist, he had constantly advocated the formation of a political-social-economic union of the neighboring East Asian countries (Japan, China, and Korea). 21 However, it was during the postwar era that he viewed its chances as being most propitious since, as he put it: "While Japan was a militaristic nation, it could not demonstrate good will towards the Chinese, Korean, and Southeast Asian peoples. Now that we have fallen to a fourth-rate country, we have the


21. Sano's vision encompassed a system such as the present European Economic Community (EEC).
objective basis for having a brotherly relationship with them." Sano thought that the creation of such a socialist bloc was imperative, for all these nations needed to pool their energies in order to thwart the two common enemies of Asia—finance capitalist imperialism and aggressive communism.

The Final Years

In an attempt to put his policies into action, Sano founded the Labor-Farmer Vanguard party (Rōnō Zen'eitō) in August, 1946, and became its chairman. With him in this venture were such former one-state socialists as Sano Hiroshi, Kazama Jōkichi, Katayama Mineto, Nozaki Seiji, Gengōromaro (now Koga) Yoshiharu, Amamori Tokusaburō, Ishida Kyōzō (an uncle of Sano's through Sano's second daughter's marriage) and Takeuchi Bunji. The Labor-Farmer Vanguard party operated under the banner of "one-state socialism under the emperor system." Its aims were to espouse a democratic form of socialism (as opposed to Russian "totalitarian" socialism), to bring democratization to the labor union movement, and to oppose communism. In an answer to those who criticized his anticommmunist position as conservative, Sano explained:

There are two roads taken by the anticommmunist movement. The first is anticommmunism from a conservative standpoint; that is, trying to maintain capitalism at any cost. This viewpoint

22. Sano Manabu, Minzoku to shakaishugi, p. 20.


24. Kokumin hyōron, p. 80; and Kazama Jōkichi, Zassō no gotoku, p. 170. Notably absent from this group was Nabeyama, who wanted no part of any political activity at this time. See Nabeyama Sadachika, "Yūfun no shisōka," p. 9.
rejects not only communism, but all types of socialism, and is conservative in endeavoring to hold back the great flow of history which must move from capitalism to socialism. The second road is anticommunism which opposes Russian autocracy in order to achieve a socialism based on democracy. This is a progressive standpoint, for it not only opposes the communist movement, but also opposes capitalism. . . .

However, when the new party failed to gain public acceptance, Sano concluded that its chief defect was its premature emergence. As with his prewar one-state socialism ideology, he believed that the people were not ready for his political ideas since they had no consciousness of what socialism really meant. The common man either feared socialism because he hated communism, or he was "brainwashed" into thinking that communism was the only "true" form of socialism and thus opposed any adaptations of it. Sano Hiroshi succinctly summed up this climate in a 1977 interview:

The Japanese nation lacked a socialist tradition and social consciousness. The people did not know the differences between the various types of socialism—democratic socialism and communist socialism. . . . The newspapers either called you a brave communist or a [communist] traitor. They could not understand what we were trying to do; that is, have a beneficial type of socialism, a democratic socialism applicable to Japan.26

In order to publicize better his one-state socialist theories, Sano decided to establish a private research organization. Toward the end of 1946 he organized the Sano Seiji Kenkyūjo (Sano Institute for Political Research), which was reorganized in July, 1947, and expanded to form the Nihon Seiji Keizai Kenkyūjo (Japanese Institute for

25. Sano Manabu, Minzoku to kaikyū, p. 255.

Political and Economic Research). The stated goals of the institute were to establish the principles of Japanese socialism, to formulate immediate policies for rebuilding Japan, and to bring together new political forces. Because of the long hours that he was spending at the research institute, Sano felt that it would be impossible for him to continue as chairman of the party. Sadly, he resigned the chairmanship of the Labor-Farmer Vanguard party in early 1947, although he viewed his party retirement as only a temporary one. In such a vein he lamented: "My retirement from a practical political movement may have been shameful, but I do not intend to stay away for long." Yet, he would never again become directly involved in a political party. For the last five years of his life, the closest he came to the political arena was through his policy for reorganizing the Japanese Socialist party (Nihon Shakaitō).

Sano had never become a member of the Socialist party because he viewed its pre- and postwar policies as nonrevolutionary, backward-looking, and lethargic. However, he was attracted to it despite these drawbacks. His dream of a revamped national vanguard party had quickly faded after the failure of the Labor-Farmer Vanguard party, and so he searched for an established party which was based on socialism but, at the same time, was wary of international communism. The Socialist party fit his needs perfectly for, in spite of its faults, it had a tradition of honesty, democracy, and unity with the people. Thus, Sano stressed

27. Sano Manabu, Gokuchūki, p. 123.

28. This analysis is based on Sano Manabu, "Tōyōteki shakaishugi no kōsō," pp. 1056-1978.
that the Socialist party could take the place of a national vanguard party if it developed the following policies: democratic socialism (socialism based on democracy, not autocracy such as the JCP); a mass party organization with a substructure centering around workshops; connections with other mass organizations and with the Socialist International; opposition to both the JCP and bourgeois parties; and development of an Asian, as opposed to Western, orientation.

Sano's last plea for an Asian orientation represented a theme which was the culmination of his long process of indigenizing Western socialism. Whereas his 1933 tenkō statement laid the foundation for his one-state socialist modification of Marxism-Leninism, and his 1938 critique of historical materialism refined one-state socialism by fusing what he considered to be the most appropriate aspects of Marxism-Leninism to the Japanese world view, Sano now tried to broaden the meaning and application of one-state socialism to include all of East Asia. To this end, in the late 1940s he renamed his one-state socialism ideology "East Asian socialism" (Tōyōteki shakaishugi), a change which was consonant with his lifelong dream of creating an East Asian union of socialist nations.

Sano endeavored in his new East Asian socialism scheme to combine the best aspects of the Western world view with those of the Asian world view. For example, he praised the Western practices of scientific inquiry, legal codes, and personal freedom as elements essential to the development of a socialism based on democracy. 29

29. Ibid., pp. 940-944.
reasoned that these practices were missing in Asia and should be incorporated into the Asian world view which stressed the link between man and nature, the cooperative society and morality as the essence of life. Thus by combining in the Asian world view not only the principles of Western socialism, but also the essential elements which allowed socialism to be developed there, Sano theorized that socialism would finally become applicable to Japan as well as East Asia. As he aptly stated:

We are East Asians and Japanese, and our socialism must be applicable to our area—East Asia and Japan. Since West European socialist thought was created and adopted to the unique social conditions of the West European peoples, it is impossible to try to import it wholly as is. Above all, it is important to Easternize and Japanize West European socialist principles.  

Sano's preoccupation with East Asian socialism attracted diverse groups to the Japanese Institute for Political and Economic Research. At one end of the ideological spectrum was Mitamura Shiro and his Democratic Worker's Association (Minshu Rōdōsha Kyōkai).  

Somewhere in the middle was a "right wing" socialist group called the League for Democratic Socialism (Minshu Shakaishugi Renmei) which numbered among its ranks such theorists as Hirano Rikizō, Miyake Shōichi, and Nishio Suehiro. At the other end of the spectrum were chauvinists such as Akamatsu Katsumaro who were drawn not by Sano's revolutionary and socialist system, but by his stress on Japanese (Asian) culture and

31. Mitamura Shiro, p. 70.  
32. Takabatake Michitoshi, p. 199 n. 88.
Sano never really felt completely at ease with this last group.

While Sano was working at the Sano Institute for Political Research, he was offered a lectureship at Waseda University's Department of Commercial Science. Professor Ijichi Junsei, chairman of the department, had been impressed by Sano's qualities as a teacher before the war, and in April, 1946, succeeded in convincing him to return in order to resume his lectures on the history of economic thought and economic theory. These lectures were so well received that one professor was led to comment that not only did students flock to Sano's lectures but they also became economics majors because of him. In 1947 Sano decided to hand in his resignation because he did not want to involve the university in the incessant attacks that the JCP had begun to unleash against him (for example, see page 124). However, he was so popular that numerous students petitioned for his return. Because he was so heartened by the students' reaction, he decided to remain at both Waseda and Senshu University Labor School, where he gave lectures on political and economic history, until January, 1953, when he was hospitalized in Tokyo with cancer of the liver. Sano's days as

33. For example, Sano argued that socialism in Japan emerged from Buddhist traditions established by Shinran and others. See his "Bukkyō to shakaishugi (1950)," SMC, III, 481-715.

34. Nakamura Kikuo, p. 75.

35. Kokumin hyōron, p. 46.

36. See the introduction to Sano Manabu and Nabeyama Sadachika, p. 4.
as an activist for Japanese socialism finally ended when he passed away at the hospital two months later at the age of 61.

In summary, Sano's effort to indigenize Marxism-Leninism was marked by three phases. His first attempt to modify socialism occurred in 1933 when he denounced the JCP and the Comintern because he found their tactics inappropriate for Japan. At this initial stage he sought only to change certain aspects of Marxism-Leninism in order to make it more compatible with Japanese nationalism. His second attempt to revise Marxism occurred in 1938 after he immersed himself in the study of the Japanese and Asian world view. His research led him to the conclusion that the Marxist-Leninist concepts of materialistic productive power, the law of the dialectic, class categories, and the necessity of a vanguard were valid and useful in the Japanese context, but that the principles of economic determinism and class supremacy were not needed because they detracted from the role of the "people" and human activism as important elements in history. Finally, Sano's third attempt to assimilate Marxism took place after Japan's defeat in World War II when he endeavored to combine the "best" aspects of the Western world view with the Asian world view in order to inculcate into the people the elements which he believed were essential for the successful development of a socialist ideology. He believed that socialism would become applicable to Japan, as well as East Asia, only if its concepts were harmonious with the world view of the people of the host country.

Thus, in plotting Sano's commitment to the lower class against his increasing commitment to Japanese nationalism, it becomes apparent
that his emphasis on nationalist symbols did not detract from his socialist orientation:

After he rejected Comintern internationalism (point A) with his tenkō in 1933, he moved steadily toward an ideology which mixed elements of Japanese nationalism with socialism (point B). At no time did he waver in his dedication to the lower class, and his life was a testament to the effort he expended in pursuit of his goal of eradicating class inequality in Japan.
PART II

OTHER PROMINENT JAPANESE ADAPTATIONS OF SOCIALISM
CHAPTER 6

AKAMATSU KATSUMARO

When Sano Manabu was chairman of the JCP in the late 1920s, he attacked all those who deviated from Comintern dictates as espousing an Akamatsu Katsumaro-type ideology of utopian socialism wedded to Japanese nationalism. Then, after Sano tenkōed and created his ideology of one-state socialism, he himself was criticized for having Akamatsu-type tendencies. Why did Akamatsu's name have such bad connotations to those in the Japanese socialist movement, and how could someone like Akamatsu, who at one time was a leader of the JCP, have fallen into such low esteem? The answer lies in the modifications that Akamatsu made to socialism. His constant vacillations and confusion of "isms" vividly contrasts with Sano's effort and illustrates both the diversity and limitations of attempting to reconcile the ideologies of nationalism and socialism in Japan.

Akamatsu Katsumaro was born in Tokuyama City in Yamaguchi Prefecture in 1894. He was the fourth son of six children in a very successful family. He led a normal childhood until middle school when

---

1. His grandfather occupied an influential position in the Nishi Honganji Buddhist temple in Kyoto, and both Katsumaro and his brothers and sister were considered to be child prodigies; his three older brothers became professors of literature, medicine, and technology, respectively; his sister became an activist in the Sōdōmei on behalf of women's rights; and his younger brother, trained under Kawakami Hajime at Kyoto Imperial University, became a leader in the
he mobilized his classmates in a strike, demanding that the principal "hand over the right of self-government to the students." As punishment for his part in the strike Akamatsu was expelled, and he finished the remainder of his middle school education at a technical school. From there he went to the Third Higher School in Kyoto and finally concluded his education by attending Tokyo Imperial University.

It was as a university student that Akamatsu became drawn to the socialist movement. Inspired by the lectures on law and politics given by his professor, Yoshino Sakuzō (he later married Yoshino's daughter, Akiko), he threw himself into the student movement. Reminiscing about the days when he and Asō Hisashi founded the Shinjinkai, he wrote: "In our dorms, student waiting-rooms at the university, or in cafes in Hongō, we talked about the Rice Riots, the Russian Revolution, the German Revolution, the Socialist League (Shakai Dōmei) strikes, democracy, and socialism." In his determination to take some action in this "new age," he participated in Asō Hishashi's Wednesday Society and organized workers in the Kameido section of Tokyo. Perhaps his exuberant feeling toward the socialist movement was best expressed in his draft of the Shinjinkai's guiding principles: "(1) We will collaborate in the new thrust towards man's liberation which is a


2. Ibid., p. 66.

3. Akamatsu Katsumaro, Tenkanki no Nihon shakai undō (Tokyo: Köseikaku shoten, 1926), p. 188.
worldwide cultural trend and will endeavor to promote it; and (2) we will follow the rational reconstruction movement of modern Japan."\(^4\)

After graduating from Tokyo Imperial University in 1919, Akamatsu worked as chief editor for the magazine Emancipation (Kaihō) and shortly thereafter was employed by the Oriental Economist (Tōyō keizai shimpo). In 1921 he, Asō Hisashi, and Tanahashi Kotora joined the Sōdōmei; he was appointed political section chief. This new position gave him his start as a politician, theoretician, and social movement organizer. Then in 1922, he became a full-fledged communist when he joined the JCP and brought along such future leaders of the Party as Nosaka Sanzō, Watanabe Masanosuke, Nabeyama Sadachika, Kokuryō Goichirō, Taniguchi Zentarō, Sugiura Keiichi, and Nakamura Yoshiaki.\(^5\)

As early as 1922, however, there were signs that Akamatsu was not fully committed to communism. Like Sano Manabu, Nabeyama Sadachika, and many of the other communists who joined the first JCP, he entered the Party with some residual feelings for the emperor and Japanese nationalism. For example, his subconscious love for the emperor was illustrated by an incident which occurred during his student days. When the police dispersed a certain demonstration for universal suffrage in which he participated, instead of feeling anger against the emperor (as the titular head of government), he walked over to the Imperial Palace

---


5. Ibid., p. 79.
Plaza and shouted the nationalistic phrase "Tennō heika banzai!" (Long Live the Emperor!) three times. Thus, Akamatsu did not experience any contradictions in professing allegiance to both the emperor and the working class. In fact, his pride in Japanese culture was such that he extolled the virtues of Japan in his article "Nation and Morality" which was published in the Shinjinkai journal Pioneer in 1920:

We have now reached a time when our pride in being a strong nation is gradually being abandoned. The glory of our ancestral land does not exist in the material quantity of our colonies, our vested rights, or our military preparations, and the time has come when we must wake up to the fact that it does exist in the spiritual fervor of our superior cultural creativity which must contribute to the whole world.

One final point suggests that Akamatsu was not even committed to some of the crucial elements of communist theory. In an article written in 1919 for the Shinjinkai journal Democracy, he stated: "We should not solely believe Marx's concept of historical materialism, but should be inspired by the moralistic lives of those who died for the great principle of popular liberation [whatever their beliefs]." In other words, he elevated human consciousness to a higher level than Marxism. These three examples suggest that Akamatsu's values were rooted in Japanese customs and institutions; they also hint at the difficulty he would encounter in submitting to Comintern dictates and to the attempt to impose Russian solutions on the problems of the Japanese society.

6. Ibid., p. 78.
7. Quoted in ibid., p. 80.
Akamatsu remained in the JCP until the end of 1923. He wrote his Marxist History of the Socialist Revolution (Shakai kakumei shiron) in 1922 and even rose to a top leadership position in the JCP after the widespread arrest of communists in the First JCP Incident of June, 1923. Then, seeing the extreme reaction of the masses who murdered known leftists in Tokyo after the great earthquake of September, 1923, he decided that the workers were not yet ready for a communist party in Japan. Thus, he began calling for the dissolution of the JCP, and in Nabeyama Sadachika's words, "like たofu [bean curd] when cut, the Party fell apart." 9

Akamatsu's rejection of Marxism illustrates a recurring theme in his belief system: a fickleness with regard to ideologies. Basically, he was searching for an appropriate path which would allow for an improvement in the conditions of the lower class. He was attracted to Marxism because it "promised" such an end. Yet, his grasp of Marxist doctrines appears tenuous at best, for as soon as it became evident to him that the JCP had to change its tactics in order to organize the masses more efficiently, he decided that the whole ideology had to be abandoned. In other words, Akamatsu was establishing a precedent for changing the ends whenever there was a problem with the means. After abandoning communism, the different ends that he espoused were "scientific Japanism" (1924-1931), national socialism (1932-1933), "totalitarian Japanism" (1933-1945), and finally "East Asianism" (1945-1955). Such vacillation has caused some scholars to characterize his

political thoughts as "following in the wake of circumstances" \[\text{jōkyō tsuizuishugi}\],\(^{10}\) "invenerate opportunism"\(^{11}\) or simply "flickering like a flame in the wind."\(^{12}\) However, one factor remained constant in all this movement—his quest for a reform method consonant with the uniqueness of the Japanese situation.

The primary reason why Akamatsu left the JCP was that he believed each country had its own unique problems and that the Comintern's universal solutions were not adequate. As an example, he showed how the particular pattern of growth of capitalism in Japan dictated the need for a unique solution to Japan's problems. Capitalism had emerged in Japan as a result of the Meiji government's decision to counter Western imperialism by encouraging, and profiting from, a spirit of nationalism under the slogan, "rich nation, strong arms." Industrialization was promoted by the government as a means to support nationalist ends. Consequently, the capitalist characteristics of sanctity of ownership and bourgeois individualism were stunted, forcing the capitalist class into collusion with the government and compromise with feudal influences—the aristocracy, bureaucracy, and military.\(^ {13}\)

Akamatsu theorized that under these circumstances an active bourgeois class could not develop, as it had in Europe, to champion

---

10. Hanzawa Hiroshi and Sanuki Sōetsu, p. 76.


13. For Akamatsu's analysis of class formation in a capitalist society, see Akamatsu Katsumaro, Musan kaikyū no seiji kōdō (Tokyo: Kagaku shiso fukyūkai, 1924), pp. 51-63.
liberalism and defeat autocracy. Therefore, liberalism, an ideology which meant to him such popular rights as universal suffrage, free speech, and so on, did not emerge naturally from the clash of social classes, but entered from the outside, a foreign import, after World War I and the Russian Revolution. Even then, the established bourgeois parties refused to embrace liberalism because they were composed essentially of "feudalistic" elements which were threatened by the liberal popular rights. Thus, it was up to the proletariat to organize its own political party which would fully comprehend the unique circumstances that had contributed to the growth of Japanese capitalism. Such a party would be able to advance the interests of the lower class through parliamentary action and gradually take control of the government. Only when the party has obtained sufficient political power should it switch tactics and push for such socialist programs as nationalization of major industry and collectivization of large landholdings.14

As a guiding principle for the proletarian political party that he envisioned, Akamatsu propounded an ideology of "scientific Japanism." He hoped to convey by this term a combination of scientific socialism and Japanese nationalism; that is, he believed that a successful socialist strategy could be conceived by taking full account of the individual nation as well as the universal law of social progress. In his view, the socialist movement must first start with a knowledge and love of Japan because if Japanese socialists base their movement on

---

foreign models and foreign dictates, they will become isolated from Japanese reality:

Both the Russian Revolution and the British labor movement are useless in indirectly setting a guiding course for the Japanese socialist movement. Both these examples must be seen as only secondary source material for the socialist movement here. Faulty analogies and dogmatism are the enemies of the scientific spirit. The time has come to move from a superstitious Japanism to a corresponding internationalism and, moreover, to a scientific Japanism. There is a proverb which says that beneath the lighthouse is darkness, and to light [the ground] beneath our own feet we need to change the direction of our frivolous ideological socialism.¹⁵

Yet, he cautioned that certain principles of Marxism-Leninism must be retained, such as international brotherhood and the Marxian concept of historical stages and the movement of history. Thus, as a means for summing up the essence of his scientific Japanism ideology, he wrote:

The actual course of the movement from capitalism to socialism differs according to the capitalistic development of each country and must differ according to the peculiar nature of each country. . . . We know Japan as well as we know the universal law of social evolution. The real scientific proletarian class policy in Japan must develop out of this knowledge.¹⁶

In Akamatsu's pursuit of a proletarian political party capable of drawing up realistic policies regarding Japan's unique form of capitalism and hence bringing liberalism and then socialism to Japan, he was first attracted to the Worker-Farmer party (Rōdō-Nōmintō), and then when this party started working with communist elements in 1926, he joined the Social Democratic party (Shakai Minshutō). In Akamatsu's


¹⁶. Hanzawa Hiroshi and Sanuki Sōetsu, p. 90.
political belief system, the term "social democracy" was synonymous with "realism" and "pragmatism," and he spent the years between 1924 and the Manchurian Incident (1931) defending this political creed against communism.

Akamatsu stressed that social democracy encompassed three main elements which made it applicable to the needs and reality of Japan. The first was the espousal of liberalism and the acquisition of such liberal rights as universal suffrage, and freedom of speech, assembly, and association. By making use of these rights, the masses could organize to oppose the bourgeoisie. He believed that the best method for achieving these rights would be to organize the workers at the grass root level into labor unions. However, in 1925, out of four million Japanese workers, only twenty thousand were organized into twenty-one unions. Akamatsu blamed the weak state of the labor union movement on the "infantile radicalism" of the JCP which scared away many workers. Labor leaders should concentrate on the problems that directly affected the lives of the apathetic masses, he urged, and should only gradually move beyond the status of a "study group" to publicize higher-level Marxist theories.

The second major element in social democracy was the promotion of such "realistic" economic policies as the abolition of private profit in favor of "public interest" organs—public ownership of capital, nationalization of large and essential enterprises, and

17. Akamatsu Katsumaro, *Tenkanki no Nihon shakai undō*, p. 74
18. Ibid., p. 48.
collectivization of land. However, Akamatsu thought that it was unnecessary to nationalize all property and capital. For example, he wrote: "Socialists who believe that they must try to nationalize everything are making a big mistake. . . . A private property system can be maintained to a certain extent in a socialist society." He had faith that once a socialist organization developed, the people would see that it was more beneficial for them to join cooperatives, and gradually their interest in private property would decline.

The third and last important element of social democracy, according to Akamatsu, was the one least compatible with the socialism preached by the Comintern—nationalism. He warned that the socialist movement should remain loyal to the emperor and to kokutai for emotional as well as practical reasons. He believed that the acquisition of democracy in Japan did not hinge on overthrowing the emperor as the 1927 Theses preached, and to this end he wrote: "We have no objection to the acquisition of democracy, but is it essential that we must espouse the 'revolutionizing of kokutai' as its main element?" In fact, he claimed that the JCP had so isolated itself from the masses by advocating the abolition of the emperor system that, when the mass arrests of the JCP members occurred during the March 15, 1928, Incident, "the masses probably did not feel righteous indignation"; Akamatsu added that "even though the government's propaganda


20. Hanzawa Hiroshi and Sanuki Sōetsu, p. 79.
[concerning the incident] is treasonous, it can report to the emperor that it performed a meritorious deed [because of the JCP slogan].”21

Akamatsu's attraction to a social democratic ideology which incorporated liberal, social, and national elements in its reform scheme also highlighted what he considered to be the basic difference between the communists and the social democrats: that is, a strategy drawn up by theorists as opposed to pragmatists.22 The theorists were those who believed that since Russia had undergone a successful revolution, world revolution could not be far behind. In support of their contention, they theorized that world capitalism was headed toward bankruptcy. Communists were active in Germany, France, and many other European countries, while in Japan, capitalism had come to a standstill and a stable communist vanguard had been formed. Thus, following the lines of the Comintern and Profintern, they put primary emphasis on the international movement and only secondary emphasis on Japan's socialist movement.

To Akamatsu, it was clear that although the fundamental aims of the theorists were laudable, their tactics and strategies were inappropriate for Japan in that "they know of the world, but not of Japan."23 He believed that their adherence to the Comintern line had caused them to espouse a formalistic struggle divorced from real life,

21. Ibid., p. 78.

22. Whereas the communists saw the split in terms of communists versus reformers.

employ Machiavellian tactics to disrupt the proletarian front, deny democracy and democratic means, promote bureaucratism which was turning the dictatorship of the proletariat into a dictatorship of the Party, and elevate Marxism-Leninism to a point where it was sacred, absolute, and above reproach. Moreover, Akamatsu criticized the Comintern for pretending to be a democratic, international group when in reality it was an organ controlled by the Russian Communist Party. "The Comintern's policies," he wrote, "are extremely lacking and inaccurate in their knowledge of the unique political, economic, social, and historical conditions of each country and as a result of this, their policies have fallen into extreme ideological standardization."  

Opposed to the theorists (communists) were the pragmatists who advocated "realistic" policies that took into account the unique circumstances of the Japanese form of state and class struggle. In Akamatsu's opinion, their practical politics was more capable of adapting the universal formulas and abstract theories of scientific socialism to the particular course followed by each country. Akamatsu believed, with Lenin, that theory and fact should always be united, for "the value of theory is judged by its practice. Theory which is separated from practical results, even if it is well-organized, does not have any value as a leading principle. To study theory for theory's


25. Ibid., p. 42.

sake is to be addicted to ideological entertainment and is worthless for the socialist movement."\textsuperscript{27}

Akamatsu retained his commitment to social democracy and liberalism until the Manchurian Incident and its aftermath caused him to reevaluate his positions. In the heightened crisis atmosphere of 1931-1932, he worried that the Japanese nation was on the brink of disaster: he believed that internally, the pervasive anticapitalist atmosphere was encouraging chaos, and that externally, Anglo-American imperialism, through the League of Nations, was trying to deny Japan her right to a self-sufficient national economy. Therefore Akamatsu decided that it was time for a new movement in Japan, a movement which would be centered on both nationalism and socialism.

To Akamatsu, his new ideology of national socialism had evolved quite naturally from his former espousal of scientific Japanism.\textsuperscript{28} The only difference lay in his increased emphasis on nationalism, as can be seen in the following statement:

\begin{quote}
The socialist movement must be a patriotic movement, and a patriotic movement must be a socialist movement. . . . Our patriotic movement must not protect the capitalist state. The capitalist state has already become harmful and useless to the national culture. Patriots must be socialists, and socialists must be patriots.\textsuperscript{29}
\end{quote}

After the Manchurian Incident, Akamatsu's conception of socialism underwent a change. Instead of denoting such principles as

\textsuperscript{27} Akamatsu Katsumaro, \textit{Kaihō undo no shido riron}, p. 9.

\textsuperscript{28} Akamatsu Katsumaro, "Kagakuteki Nipponshugi kara suppatsu shite," \textit{Kaizo} (December 1931), p. 72.

\textsuperscript{29} Akamatsu Katsumaro, \textit{Shinkokumin undo no kicho} (Tokyo: Banrikaku, 1932), p. 73.
international brotherhood and the movement of Marxian historical stages (two elements of socialism that he believed in during his social democratic period), now socialism only meant a vague restructuring of society on behalf of the poor. Such a conception of socialism can be seen in his drawing on the historical precedent of the Taika Reform of 645 to legitimize his contemporary socialist reforms.

In his unconventional interpretation of the Taika Reform period, he theorized that a socialistic reform took place since the special privileges of the old nobility had been removed and stability had been brought into the people's lives through the ideal of a holistic nation based on the principle of "all the people and one leader" (ikkun-banmin). By contrast, during the Shōwa period, the zaibatsu and political parties had intervened between the emperor and his subjects, monopolized wealth, and abused their special privileges. As a result, Japan was now confronted by a national crisis calling for another resolute enforcement of "socialism" similar to the Taika Reform period. 30

From Akamatsu's use of the Taika Reform example, it becomes abundantly clear that socialism and nationalism were now inexorably linked in that socialism connoted an anticapitalist reconstruction of society that would result in the enhancement of the kokutai principle. He believed that the needs of the Japanese masses would somehow be met if only the emperor could be reunited with the people as had been done in the Taika period. The achievement of the holistic nation was now

30. Takagi Ikurō, p. 177.
the goal, not necessarily socialism per se. With this end in mind, he wrote: "Our holistic nation is a coordinated family. The emperor is the head of this coordinated family and is its representative. This kokutai principle is the foundation of that national spirit which has constantly been present in the lives of the people from time immemorial."  

In line with his new emphasis on nationalism, Akamatsu incorporated two additional elements into his belief system at this time. The first was an affirmation of imperialistic conquest. His support for the Manchurian Incident was based on nationalistic as well as strategic considerations. On some occasions he stressed Manchuria's strategic value as a supplier of Japan's much needed raw materials and proposed the creation of a "socialist bloc" that would integrate the economies of Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Manchuria (and later, China, India, and the Philippines). At other times he displayed a nationalism that bordered on chauvinism when he made statements to the effect that "imperialism is the nationalism of strong peoples and anti-imperialism is the nationalism of weak peoples" or that "there is no law that says that we must always live an undernourished life for the sake of world peace."

31. Hanzawa Hiroshi and Sanuki Sōetsu, pp. 78-79.
32. Akamatsu Katsumaro, Shinkokumin undō no kichō, p. 54.
34. Quoted in Takagi Ikurō, p. 178.
The second new element in Akamatsu's belief system was a budding attraction to fascism. The fascist emphasis on national consciousness and mass demonstrations was most appealing to him. Disenchanted with parliamentary government, he applauded the fascist method through which history was created by the strong rulers of the street, not the "effete" rulers of the Diet. However, he criticized the European fascists for allying with capitalism and the middle class. Thus he concluded that "where Marxism fails to incorporate nationalism, fascism incorporates it; where fascism fails to incorporate socialism, Marxism incorporates it."\(^35\) The answer, Akamatsu wrote, lay in his own concept of national socialism—a movement based on both anti-middle class and nationalist sentiments.

In order to promote his new ideology, Akamatsu organized the Socialist Youth League (Shakai Seinen Dōmei) in November, 1931. The Youth League functioned within the Social Democratic party and its creation was intended either to convert the party or divide its ranks.\(^36\) The latter occurred in early 1932 when the party's "right wing" gave its support to Akamatsu's policies and formed the Japanese State Socialist party (Nihon Kokka Shakaitō). However, about a year later, Akamatsu moved from national socialism to "totalitarian Japanism" and left the party. Thus he began his fourth major ideological shift which was to last from 1933 through the end of the Pacific War.

\(^{35}\) Akamatsu Katsumaro, *Shinkokumin undō no kichō*, p. 150.

\(^{36}\) See Totten, p. 73.
The primary reason for his abandonment of national socialism was similar to his previous rejections of Marxism and social democracy. In all these cases his conception of socialism kept changing. In his Marxist phase, communistic socialism meant an illegal vanguard party working for a revolution which would overthrow the government and eradicate capitalism. When the JCP failed to make an impact on the masses, he became a social democrat and conceived of socialism as encompassing the principles of international brotherhood and the inevitable progression of historical stages. Then Japan went to war in 1931, and Akamatsu switched to national socialism because his idea of socialism shifted to an anticapitalist reconstruction of society that would result in the enhancement of the kokutai principle. Finally, in 1933, he rejected national socialism because the concept of "socialism" no longer had any positive connotations for him.

Akamatsu's disenchantment with the concept of "socialism" stemmed from his new belief that socialism and nationalism were no longer compatible. In spite of the fact that he had previously thought that socialism would enhance nationalism (kokutai), he now saw socialism as embracing such concepts as a materialistic view of society, class consciousness, international peace, and antimonarchist sentiment. These concepts, in turn, were at variance with such Japanese nationalist ideals as the spiritual belief in the emperor, the holistic quality of the nation, and the duty of the individual to the state. 37

Thus, Akamatsu decided to switch his allegiance to what he thought was the antithesis of socialism—totalitarianism. Basing his opinion on the German and Italian variants, he believed that totalitarianism met his proclivities because it championed spiritualism (as opposed to materialism), nationalism, and the organic cooperation between the individual and the state. Swept up in the successes of the European fascists, Akamatsu proclaimed: "Hitler, the armed prognosticator, says with full confidence that man must make war to live! This truly is the ultimate expression of pragmatism. Youthful blood is continuously excited by fascism. . . . Thus, it is very likely that fascism will stride across the world of tomorrow." 38

Consequently, Akamatsu shifted his strategy and hoped that a nationalistic middle class or military dictatorship would somehow improve the conditions of the lower class. 39 He believed that the Shōwa Restoration would constitute a movement from above and would be firmly founded on a middle class ideology. To propagandize his views, he became involved in the Japanese Institute for the Study of Socialism (Nihon Shakaishugi Kenkyujō) which was founded in 1931 by Ōkawa Shūmei, and later created his own society, the Nationalist Society (Kokumin Kyōkai), which published a journal called The Nationalist Movement (Kokumin undo). When the Sino-Japanese War erupted, he joined the ultranationalistic Japanist Clique (Nipponshugiha), formed the Japanese Progressive Party (Nihon Kaishintō), was elected to the Diet in 1937,
and became a representative of the pro-military clique of Dietmen (shingunha).

However, during the war, Akamatsu was most noted for his active participation in Prince Konoe's Imperial Rule Assistance Association. As section chief of the planning bureau, he called for such radical economic and political reforms as revamping the election law, reconstituting the Upper House of the Diet, destroying capitalism, and constructing an East Asian cooperative sphere. His support for this last idea brought out his most chauvinistic inclinations:

The leading principles [that must be followed] in building an East Asian cooperative sphere are a rejection of communism and Western liberalism and the elevation of all East Asia. This can be accomplished by an East Asian totalitarianism. Since Japan is the leader in the creation of the sphere, the center of East Asian totalitarianism must be Japanese totalitarianism. In addition, the East Asian cooperative sphere is a collection of national systems necessarily lacking in uniformity since each participating state has its own respective national characteristics. Nevertheless, because the Japanese have the highest culture of the participating states, they are in a position to lead and improve the others.40

After Japan's loss in World War II, Akamatsu was a bitter man. All his hopes about Japan's future greatness in world history faded and he was left bemoaning the fact that he was "living in a sick period when instability and confusion rule the world."41 He realized that many Japanese were abandoning Asian thought and were turning to American and Russian culture as the sources of progressive ideas. "Japan has lost its national individuality," he lamented, "and will

40. Akamatsu Katsumaro, Atarashii yabanshugi, pp. 76-77.
become a country without a soul even if it does obtain political independence and economic self-reliance." 42

His only hope for Japan was that it would somehow return to Asian thought and principles. He sang the praises of Buddha, Confucius, Lao-Tzu, and Shōtoku Taishi, men who had created systems stressing morality, consciousness, naturalism, and humanism. He believed that these were the qualities which Japan should adopt, not American materialism or Russian authoritarianism. But Akamatsu's days of activism were over. He was among those purged during the Occupation and was content to retire to a quiet farming life. Almost unnoticed, he died quietly in 1955.

In summary, Akamatsu Katsumaro's adaptation of socialism illustrates the limitations of mixing the ideologies of nationalism and socialism in Japan. His conception of Marxism-Leninism was vague to begin with, and in fact his subsequent ideological vacillations were due to his changing, nebulous perceptions of socialism. Diametrically opposed to this situation was his constantly increasing fervor for nationalist doctrines which eventually led to his outright rejection of socialism in the 1930s. In plotting Akamatsu's commitment to the lower class against his increasing commitment to Japanese nationalism, this process becomes apparent:

42. Ibid., p. 12.
After rejecting communism (point A) in 1923, he moved to scientific Japanism (1923-1931) and national socialism (1931-1933), both of which emphasized the lower class and Japanese nationalism (point B); then he switched to totalitarian Japanism (1933-1945), which championed a middle class dictatorship (point C), and finally he changed to East Asianism (1945-1955), a philosophy characterized by a longing for a past era (point D).

Hence, Akamatsu's efforts to adapt socialism stand in sharp contrast to Sano's. Whereas Sano tried to indigenize Marxism-Leninism by combining what he considered to be the elements most applicable to Japanese nationalism and world view, Akamatsu totally abandoned all socialist doctrines because he saw them as being at variance with Japanese nationalism.
CHAPTER 7

ASO HISAHI

In 1919, Aso Hisashi organized a group called the Wednesday Society to study and disseminate the ideology of socialism in Japan. Other leaders of the newly arisen student movement, such as Sano Manabu and Akamatsu Katsumaro, joined Asō's group in order to share their views with peers. However, a split soon developed in the society over the proper direction which the socialist movement should take. One group, led by Sano and Akamatsu, stressed the need to develop a vanguard party and joined the JCP. The other group, led by Asō, urged the formation of a strong labor movement and proletarian political parties as prerequisites for the successful enactment of the socialist revolution. Even though they avoided the thorny problem of advocating an illegal JCP, the unresponsiveness of the Japanese political system caused them to make some adaptations in their socialist principles in order to become an effective movement. Asō Hisashi's case highlights such a process and provides yet another example of the need felt by many in Sano's generation to indigenize socialism.

Asō Hisashi was born on May 24, 1891, in Ōita Prefecture. Since his family was in poor financial straits, Asō was adopted at the

1. Asō's family, which traced its roots back to the pioneer Kusu Migata, comprised his father Ryōsaku, mother Kata, eldest brother Kunitarō, elder sister Katsu, and two younger brothers Tamotsu and Katsuōshi. See Kawakami Jōtarō, p. 3.
age of six by his uncle Asō Chūzō, a petty official working for the Justice Ministry in Tokyo. The adoption did not substantially change his lifestyle, for his uncle had four other children and a salary that was barely enough to keep them all alive.  

When Asō was eight years old, his stepfather died and the family separated, his stepmother returning with her four children to her native hometown and Asō returning to his natural parents. However, by this time his father was doing much better financially. After having tried to make a living as a tenant farmer and laborer, he had finally met with some success as a sake brewer and a landlord. Far from being pleased by his father's transition to a fairly well-off member of the nouveaux riches, Asō rebelled at the role that his father forced him to play. "In my younger days," he said, "I had to request rent paid in rice and money from poor farmers. This was a bitter, coldhearted, sad experience. . . . My head was filled with a strong hatred of money and I came to hate my father."  

From this time until his death in 1940, Asō consistently decried middle class lifestyles and values while glorifying the life of the poor farmer and working man.

At the age of fourteen, Asō entered Oita Middle School and during his third year there was involved in a student strike. As

2. Asō gave this poignant description of his home in Tokyo: "My family lived in a very small house beside a dirty warehouse. When it rained, the roof leaked. In summer, snakes hung from the ceiling. In winter, the cold north wind blew in from between the walls. I slept huddled on a thin mattress." From his autobiography Dakuryū ni oyo gu [Swimming in a Muddy Stream](1922), quoted in Hanzawa Hiroshi and Sanuki Sōetsu, p. 103.

3. Ibid., p. 104.
punishment for his role in organizing the strike, he was suspended from school indefinitely, but was readmitted after a few months. After graduating from middle school, he went on to the Third Higher School in Kyoto where he majored in French literature. While there, he was attracted to Russian literature and was especially touched by an account of the death of Tolstoi. In fact it was through the works of Tolstoi and Turgenev that he "was filled with a desire to understand and love humanity." In this spirit, he and two other students, Yamana Yoshitsuru and Tanahashi Kotora, formed a discussion group called the Jūōkai (Talking Freely Society). The group participated in many progressive activities such as the national "Protect the Constitution" movement of 1913, and as a result frequently clashed with conservative military student groups.

In the fall of 1913, Asō joined Tokyo Imperial University's French Law Department. Throughout most of his first year, he felt directionless and suffered deep spiritual and physical depressions. His despair is reflected in his autobiography where he wrote: "In the present world the greatest fortune is not to be born. I cannot bear the world. I prostrate myself in a field and weep." Finally, stimulated by Yoshino Sakuzō's lectures on political history, Asō snapped out of his depression and decided to start a new life. He began reading about

4. Ibid., p. 95.
5. Ibid.
7. From Dakuryū ni oyogu, quoted in Hanzawa Hiroshi and Sanuki Sōetsu, p. 103.
social problems and the socialist movement, and in 1916 he organized the Tokyo Imperial University Law Department Oratorical Society for the purpose of debating these topics.

The year 1917 was a watershed in the life of Asō Hisashi. After reading a report on the Russian Revolution, he vowed to dedicate his life to the socialist movement. Upon graduation, he began working for the Tokyo nichi-nichi shimbun (now the Asahi shimbun); yet he still had time to become involved in a number of progressive activities, such as the Wednesday Society, Yūaikai, Rōgakkai (Worker-Student Society), and Reimeikai (Dawn Society). He also aided Professor Yoshino in the famous debate against the conservative-nationalist Society of Rōnin.

Spurred on by the Rice Riots of 1918, Asō wanted to become more involved in a practical movement; subsequently, he quit his position on the paper and began his life as a labor organizer. He formally joined the Yūaikai hoping to reform it and advance the revolutionary movement by heightening and strengthening the proletarian consciousness of the workers. Then, along with other members of the Wednesday Society, he moved to Tsukishima to organize the workers. However, not long after, Asō returned to central Tokyo and formed a Celluloid Factory Union with the help of Watanabe Masanosuke, took an active part in a number of mining strikes, and helped Sano Manabu form the National

8. Ibid., p. 96.

9. Many commentators see Yoshino's victory in this debate as opening the way for democracy and internationalism in the Taishō period.

Miner's Union. But it was in 1920 that he and his longtime friend Tanahashi decided that the time was ripe for the socialist revolution in Japan, so they instigated a wave of violent strikes that became known collectively as the "period of storming waves." Inspired by the violence of the Russian Revolution and the Rice Riots, Asō participated in the Kawabata, Tokyo City Electric, and Fujii Yarn strikes, as well as numerous strikes by workers of the Oshio, Matsuoka, and Yōbari mines. During this disruptive period, both he and Tanahashi were considered the leaders of the radical Kantō section of the Sōdōmei because they advocated such anarcho-syndicalist positions as rejection of parliamentary tactics and opposition to universal suffrage.\(^\text{11}\)

By 1922, Asō decided to abandon the destructive strategies and confrontation tactics to which the labor union movement had turned. The turbulence of the strikes had neither brought down the system nor resulted in better labor laws. The only result of the strikes had been their alienation from the rank and file workers. For this reason, he agreed with Tanahashi's new strategy which called for a "return to the labor unions," implying a switch to a more moderate means of winning the fight against bourgeois oppression. From this point on, Asō kept aloof from ideological conflict within the socialist movement and tried to prevent the split between the communists and anticommunists which eventually led to the breakup of united front organizations such as the Sōdōmei in 1925 and the Rōnōtō (Labor-Farmer party) in 1926.

\(^{11}\) Kawakami Jōtarō, p. 180.
Although Asō was extremely close to many who later became JCP members (men like Sano Manabu, Nosaka Sanzo and Akamatsu Katsumaro) and although he was inspired by the works of Marxists such as Kawakami Hajime's *Research in Social Problems* (Shakai mondai kenkyū) and Yamakawa Hitoshi's journal *Vanguard* (Zen'ei), he never became a member of the Party. Together with his school friends Yamana and Tanahashi, he preferred to work directly with the masses, realizing that the JCP was useless as long as the workers lacked political consciousness. He believed that a wide gap existed between the professional revolutionaries of the JCP and the common worker. In fact, he sometimes even lamented his own role as a labor organizer, as the following quotation indicates: "To be a labor organizer is a sad thing. Wherever we go, invariably many workers are deprived of their jobs and their incomes decrease. Nevertheless, they smile at us and do not grumble. Is it right to sacrifice these workers?"  

The Universal Manhood Suffrage Act of 1925 revived Asō's spirit of optimism, and he threw all his energies behind the attempt to create a united, legal proletarian party. To this end, he insisted:  

The Japanese socialist movement is again returning to politics. This is the correct path for the proletarian class movement and following it is inescapable. Marx declared that "all class struggle returns in the end to a political struggle." To this extent the political struggle will center on the proletarian class movement. Capitalism is approaching its end and it is necessary for a political struggle to bring its final destruction.

---


Asō believed that the major problem facing the proletarian party movement was the ideological struggle between its right and left wings which were "ignoring, trampling upon, and forgetting the interests and true nature of the proletarian class movement." On the one hand, he criticized the right wing (as epitomized by the policies of Akamatsu Katsumaro) for idolizing the terms "realism" and "pratmatism." Although Akamatsu was correctly advocating realistic policies such as his espousal of a legal proletarian political party and efforts to meet the every day needs of the workers, he had gone to the extreme in collaborating with the established bourgeois parties and with management in order to keep the movement as peaceful and appeasing as possible. These policies, Asō believed, resulted in only limited gains for the workers and the emphasis on "pragmatism" was actually a hindrance to the goal of moving the labor movement toward the enactment of the socialist revolution.

On the other hand, Asō chastized the left wing (namely Sano Manabu's policies after 1927) for trying to radicalize the masses too quickly. The JCP was forced to follow the Comintern's dictates which were out of touch with the actual social conditions in Japan. Instead of organizing the masses by means of an illegal political party and trying to elevate economic strikes into political ones, Asō stressed that the weak state of the labor movement dictated the need for first establishing a united proletarian political party to raise the class

---

consciousness of the workers before endeavoring to change economic strikes into political ones in order to initiate the socialist revolution. His answer to the inappropriate policies of both the right and left wings of the proletarian movement was to reject the revolutionary tactics of the left which were directly imported from the West and to establish instead a "peculiar class movement which is historically compatible with Japan."\(^{15}\)

Asō's consciousness of the need to create a revolutionary proletarian movement compatible with Japanese conditions marked the beginning of his attempt to indigenize socialism. He sought to achieve this goal in 1932 by creating a united proletarian party, the Social Masses Party (Shakai Taishutō), which, he hoped, would establish a solid foundation of internal unity and mutual support for the lower class against the bourgeoisie.\(^{16}\) However, he soon realized that the established bourgeois parties in the Diet would never allow his proletarian party to gain political power in Japan, for "democratic socialism is only possible in countries like Britain where labor unions are legally recognized and where a proletarian party stands on the human and financial foundation of labor unions."\(^{17}\)

---

15. Hanzawa Hiroshi and Sanuki Sōetsu, p. 97.


Therefore, Aso felt compelled to turn to an extra-parliamentary force in order to defeat capitalism in Japan and elevate his proletarian party to political supremacy. The question was what group could he ally with? The JCP was out of the question because it was separated from the masses and controlled by a foreign power (Russia). The nationalist groups and secret societies in Japan professed anticapitalist sentiment but their reform schemes were vague and could not be expected to enact policies such as the nationalization of major industries and collectivization of land. There was only one group which had the power to overthrow the established bourgeois political parties and reconstruct Japan—the Army. But could it be trusted to carry out socialist policies and be persuaded to allow the Social Masses party to run the country?

At first Aso was negatively inclined to approach the military. He was appalled by its aggressive behavior in Manchuria in 1931, and even before that, when the ultranationalist Ōkawa Shūmei tried to elicit his support for the abortive military coup of March, 1931, Aso rebuffed him because he did not trust the military. Although he was considerably heartened by the anticapitalist sentiment expressed by participants in the attempted Naval military coup of May, 1932, he still shied away from their ideological philosophy, reasoning that it was based solely on spiritual values and irrational intrigue.

It was only in 1934 when he read the Army pamphlet entitled "The Basic Theory of National Defense and Suggestions for its Realization"


that Asō decided enthusiastically to come out in favor an alliance with the military. The pamphlet had been drafted by a certain clique of middle-ranking Army officers who envisioned an activist policy for promoting reformist political thinking among the masses and enacting a rational reform of the nation's capitalist structure. For example, the Army pamphlet had taken note of the fact that due to the necessity of alleviating the economic distress of the masses under capitalist rule, the military budget could not be increased so as to adequately meet the defense needs of Japan. In the opinion of the military officers, only when economic power was taken out of the hands of the big business leaders and transferred to those men whose actions were directed toward the reconstruction of society would the livelihood of the masses be stabilized and military budgets expanded.

Asō was elated by the prospect of military men who advocated the necessity of achieving social reform and overthrowing capitalism. Since these officers seemed to indicate their willingness to work with those activists who shared their desire to reconstruct society and ensure Japan's legitimate defense needs, Asō maintained that it was both necessary and rational for the military and the proletarian class to band together. The forging of such a link should be actively encouraged for, as he put it, fear of the military uniform was a delusion of the liberal period. "If we make the business suit our ally, then the bourgeois political parties and the zaibatsu must also be our allies,"

In terms of strategy, Asō was convinced that the party membership should start research groups which would "correctly perceive the road opened by the pamphlet." He also espoused a "bold advance" into the "camps" of the Military Reservist Association, youth groups, and industrial unions. He believed that by following the contents of the pamphlet, both his own party and the power of anticapitalism would be strengthened and enlarged. On the other hand, if they did not take quick and fearless advantage of the road which had been opened to them, it was inevitable that they would lose this auspicious chance to further the social reform movement in Japan.

In sum, Asō sensed that the Army was undergoing a transformation, moving away from the bureaucracy, landlords, capitalists, and established political parties, and turning towards the pursuit of lower class aims. He saw the role of the officer clique as being similar to that of the lower samurai during the Meiji Restoration. That is, the young officers had become alienated against the bourgeois parties just as the lower samurai had been against Tokugawa political power.21 Hence, Asō was optimistic that historical precedent augured well for the successful enactment of a Shōwa Restoration.

After the proposed military defeat of the bourgeoisie in the Shōwa Restoration, Asō believed that the way would be open for the rapid development of the proletarian class which would serve as a foundation

the text of the Army pamphlet, see Hata Ikyhiko, Gun fuashizumu undo shi (Tokyo: Kawade shobō, 1962), pp. 142-144.

21. This scenario is taken from Asō Hisashi, "Kokka kakushin ni okeru genzai no dankai to musan undo no shimei," p. 529.
and guide in the period of reform. Based on the leadership of the Social Masses party, representing the workers, peasants, small and medium industrialists, and salaried men, such goals as the nationalization of industry, worker self-government, and the collectivization of land could be promoted in order to bring financial security and equality to the Japanese people.  

It thus becomes clear that the crucial element in Aso's plan was the military's commitment to socialistic reform policies. Convinced now of the military's progressiveness, Aso stayed in close contact with, and was ready to throw his support behind, the Toseiha (Control Faction) of Army officers who had written the Army pamphlet and had, in his estimation, exhibited sure signs of having been schooled in proletarian ideology, emperor worship, and the scientific reform of the capitalist system. Again drawing on the example of the actions of the lower samurai during the Meiji Restoration, he stated: "The reform of Japan [now envisaged] is similar to the reform that took place during the Meiji Restoration, and must not only come from below. It must combine the strength of the emperor from above with the strength of the proletarian class from below." Believing in this ideal, Aso wishfully thought that his contacts in the Army would acquiesce in allowing the Social Masses party to lead the country after the fall of the bourgeois parties.


23. Quoted in Hanzawa Hiroshi and Sanuki Sōetsu, p. 96.
That a revolution was imminent in the mid-1930s was an obvious and exciting prospect for Asō. He reasoned that the May 15, 1932, Incident had brought about internal opposition and fragmentation within the military, the bureaucracy, and the existing political structure, all of which were a part of the bourgeois political power. However the capitalist class had managed at the time to maintain its coherence and to restore the status quo. Now, in the middle and late 1930s, Asō saw successes at every turn. First, his revolutionary expectations rose with the outbreak of, and destruction caused by, the four day military coup which became known as the February 26, 1936 Incident. He theorized that this coup was beneficial to revolutionary prospects because its proposed reform program gave "clear hope to the masses by cutting away the roots of the capitalistic system, resolutely enforcing domestic reconstruction and the Shōwa Restoration, destroying the former abuse of politics, and stabilizing national life." Then, when the February 26 Incident was put down and the Hirota military government was installed, Asō was elated since the Hirota reforms seemed to be more in keeping with the Tōseiha reforms that he also espoused: "[P]olitical power which is necessary for reform has now been strengthened and is being used as an avowed principle to liquidate liberal capitalism. That is to say, the Hirota Cabinet has taken many measures [to establish] the public operation, management


and control of essential industries and is clearly utilizing reformist principles.\textsuperscript{26}

Nevertheless, Aso's enthusiasm for the military began to wane when his initial expectations were not realized. The Army bureaucrats soon began restricting union penetration into the munitions industries and compromising with zaibatsu interests.\textsuperscript{27} This low point in Aso's enthusiasm did not last long, for his hopes rose again with the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937. Once again he believed that the revolution was imminent. Looking back to the period after the Manchurian Incident, he concluded: "The chances for domestic reform were stirred up as a consequence of the Manchurian Incident, and this process will continue both within the country and without with the Sino-Japanese Incident."\textsuperscript{28} Here, Aso was referring specifically to the need for reform of the nation's capitalist structure; as he put it: "For the national unity and increased productivity necessary to win a protracted war, a reform of capitalism is essential."\textsuperscript{29} Apparently the imperialistic aspect of the war did not bother him. If war was a prerequisite for reforming the system, he chose not to criticize the means employed in securing the ends.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{26} Aso Hisashi, "Rekishi no hiyaku," in ibid., p. 514. For a similar argument, see Aso Hisashi, "Rekishi no haguruma," \textit{Kaizō} (April 1936).
\item \textsuperscript{27} Aso Hisashi, "Gunbu no handōteki shisō to kūkyo naru kisei seitō," \textit{Kaizō} (December 1937), p. 287.
\item \textsuperscript{28} Aso Hisashi, "Shina jihen to Nihon taishū," \textit{Bungei shunju}, (October 1937), p. 75.
\item \textsuperscript{29} Aso Hisashi, "Kakushinki ni okeru sōkoku," \textit{Kaizō} (April 1938), p. 339.
\end{itemize}
During the war, Asō was attracted to the "New Order" (shintaisei) movement centered on Prince Konoe Fumimaro. Konoe, a Court aristocrat with close ties to the emperor, preached the need for national unity and national reconstruction. Asō immediately saw Konoe as a substitute for the military in the ultimate union of "imperial power" and mass power. Konoe's outlook fit Asō's proclivities perfectly in that they both agreed with the goal of bypassing the Diet by creating a united mass party. Such a party would be headed by Konoe (representing imperial power) with the Social Masses party (mass power) providing the necessary foundation. From 1937 until his death in 1940, Asō continually urged Konoe to follow through with the shintaisei plans to create this mass party organization and oppose capitalism. However, because of failing health, he himself never became an active participant in the movement. He was stricken with heart disease in December, 1938, and gradually weakened until his death almost two years later in September, 1940.

In evaluating Asō's effort to Japanize socialism, that is, to make it compatible with Japanese conditions, it can be said that generally his plan of revolution borrowed the power of the emperor, utilized the strength of the military, but was firmly grounded in the lives of the masses. Some writers have praised him as "a man of feeling and strength, writing and speaking with all his might for the

30. For an in depth analysis of this movement, see Gordon Berger, "The Search For a New Political Order: Konoe Fumimaro, the Political Parties, and Japanese Politics During the Early Shōwa Era," (Ph. D. dissertation, Yale University, 1972).
legal left wing"\(^{31}\) and as "an activist in both the labor movement and proletarian politics who, as a pragmatist, was extremely flexible in adapting to the times."\(^{32}\) Others have attacked him for shifting his bases of support: "Asō's passion for reform and revolution, which was instilled in him by the Russian Revolution and the Rice Riots, was soon transformed into an emperor system—military antirevolutionary 'reform' which required fascism and a conservative class [the military] to destroy the status quo."\(^{33}\)

Overall, what must be emphasized, however, is Asō's lifelong dedication to the realization of the socialist revolution in Japan. He tirelessly advocated such policies as the nationalization of major industries and the collectivization of land in order to bring financial security and equality to the Japanese people. His adaptation of socialism included the need of utilizing "imperial power" to enact his socialist policies. For this reason he allied with the military and then with Prince Konoe. Unlike Sano, Asō never felt the need to tenkō because he had not advocated the abolish the monarchy slogan or the need of an illegal JCP. Yet, he did not let his nationalist sentiment impede his socialist convictions, such as in Akamatsu's case. Thus, in plotting Asō's commitment to the lower class against his

\(^{31}\) Kokumin Shimbunsha Seijibu, p. 129.


increasing commitment to Japanese nationalism, it becomes readily apparent that he was able to travel a path (from point A to point B) which allowed him to reconcile the two ideologies of nationalism and socialism without compromising either belief system:

In the words of one of his contemporaries, Aso occupied a position between the anarchist Osugi Sakae on the left and the radical nationalist Kita Ikki on the right. In this sense he combined Osugi's concern for the masses with Kita's loyalty to the emperor and faith in the young officer movement. Although his efforts proved fruitless, his adaptations nonetheless provide a vivid example of the search for a way to achieve a socialist revolution in the turbulent prewar Shōwa era.

34. Yatsugi Kazuo, p. 60.
The young officer movement of prewar Japan was characterized by a series of attempted coups and assassinations that occurred between the
late 1920s and middle 1930s. The movement culminated in a nearly successful coup on February 26, 1936 (Ni-ni-roku jiken) when rebels virtually paralyzed the government for four days, endangered the lives of the entire power elite, and indeed shook the very foundations of state. Even though the young officers who participated in this coup killed four prominent officials, severely wounded a fifth, tried unsuccessfully to kill a sixth official, and occupied the War Ministry, General Staff, police headquarters, and other governmental buildings in the center of Tokyo, they were not roundly condemned in public by the leading officials of Japan. A typical reaction to the incident may be seen in the following statement by Saitō Hiroshi, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States:

It was a terrible occurrence, but there is a redeeming factor. The insurgent subalterns were all patriots, sincere in their motives and genuine in their loyalty, only they were misguided. In their youthful enthusiasm they believed that only by wiping out those "evil elements surrounding the throne" --to use their own words--and by occasioning the establishment of a powerful cabinet could the difficulties ahead of the nation be successfully overcome. Rash and faulty reasoning, no doubt, but there were no selfish intentions. We feel thankful that amongst Japanese there are very few indeed, if any, who are disloyal to the emperor and unpatriotic to the nation. 2

Who were these young officers who saw themselves as ideal patriots and saviors of Japan? The answer to this question serves to

1. Listed among the dead were: Admiral Saitō Makoto, the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal; General Watanabe Jotarō, the Inspector General of Military Education; Takahashi Korekiyo, the Finance Minister; and Colonel Matsu Denzō, who was mistaken for Prime Minister Ōkada Keisuke. Further, Admiral Suzuki Kantarō, the Chief Chamberlain, was severely wounded. Makino Nobuaki, the former Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, escaped uninjured.

2. Japan Times (March 26, 1936).
highlight two immediate anomalies: first, the term "young officer" may be misleading, for some of the leaders of the movement were neither young nor officers. For example, on the list prescribing the sentences given to the participants in the military uprising of February 26, 1936, Muranaka Koji, Isobe Asaichi, and Shibukawa Zensuke all appear as civilian participants, having been earlier expelled from the Military Academy for disciplinary reasons.\(^3\) As for the age of the young officers, in 1936, Hashimoto Kingorō was 46, Mikami Taku was 30, and Hayashi Hachirō was 22. Thus, not all the officers in this movement were "young," even though the average age of those involved in the February 26 Incident was approximately 26.\(^4\) However, despite the fact that not all the participants in this movement were either young or officers, it is still conceptually useful to employ the term "young officer" since the majority did fit the description.

A second anomaly of the so-called young officer movement concerns the cohesiveness of the participants. Some scholars, such as Ben-Ami Shillony, skirt this question by asserting that the young officer "movement" was a loosely-knit organization, composed of a hard core of dedicated activists and a larger following of a few hundred


\(^4\) All ages were calculated from the biographical material on the young officers contained in Kōno Tsukasa, ed., Ni-ni roku jiken (Tokyo: Kawade shobō, 1972). If one were to include the ages of the participants in the March and October Incidents of 1931 and the May 15 Incident of 1932, then the average age of those involved in the "young" officer movement would rise to approximately 40 years as of 1936.
comrades and sympathizers. However, upon further analysis, one finds that sharp ideological divisions existed among the various competing factions subsumed under the broad heading of "young officer movement." This kind of analysis helps clarify the varying motives and reasons for the actions of each group.

The young officer movement can be conveniently divided into three factions as follows: the "Imperial Marxist" and "Hashimoto" cliques in the Army, and the unified "Naval" clique. Before analyzing the differences between these three cliques, a word must be said about the one common experience which drove all three to espouse what the Japanese call "decisive actions" (kekko), this experience being exposure to the peasant recruits whose emaciated condition brought into sharp focus the continual agrarian distress of the 1920s and 1930s. From 1920-1936, approximately forty per cent of the pupils who attended the Military Academy came from agricultural families (see Table 1). Hence, at the Military Academy, the well-to-do sons of retired officers came into contact with the poor, starving recruits from the rural districts,


6. The author takes full responsibility for the appropriateness of the appellations used. Other names given to these groups are " shootings" and "Tōseiha" (Control Faction) for the "Hashimoto" faction, and "Kita/Nishida-wing" and "Kōdōha" (Imperial Way Faction) for the "Imperial Marxists." The author's preference for the terms used here is based on simplicity (in the case of the "Hashimoto" clique) and on ideological preference (in the case of the "Imperial Marxists").
Table 1. Survey of home occupations of those pupils attending the Army Military Academy from 1920-1936.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Military officer</th>
<th>Public official</th>
<th>Academic faculty</th>
<th>Banker</th>
<th>Professional or religious occupation</th>
<th>Farming</th>
<th>Trade</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Misc.</th>
<th>Unemployed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>15.4*</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>2.5 (10.7) b</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>3.7 (12.7) b</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>3.4 (10.6) b</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>2.1 (12.6) b</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a Figures represent percentages.

b Indicates the number of retired military officers in the unemployment list.

Source: Fujiwara Akira.
an experience which often radicalized many of them, leading them to seek changes in the status quo. 7

Their revulsion at the government for mishandling the rural situation was reflected in statements made by the young officers. For example, Hashimoto Kingorō, the leader of the "Hashimoto" faction, wrote that he was inspired to action because of "the distress of the rural communities, unemployment and the Depression." 8 Gōtō Akinori, an Army cadet who participated in the May 15, 1932, Incident, explained that the cadets were forced to take action because:

At the time, farming communities, small manufacturers, and merchants were suffering. Then at the same time the harvest in the north-eastern district was so bad that the people had not sufficient food. Sons of these farmers of the north-eastern district were sent to Manchuria. Primarily farmers and soldiers are closely connected as soldiers are mostly sons of farmers. Thus soldiers who were sent to Manchuria to fight were much worried about giving reliefs to their fathers, brothers and sisters. But what had the government and the political parties done to relieve the sufferings of those farmers? 9

Cadet Nishikawa Taketoshi, also of the May 15 Incident, told why he personally became involved:

When the delegates of the north-eastern famine-stricken communities called on Finance Minister Inouye several times to ask for governmental aid to save their families from starvation, the minister refused to see them. Upon hearing this incident, I felt that the government cannot be depended

7. Most of the leaders in the young officer movement came from rich or upper middle class backgrounds. This phenomenon is analyzed in Fujiwara Akira, "Ni-ni roku jiken," Rekishigaku kenkyū, No. 169 (March 1954), p. 23.


9. Japan Times (July 26, 1933).
upon, and I desired the establishment of a new government for the welfare of the people.\textsuperscript{10}

It was the leaders of the "Imperial Marxist" faction who were perhaps the most outspoken critics of the privileged class and its suppression of the lower class. Notes written in prison by Kōda Kiyosada and Kōno Hisashi continually refer to the need for eliminating the privileged class for the sake of the welfare of the lower class countrymen. Another leader, Yasuda Masaru, depicted the privileged class as a "useless, self-interested class which thrives on the impoverishment of others."\textsuperscript{11}

In sum, the agricultural situation may be seen as the catalyst which radicalized young officers, leading them to take decisive action. Since these men equated the zaibatsu, landlords, senior bureaucrats, and party politicians with the so-called privileged class (tokken kaikyū) which was monopolizing wealth, prestige, and power in Japan (and thus was the oppressor of the lower class), they naturally advocated reforms which would eliminate these elements.

Although there were differences in the commitment to, and scope of, national reorganization envisioned by the three young officer cliques, all advocated action which would culminate in a Shōwa "Restoration." The concept of restoration was very important to the young officers who wanted to legitimize their actions and obtain recognition as patriots. In calling for the elimination of the power structure in Japan, they were seeking to break or defy the all-encompassing nature of

\textsuperscript{10} Japan Times (August 3, 1933).

\textsuperscript{11} Kōno Tsukasa, pp. 221, 211, and 187, respectively.
of the emperor system and, in this way, they were rebels. The Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors (1882) demanded that the military officers "must neither be led astray by current opinions nor meddle in politics." The young officers were thus breaking the revered code by involving themselves in the political and economic turmoil of the times.

Yet, they rationalized their activism because the military establishment perpetuated a belief that the officers were superior to civilians in that the former could bypass the government and have direct contact with the emperor. The young officers interpreted this practice to mean that they were "officers of the emperor," not "officers of the government"; therefore they could break the "non-interference" precept of the military code since they believed that the emperor was being tricked into signing laws and giving his consent to governmental policies which had been formulated by corrupt advisers and as a result, were not truly reflective of the sovereign's wishes. By such reasoning they thought that they were displaying "true loyalty" to the emperor by calling for the overthrow of the power elite which was betraying the emperor's real wishes and usurping his powers.

In promoting their cause, the young officers constantly made references to the Meiji Restoration patriots and loyalists (shishi) in order to show by analogy that their desire was to reenact the glorious events of 1868. For example, Tsushima Katsuo, a member of the "Imperial

Marxist" faction, explained in his prison notes that he rebelled out of reverence to the emperor, against an enemy whom he characterized as the "shogunate." Gotō Terunori, an Army cadet who participated in the May 15 Incident, equated the assassination of Prime Minister Inukai Ki in 1932 with the murder of Ii Naosuke, the chief minister of the shogunate, by a group of samurai in 1860.\footnote{Tsushima Katsuo's notes are reproduced in Kōno Tsukasa, p. 293; and Gotō Terunori's are in Shillony, Revolt in Japan, p. 58.}

As a whole, then, the young officer group advocated a reorganization of power. They justified their program by stressing that they were undertaking actions to restore lost powers to the emperor by ridding the nation of those corrupt officials who had usurped his powers. Moreover, all three factions concentrated on Tokyo in their coup attempts since the highly centralized organization of government meant that control of the capital city would also signify control over the whole country.\footnote{Royal Jules Wald, "The Young Officers' Movement in Japan" (Ph. D. dissertation, University of California, 1949), p. 234.} On these matters, the young officers displayed cohesion. However, each faction had its own particular, specific reasons for enacting the Shōwa Restoration, and they differed in the extent of the reorganization. In fact, the "Imperial Marxist" group actually went so far in its plans for reorganization that its mixture of socialist and nationalist policies was comparable to both Sano Manabu's and Asō Hisashi's schemes for the indigenization of Marxism.
"Hashimoto" Faction

The "Hashimoto" faction of the young officer movement was composed mainly of approximately fifty field-grade military officers (majors, lieutenant-colonels, and colonels) who in 1930 coalesced around Lt. Colonel Hashimoto Kingorō, the Russian section chief of the General Staff Headquarters. At the time, Hashimoto had recently returned from an assignment in Turkey where he had been impressed by Kemal Ataturk's strategy designed to acquire political power by military means.15

Determined to emulate this strategy, Hashimoto formed the Sakurakai (Cherry Society) with the help of Captains Chō Isamu, Ohara Shigetaka, Tanaka Wataru, and Lt. Colonel Nemoto Hiroshi (all from the General Staff Headquarters); as well as Lt. Colonel Sakada Yoshirō and Captain Tanaka Kiyoshi (both from the War Department's Research Bureau).

Although the concern of these men had been awakened by the poverty that they witnessed among the agricultural workers in Japan, their decision to take action stemmed primarily from military considerations rather than matters of conscience; by overthrowing the civilian government, they would free the military from civilian resistance, thus enabling it to secure Japanese interests in Manchuria and Mongolia.16 Secondly, by improving social and economic conditions at home, they could gain both physical and moral support for continental expansion. Their conviction that domestic reform should be subordinated to the

16. Storry, p. 56.
cause of continental expansion led the Sakurakai members into a close association with the ultranationalist Ōkawa Shumei.

Ōkawa had first established a close rapport with the military during his university days when he had received a commission to translate German books for the General Staff Headquarters. Later, while working at the Southern Manchurian Railroad East Asian Economic Research Bureau, he became acquainted with officers whose fathers or friends he had known during his General Staff days. His close ties with these officers who became members of the Sakurakai continued to be strengthened because both parties shared a common outlook: that is, both feared that Japanese influence in Manchuria and Mongolia would be lost to either Soviet expansionism or to the Chinese nationalist movement. Believing that the civilian government was too feeble to rectify the situation by initiating military action, Ōkawa and the "Hashimoto" group planned the abortive March Incident of 1931 in an effort to establish an expansionist military government under General Ugaki Kasushige.

The March Incident was planned by Ōkawa and his followers in the middle echelons of the Army and did not include the other two factions of young officers (the "Imperial Marxist" and "Naval" cliques). The most plausible reason for their exclusion lies in the "Hashimoto" faction's fear that the "Imperial Marxists" would try to enact a

17. For background material on Ōkawa, see Imae Seiichi and Takahashi Masae, p. 27.

18. For an interesting interpretation of the Sakurakai as solely an anticommunist group, see Nakada Minoru, "Chūkoku shōkō no kiki ishiki to Sakurakai no kessei yōin," Rekishi hyōron, No. 260 (March, 1972).
widescale social and political revolution if they were allowed to participate in the venture.\textsuperscript{19} In any event, despite precautions and careful preparations, the Ōkawa plan never really got off the ground, mainly due to Ugaki's wavering support, and was eventually dropped.

The unsuccessful March Incident drove the "Hashimoto" faction to try an alternative plan; they decided to take military action in Manchuria without the government's knowledge, with the aim of forcing the civilian regime to accept a fait accompli. In helping to realize the plans, Ōkawa made several trips (disguised as business visits) to Manchuria and gave lectures throughout Japan. These lectures, he rightly anticipated, "would create a surge of patriotic feeling throughout Japan and so sweep away the evils identified with cautious diplomacy, parliamentary interference with the armed services and all influences related to Western democratic thought.\textsuperscript{20}

However, when the government seemed disinclined to accept the successful military conquest of Manchuria that took place in September, 1931, the "Hashimoto" clique again attempted a coup which became known as the October Incident of 1931 or the "Revolution of the Imperial Flag" (Kinki Kakumei). The chief planners of this incident were again Ōkawa and Hashimoto, but this time they had changed their strategy in two respects: first, the military government which they hoped to establish would now be headed by General Araki Sadao; and secondly, they

\textsuperscript{19} Wald, p. 65; for a detailed analysis of this incident, see Hata Ikuhiko, pp. 30-31, and Imai Seiichi and Takahashi Masae, pp. 59-64.

\textsuperscript{20} Quoted in Storry, p. 74.
now decided to include both the "Imperial Marxist" and "Naval" factions in their planning. Although the October plot, like its predecessor in March, was prematurely abandoned, the reason for failure this time was factionalism among the young officer groups. The "Hashimoto" faction aimed at a simple seizure of power with immediate expansion on the continent as the primary goal; the "Imperial Marxists" were concerned with promoting a thorough internal revolution based on a mixture of nationalism and socialism; while the "Naval" faction, ideologically caught in the middle, became frustrated and withdrew from the venture.

After the failure of the October Incident, the "Hashimoto" faction was broken up by upper echelon officers in the Army. Hashimoto was transferred to a regiment in Himeji, while Chō and Nemoto were sent to Manchuria. In summarizing the policies of the Hashimoto clique, it can be said that though this clique was vocal about overthrowing the government in order to facilitate Japan's unhindered expansion on the continent, the extent to which the members wanted to eliminate the zaibatsu, landlords, and bureaucrats at home was unclear. In all probability, it was not an overriding concern or even a policy which was to be seriously considered by them.

"Naval" Faction

The "Naval" faction of the young officer movement was a small group of about one dozen middle- and lower-level officers, but was specifically centered around Fujii Hitoshi, Koga Kiyoshi, Nakamura Yoshio, and Mikami Taku. It was this faction that was responsible for the so-called May 15, 1932, Incident, an unsuccessful military coup in
which Prime Minister Inukai was assassinated. As was the case generally, these young officers were radicalized by the desperate agricultural situation; yet, it was the London Naval Treaty of 1930 which drove them to action.

The London Naval Treaty designated that the United States, Britain, and Japan should build military vessels at a ratio of 5:5:3, respectively. Since the Chief of the Naval General Staff, the traditional advisor of the emperor on questions of Naval affairs, held a negative view of the proposed treaty, Prime Minister Hamaguchi decided to ignore his opinion. Instead, the Prime Minister obtained the emperor's approval of the treaty by using the signature of the Navy Minister alone, despite the fact that this was a matter vital to national defense. The Navy complained that the Hamaguchi Cabinet was infringing on the prerogatives of the supreme command, but the treaty was ratified over these protests.

The extent to which the London Naval Treaty inflamed members of the "Naval" clique can be seen in their testimonies during their trial for participation in the May 15 Incident. One of the leaders, Mikami Taku, stated: "I had long been thinking about the necessity of

21. The "Naval" faction had hoped to coordinate a military coup with the nationalist Inoue Nissho's Ketsumeidan (Blood Brotherhood) group. However, the naval participants were transferred to Shanghai at the last minute, so the Ketsumeidan plot was carried out by Inoue without them. When the "Naval" clique returned to Tokyo and realized that their erstwhile allies in the Ketsumeidan were all in prison, they enlisted the help of some Army cadets who were affiliated with the "Imperial Marxist" faction. For a detailed analysis of the action which took place on May 15, see Hata Ikuhiko, Part III.

22. Storry, p. 53.
reforming the nation, when there arose the issue of the London Naval Treaty, which gave me cause to make a firm determination, and I saw the necessity of co-operating with many others." 23 The same opinion was echoed by Tsukano Michiyo when he stated that "the London Naval Treaty is a treaty to ruin the country, concluded by the cooperation of capitalists and political parties which brought pressure on the Navy." 24

Apart from the London Naval Treaty, another cause for the uprising of the "Naval" faction, according to testimony given during the trial, was the perceived inability of the civilian government to take firm action in foreign affairs or military matters. One participant, Kuroiwa Isamu, related how angered he was by Hamaguchi's "inept" handling of the London Naval Treaty Conference and by the "scared" behavior that Foreign Minister Shidehara exhibited in not pressing the advantage when, in January, 1932, a sharp clash occurred between Chinese and Japanese troops stationed in the internationally partitioned city of Shanghai. 25 Murayama Tadayuki took this argument one step further when he explained:

... I favored the cause of the Shanghai Incident, and I believed that under the Inukai Cabinet, the Shanghai affair would become meaningless. Thus I felt the necessity of causing the downfall of the Inukai Cabinet, establishing a military government and changing the principal officers in the Army and Navy Staff Offices. By a military government I mean a government that will act according to the wish of the War and Navy Departments. I made this plan because I realized that the Inukai Cabinet was unable to settle the Manchurian

23. Japan Times (August 2, 1933).
25. Japan Times (August 9, 1933).
question satisfactorily, and although the Saito or Hiranuma cabinet was rumored to come next, they could not do anything as they would be merely the tools of the political parties.\textsuperscript{26}

Thus it is clear that many of the Naval participants in the May 15 Incident were motivated by a desire to see Japan take a firmer stand on national defense questions. However, the Manifesto that they issued at the time constantly made references to the oppressive nature of the power elite in Japan. For example, at one point it exhorted the "farmers, laborers and all the people of Japan" to "rise against the oppressive government" and in very strong language: "People! Take arms! The only way to freedom is through direct action. People! In the name of the Emperor, destroy the evil advisors around the Throne, kill the zaibatsu, smash the politicians who have betrayed the masses and punish the officials who misuse their power. Destroy the privileged class."\textsuperscript{27}

Despite this seemingly strong desire for domestic reform exhibited in the May 15 Manifesto, the young Naval officers spoke only of defense considerations in their trial statements. In fact, it was left to the Army cadets (affiliated with the "Imperial Marxist faction) who had assisted in the coup, to bring up the notion of domestic reform during the trial.\textsuperscript{28}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{26} Japan Times (August 13, 1933).
\item \textsuperscript{27} Ben-Ami Shillony, "The Army Officers and the February 26, 1936, Army Rebellion in Japan" (Ph. D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1971), pp. 127-129 passim.
\item \textsuperscript{28} See statements previously quoted by Nishikawa Take toshi and Gotô Akinori, pages 187 and 188.
\end{itemize}
Thus it can be surmised that the "Naval" faction of young officers was primarily concerned with strengthening national defense; internal reform was seen as an instrument enabling a military government to act freely without civilian "interference and indecision." In this sense, the goals of the "Naval" faction were similar to those of the "Hashimoto" group, except that the emphasis of the latter was on continental expansion as opposed to simple national defense.

However, there is a clear difference in the "language of reorganizations" used by the "Naval" clique when compared to that used by the "Hashimoto" faction. The former group stressed class antagonism in its Manifesto which called for the oppressed classes to rise against the privileged class. Although this concept was not pursued during their trial, the fact that they printed it at all was a departure from the language used by the "Hashimoto" faction. Hence, if one were to rank these two factions of young officers on a political-ideological continuum, the "Naval" clique should be designated as a little to the left of the "Hashimoto" group, if only because of the former's statements regarding internal reconstruction.

After the May 15 Incident, the "Naval" faction of the young officer movement lost all of its influence and power. The Naval

---

29. The Sakurakai's prospectus stated: "The members of this society could not stand the immoral behavior of the upper-class statesmen, the deterioration of the political parties, the capitalists' lack of understanding of the masses, the tendency of the press to confuse the minds of the people with no thought to the future of the state, the distress of the rural communities, unemployment, depression, the radicalism of various intellectual groups, the lack of patriotism among students, and the concentration of bureaucrats on protecting their positions." From Brown, p. 190.
General Staff instituted a "thought controller" at the Yokosuka Naval Station in order to insure for the Navy greater control over the thinking and actions of its young officers. This policy proved to be successful in inhibiting the growth of any radical thoughts and actions. 30

"Imperial Marxist" Faction

Since the "Imperial Marxist" faction of the young officer movement formulated the clearest domestic reform program, and since this program was based on a mixture of nationalism and socialism, it deserves to be analyzed in some detail in order to facilitate comparison with other Japanese adaptations of socialism. Although the "Imperial Marxist" clique was able to mobilize about two hundred soldiers during the February 26, 1936, Incident, it was led primarily by eight lower-ranking Army officers who are briefly profiled in the following listing: 31

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birth</th>
<th>Military Academy graduating class</th>
<th>Year received commission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ōgishi Yoriyoshi</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muranaka Kōji</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ōkura Eiichi</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suganami Saburō</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isobe Asaichi</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andō Teruzō</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suematsu Tahei</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurihara Yasuhide</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>1929</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30. Wald, p. 135.

Even though the "Imperial Marxist" faction is often associated with the other two cliques because it organized the violent February coup mentioned earlier, there were three fundamental differences between the "Imperial Marxists" and the "Hashimoto" and "Naval" groups. First, in seeking the destruction of the existing power structure in Japan, the "Imperial Marxist" group was motivated neither by foreign expansion nor national defense; rather, the group was concerned with the inequities and corruption within the status quo. In fact, the leaders of this faction were initially politicized by the Rice Riots, the democratic atmosphere of the Taishō era, and an awareness of the suffering of the poor. Ōshigi and Suematsu were so caught up by the radical mood of the times that both were drawn to Marxism in spite of the fact that each was attending a conservative military institution.

32. See page 183. For a detailed analysis of the February 26 Incident, see Shillony, Revolt in Japan.

33. For example, Ōgishi Yoriyoshi was influenced by the Rice Riots and Taishō democracy, Suganami Saburō by the Rice Riots, Suematsu Tahei by Taishō democracy, and Isobe Asaichi by class inequalities. In Isobe's case, he had to face the wrath of his Army superiors as well as indignations from society because he had to buy the woman he loved from her master to whom she had been sold as a mistress. For the influences on Ōgishi and Suganami, see Matsuzawa Tetsunari and Suzuki Masayetsu, Ni-ni roku to seinen shōkō, pp. 56-57; the influence on Suematsu was related in a letter dated April 7, 1977, from Suematsu to the author; and the Isobe anecdote was told to the author by Takahashi Masae, editor for Misuzu shobo, in a private interview conducted in Tokyo on March 16, 1977.

34. Ōgishi became a self-styled Marxist in 1919 while attending the Chūō Military Preparatory School, and Suematsu was often called "Marx boy" by his classmates at the Hiroshima Military Preparatory School which he began attending in 1920. For Ōgishi on Marxism, see Takeyama Morio, "Rikugun seinen shōkō undo no tenkai to zasetsu;" Shigaku zasshi, 78, No. 6 (June 1969), pp. 7-17; Suematsu's statement was mentioned in his private letter to the author.
The second difference between the "Imperial Marsists" and the other two factions was the former's characterization of their senior military officers as part of the privileged class which must be destroyed. This antagonism toward their senior officers stemmed from the rivalry that took place among the senior officers themselves. During the 1920s, the top positions in the Army were monopolized by Chōshū-born men. An anti-Chōshū clique was formed by those generals (Araki Sadão, Mazaki Jinzaburō, and Hayashi Senjirō, for example) who believed that their careers were being hindered by the Chōshū clique. By the late 1930s, the anti-Chōshū clique had made great inroads into the Army power structure and anti-Chōshū feeling had declined. In its place, a new problem arose dividing the Army leadership on the question of the direction which the Army's policy of refurbishment and expansion should take.

One group believed that the refurbishment and expansion program should be implemented with an emphasis on equipment and economic planning. This approach was fostered by the so-called "German school" (later called the Tōseiha or "Control Faction") within the War Ministry and had first been proposed by Colonel Nagata Tetsuzan and War Minister Ugaki Kazushige. Opposing them was a group of officers headed by General Araki Sadão who were devoted to the concept of "mass tactics"; that is, the development of a large body of soldiers drawing inspiration from the spiritual power (seishinshugi) of Japanese culture. Araki's group emphasized the necessity of relying on kōdō (the "imperial way;")

hence the origin of their faction's name, the Kōdōha) and warned that excessive reliance on "material goods" would corrupt the state of the Japanese Army. 36 At the risk of oversimplification, the period from 1928-1936 may be viewed as a time when these two senior officer cliques, the Tōseiha and the Kōdōha, were vying for power and control in the Army hierarchy.

The ideas of Araki and the Kōdōha were attractive to the "Imperial Marxist" faction of young officers since these senior officers espoused reliance on the "imperial way" and concern for the masses, ideals which the "Imperial Marxists" held to represent the true Japanese spirit. The Tōseiha, on the other hand, espoused a rival ideology based on cooperation with the political parties; 37 furthermore, the group's national defense and economic policies "possessed all the attributes which the young officers regarded as a perversion of the true national principle." 38

In time, however, Araki's concern for the masses and the kōdō spirit turned out to be something less than the "Imperial Marxist" clique thought it ought to be. During Araki's tenure as War Minister from 1931-1934, the young officers of this clique discovered that he was more inclined to talk than to act, and Araki encouraged this opinion by

36. Ibid., p. 314.

37. See page 176 for Asō Hisashi's connection to this faction.

exhibiting sole concern for the advancement of his own Kōdōha faction.\(^39\)

The "Imperial Marxists" soon realized that Araki's encouragement of
groups that espoused reform was a matter of mere superficiality and
related to Army politicking. It was not long before the "Imperial
Marxists" became estranged from the Kōdōha and from General Araki; they
subsequently equated all senior officers who were jockeying for control
in the Army with the other "corrupt" elements that comprised Japan's
power elite. Thus, in their eyes, the senior military officers joined
the zaibatsu, landlords, senior bureaucrats, and party politicians as
the privileged group which had to be eliminated.

All these "corrupt" elements were continually vilified by the
officers. Yasuda Masaru, for example, used strong language to describe
the "culprits" who were "destroying kokutai": that is, the govern­
mental leaders ("Dark Age eunuchs who are isolating the lower class
from kokutai"), the zaibatsu ("purveyors of capitalism and corrupters of
government"), the military leaders ("contenders for political power"),
and the middle class ("seekers of utilitarianism which breeds useless
servility").\(^40\) Again, a colleague of Yasuda, Kōno Hisashi, wrote that
the corrupt elements were the elder statesmen, bureaucrats, and senior
Army cliques.\(^41\)

\(^39\) While Araki was in power he reassigned every senior Chōshū
general in Central Headquarters to the field; moreover, he transferred
some of his Tōseiha critics from strategic positions. See Crowley,

\(^40\) Kōno Tsukasa, pp, 287-292 passim.

\(^41\) Ibid., p. 212.
Criticism of the senior Army officers, in particular, was vividly expressed by the now disenchanted "Imperial Marxists." Hayashi Hachirō characterized them as incompetent men who only wanted to preserve the status quo, while Kurihara Yasuhide attacked the staff officers for causing the populace to lose faith in the military: "Because society believes that these people are the ideological representatives of the Army, the fascism that they advocate reminds the people of the entire Army, and particularly of the young officers who are the radical elements of the military." Not only did Kurihara view the staff officers as fascists, but he also denigrated their propensity for enthusiastically meeting in restaurants to discuss the serious affairs facing the nation by calling them the "banquet clique."

In view of the antipathy felt by these young officers towards their commanders, it was logical that they should repudiate the sanctity of military discipline. The Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors, the basis of moral guidance for all conscripts in the military, stressed that a soldier must regard an order from a superior as equivalent to an order from the emperor himself. However, the young officers reasoned that since their superiors were not acting in the best interests of the nation as a whole, they were not obliged to follow them. Kurihara Yasuhide succinctly summed up this position

42. Ibid., p. 203.


44. Ibid., p. 772.
during an interview in which he was asked to explain the relationship between the young officers and their superiors:

Because we are soldiers of the emperor, we are not subordinate to our superior officers. In short, if we firmly believed that our superior's orders were the orders of the emperor, we would not hesitate to go through fire and water. Consequently, in a country such as Japan, in a case where the superior officer does not truly grasp the doctrine of kokutai, it is only natural that those under the so-called professional soldier do not give them blind obedience. . . . In a system such as this, submission to a superior is not always mandatory. One gives submission because the order is given by the emperor and passed on by the superior officer and this is not submission to military regulations but rather to the emperor.45

Thus, as Kōno Hisashi so rightly emphasized, this clique of young officers was determined to revere and give aid to the emperor and bring welfare to their lower class countrymen as well.46 To accomplish this, they thought it was necessary to rise up against their superiors since, according to one leader, Isobe Asaichi, these men were "the enemy of the people. . . [and] killing traitors is not a crime, but the duty of the patriot."47

Further, the fact that they were opposed to the establishment of a postcoup military cabinet—despite their willingness to ally with and rely on certain senior officers—clearly reflects of their disgust with their superior officers. Muranaka Kōji provided some insights into the reasons for this negative feeling about military cabinet rule: "We opposed the idea of a military cabinet. . . . such a cabinet, ruling

45. Ibid., p. 773.
46. Kōno Tsukasa, p. 211.
47. Ibid., p. 117.
by fiat, would be nothing but a modern shogunate. . . . Why should a government made up of military men be any better than one made up of civilians? The people of Japan will not agree to become again the puppets of the military." In the same vein, Kurihara explained:

Thus, the young officers were fundamentally incompatible with them [the staff officers]. First, we did not believe in a dictatorship of military men as they did. We regard ourselves as Japanese; that is, we have the self-understanding that we are a revolutionary Japanese-type of military man. So we did not think that it was necessary to produce a military dictatorship to reform the nation.

The third and final fundamental difference between the "Imperial Marxists" and the "Hashimoto" and "Naval" cliques can be seen in the emphasis that the former placed on enacting radical domestic change in Japan with a view to building a new egalitarian society. Although in the late 1920s many of the leaders of this clique were drawn to the radical nationalist, Kita Ikki, who was propagandizing his ideas on reconstructing Japan, by the early 1930s some had begun to move away from him. Many of the officers opposed Kita's magnum opus, _A Plan for the Reorganization of Japan_ (Nihon kaizō hōan taikō), believing that Kita was biased in favor of the middle class. In support of this contention, they cited such factors as Kita's attachment to individual property (only the very rich were to have their property confiscated)

---

48. Quoted in Shillony, _Revolt in Japan_, p. 70.

49. In Wada Hidekichi, pp. 767-768.

50. It is noteworthy that the leaders of this faction first came into contact with each other in 1927 as members of the Tenkentō (Heavenly Sword Society) which was organized by Kita Ikki's disciple, Nishida Zei. For an excellent analysis of Kita's ideas, see George M. Wilson, _Radical Nationalist in Japan: Kita Ikki, 1883-1937_ (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969).
and his contempt for the proletariat and fear of a revolutionary movement led by the masses. 51

In opposition to Kita's anti-lower class orientation, Suganami Saburō, Ōgishi Yoriyoshi, and Suematsu Tahei created their own plan in September, 1931, a plan which was more anticapitalist than Kita's scheme. Formulation of the plan was primarily the work of Ōgishi and the result was his Plan for an Imperial Restoration (Kōsei ishin hōan) which called for an imperial ban on private property and strict limitations on amounts that could be held as individual possessions. 52

Kurihara Yasuhide also favored a system similar to Ōgishi's. He held that in order to destroy the capitalist system, the three main cornerstones of capitalism—land, capital, and private property—had to be fundamentally altered. Specifically, large capital should be returned to the state, and limitations should be placed on private property and land. 53

It is evident that this group was in favor of some form of socialism. Indeed, Suematsu later averred that he and his group were "socialists." Yet, they avoided words like socialism and revolution, because, as military men, it was more appropriate for them to use the


52. See Hata Ikuhiko, pp. 216-221, for a copy of Ōgishi's plan. Contrary to the popular belief that all military men in Japan approved the expansionism of the 1930s, it is significant to note that Suematsu and Ōgishi opposed the Manchurian Incident and the Japanese military penetration into China; private interview with Suematsu Tahei conducted in Tokyo on March 30, 1977.

term "nation" (kokka) instead of "society" (shakai) when talking about their loyalties:

If we were not careful, we might say we were socialists. Well, in the old days there were officers like us in all the regiments. However, to call oneself a "socialist" was an extreme thing because at that time the term "society" was a taboo term in the military.

Therefore, the term "nation" was better. The term "society" was thought to be somewhat antinationalistic and since we were military men who bore the fate of the nation, it was not very discrete to use that word.

Suematsu explained his own position further, adding that although he had not particularly liked being part of the military, at the time he felt that only the military had the power to enact a revolution to save the poor in Japan. He and a few other comrades actually preferred the term "revolution" (kakumei) to "restoration" (ishin), since their hope was that a brand of "Imperial Communism" would come out of the Shōwa Restoration. Yet, most of Suematsu's colleagues had opted for the milder term and it is probably their reluctance to use radical-sounding words that has led many outsiders to view the actions of this clique of young officers as solely nationalistic and fascistic.

At the same time, it was not merely for cosmetic reasons alone that the "Imperial Marxists" avoided certain terms. They were also loathe to use words which smacked of communism simply because they associated communism with such concepts as the abolition of the emperor system and the inevitability of class war, leading to the destruction


of kokutai. The young officers wanted an end to capitalism and those who had profited from it, but they did not want to destroy the very essence of Japan.

They could not therefore accurately call themselves Marxists, but they did admit that many tenets of Marxism appealed to them. Suematsu, for example, asserted that certain principles of Marxism could be useful to the military: "We were not well-versed on such topics as Marxist theory, for we were only knowledgeable about its general principles. However, some of its ideas were certainly very good." On the other hand, while Kurihara also sympathized with certain of the goals of communism, he admitted that adverse connotations still made him skeptical of all left wing movements: "We do not deny that the objective of communism is the happiness of mankind. However, more than anything else, we are first of all Japanese and must be Japanese—in this way we must absolutely deny and exterminate [communism]. Thus left wing movements make us feel uncomfortable."57

Clearly, then, this faction tried to find a meeting ground in combining socialist and nationalist ideas into a program of extensive national reform under the emperor system. However, after the unsuccessful military coup on February 26, 1936, the "Imperial Marxist" movement was abruptly checked, Muranaka, Isobe, Kurihara, and Andō were executed for their active roles in the rebellion, while Suganami, 

56. Mishima Yukio and Suematsu Tahei, p. 25.

57. In Wada Hidekichi, p. 772. Ōgishi also felt the same, for in 1926 he tenkōed, as he put it, "from Marxism to Motoori Norinaga" (a famous neo-Shintoist and philologist of the Tokugawa era); see Takeyama Morio, pp. 12-13.
Suematsu, and Ōkura, who had participated only indirectly were imprisoned. The downfall of this clique marked the official end of the young officer movement in prewar Japanese history, and the final silencing of Marxist/socialist ideas in the military.

In sum, the "Imperial Marxists" illustrate the extent to which many activists tried to incorporate both socialist policies and nationalist ideas into ideology. These young officers were motivated by the Taishō democratic atmosphere and a hatred of class inequality, and thus endeavored to overthrow their senior military officers, big business leaders, landlords, party politicians, and senior bureaucrats, and implement an imperial ban on private property as well as strict limitations on capital holdings. Yet, because of their position as military men, they chose not to utilize terms like "socialism" and "revolution" in propagandizing their policies. Their aversion to those words caused many activists, such as Aso Hisashi and Sano Manabu, to underestimate the socialistic content of the "Imperial Marxist" scheme.

However, the underlying philosophy behind the "Imperial Marxists'" ideas was similar to that behind Sano's, Aso's, and Akamatsu's adaptation of socialism—the need to indigenize the Western concept of "socialism" to make it more compatible and acceptable to Japanese national customs and institutions. In this sense all four orientations were similar even though the efforts began at different ideological points (and in Akamatsu's case ended at a dissimilar point), as the following chart depicting affinity to the lower class and adherence to nationalism indicates:
Key: 1. Ideological path followed by Sano Manabu
2. Ideological path followed by Asō Hisashi
3. Ideological path followed by Akamatsu Katsumaro
4. "Imperial Marxists'" ideological position
CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION: THE DESIGNATION OF IDEOLOGICAL BOUNDARIES

This study has explored the phenomenon of the Japanization of socialism by that generation of Japanese activists who were born around the turn of the twentieth century and who were influenced in their lifetimes by many of the major ideological currents of modern Japanese history. Having grown up in the atmosphere of Meiji nationalism, these activists became attracted to Marxism in their youth, and as adults created adaptations of socialism in order to make it compatible with the reemergence of Japanese nationalism during the Shōwa era. Their efforts to accommodate their political thought to the emperor system and to nationalism led scholars to label them as "fascist" or to excoriate them as craven opportunists. However, it is hoped that the material provided in this study lends support to the view that a different conceptual framework is necessary to understand their peculiar brand of national socialism.

The primary reason why such men as Sano Manabu, Asō Hisashi, Akamatsu Katsumáro, and the "Imperial Marxists" have all been called "fascist" is that scholars have adhered to a simplistic method of designating ideological boundaries: all factions that drew upon or accommodate themselves to Japanese nationalism were regarded as "right wing," and all those whose primary allegiance was to the working class were "left wing." Thus, for example, Maruyama, Brown, Storry, Morris,
Reed, and Kinoshita invariably term all nationalist groups "right wing" or "fascistic" (the latter being used instead of "fascist" in order to illustrate that the Japanese phenomenon differed considerably from the European model). Again, Shillony, Wald, Wilson, Crowley, Jones, Hata, and Hashikawa tend to refer to all military groups in the young officer movement as "rightists" or "fascists" on the grounds that all segments of the movement gave primary allegiance to the emperor. Finally, Totten, Beckman, Scalapino, Smith, Takabatake, and Shimane designate as "left wing" only those groups which specifically engaged in confrontations with Japanese nationalism. The philosophy underlying the attitudes of these authors is similar to that expressed by the noted historian Takahashi Masae, editor for Misuzu Shobo, when he stated that since the existence of the emperor is contributing to Japan's spiritual underdevelopment, Japan can only become an advanced state if his position is abolished; for this reason one cannot be loyal to both the emperor system and the working class.


Recent research both in Japan and in the West, however, has begun to explore the ways in which Japanese activists in the 1930s attempted to reconcile nationalism and socialism. Professor Itō Takashi of Tokyo University has cited Ozaki Hozumi as one example of the co-existence of these two systems of thought in one person's ideological make-up. Writing in his diary about his participation in the Sorge Spy Incident, Ozaki talked about his "split personality," one part of which was represented by his actions as a spy on behalf of Russia against Japan, while the other was defined by his feeling as a "Japanese nationalist" (Nihon minzokushugisha), especially in his backing of Prime Minister Konoe and his notion of an East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. Itō concludes from this that Ozaki, at least psychologically, "was both a communist and a fascist. Thus these two yearnings were not contradictions within this one person, or even if they were, they were able to coexist within him."  

Similarly, Tokyo University Professor Ishida Takeshi found that both right and left wing ideologies were incorporated into Prime Minister Konoe's "New Order" movement (shintaisei). He surmised that many leftist intellectuals were attracted to Konoe's system because it was an effective way to retain their revolutionary passion for socialism.


6. Ibid.

while eradicating capitalism from Japan. Konoe urged them on in this thinking by making pronouncements such as the following:

There are some criticism that the New Order movement has communist ideology as one of its undercurrents, I would not deny that there are some so-called converts active in the movement. We sometimes make use of their knowledge and get suggestions from them. But the basic purpose of this movement is to clarify the concept of our national polity. The New Order is like a huge drum; if you pound on it hard, it reverberates loudly; if you hit it gently, it reverberates gently. Sometimes it may be resonant with Nazism, and sometimes with communism. But the New Order should be rooted deeply in our national polity, and its actions should conform to the true way of a loyal subject. 8

These two studies point to the difficulty of designating political affiliation along a right (nationalism)-left (socialism) continuum. In the same manner, studies of Japanese history by Wilson, Notehelfer, Bernstein, and Wagner have highlighted the limitations inherent in categorizing political movements into one of two separate and mutually exclusive camps: "right" and "left." 9 Since the old method of designating political boundaries is no longer useful, what then should take its place?

This question has vexed not only the field of Japanese history, but the broad realm of historical and political studies. For example, Samuel Huntington uses rate of change (radical, gradual, and so on) urged by groups in the society as an indicator of political

8. Ibid., p. 120.

Seymour Martin Lipset, on the other hand, focused on a political group's orientation toward classes as the determinant of ideological affiliation. According to Lipset, if a group's actions were intended to benefit the upper class, the group would be "right wing"; likewise, it would be considered "centrist" if it espoused a movement to improve the conditions of the middle class, and "left wing" if its actions benefited the lower class.

With these definitions in mind, the author would like to suggest a model for designating ideological boundaries which represents a refinement and elaboration of Lipset's and Huntington's paradigms. The model utilizes two axes, X and Y. As in the previous diagram used to correlate nationalism and socialism in prewar Japan (see page 17 and the end of Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8), the X axis reflects Lipset's stress on class by creating a continuum with the lower class on the left, the middle class in the middle, and the upper class on the right. On the other hand, the Y axis, which in the previous model measured adherence to nationalism, now is based on Huntington's group focus: that is, attitude toward rate of change, ranging from radical change at the top, to gradual change in the middle, and no change at the bottom. Hence, a group's ideological affiliation can be determined by


identifying which class it was trying to help, and what tactic (radical change, gradual change, no change) it was espousing. In terms of "right wing" and "left wing," the target class (X axis) is the most crucial indicator, for different tactics (Y axis) can be utilized without compromising class orientation.

Model of Ideological Boundaries

Key: A = Revolutionary Socialism  
B = Social Democracy  
C = Liberalism  
D = Classical Liberalism  
E = Fascism  
F = Conservatism

When applied to the case of Japan, the left wing ideologies of revolutionary socialism and social democracy would be designated at points A and B of the model, respectively. Revolutionary socialism is
in the upper left-hand quadrant because this particular ideology called for the radical reconstruction of society on behalf of the lower class. Social democracy is shown exactly on the left side of the X axis, for its advocates proposed a lower class-gradual change position. The two centrist ideologies of liberalism and fascism would reflect a middle class orientation. Classical liberalism belongs squarely in the middle of the diagram (point D) due to its adherents' espousal of gradual improvement of the middle class. (The middle class emphasis of classical liberalism is in sharp contrast to our contemporary usage of the term "liberalism" which connotes a somewhat slow improvement of the lower class--point C.) On the other hand, fascism is located on the upper section of the Y axis (point E) since its proponents sought to reconstruct society for the benefit of the middle class. Finally, the right wing ideology of conservatism is shown in the lower right-hand quadrant (point F), indicating its supporters' preference for preserving the status quo in order to ensure the position of the upper class.

This model can be applied to the political orientations of Sano Manabu, Asō Hisashi, Akamatsu Katsumaro, and the "Imperial Marxist" young officer clique. In the case of Sano, Part I of this study has demonstrated that he did not become an "antirevolutionary fascist," though he is considered as such by many postwar Japanese historians.12 Rather, as the chart below indicates, Sano's approach to socialism and the lower class demonstrated considerable continuity over time. He

12. See footnote 21 of Chapter 1,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude toward</th>
<th>1920-23</th>
<th>1924-32</th>
<th>1933-44</th>
<th>1945-53</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Japanese symbols:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emperor</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nationalism</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socialist symbols:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liberation movements</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vanguard-masses</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revolutions in Japan</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revolutions in colonies</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>logic of the dialectic</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>economic determinism</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JCP/Comintern</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proletarian dictatorship</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key:</strong> + indicates favorable attitude; - indicates negative attitude.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

retained his socialist commitment to the Marxist-Leninist logic of the dialectic, and he continued to espouse peoples' and colonial liberation movements; the necessity of the agrarian, democratic, and socialist revolutions; and the need for a vanguard party to lead the masses. However, he discarded the Marxist doctrines of economic determinism and proletarian dictatorship, and added an affirmation of the Japanese emperor system and of Japanese nationalism. In its final shape, then, Sano's though represented a coherent synthesis of his pre-tenkō Marxist ideas and his post-tenkō nationalist positions.

Because of his consistent emphasis on the need of a radical reconstruction of society to help the lower class, Sano remained true
to the principles of revolutionary socialism. The elements of change in his political thought were basically tactical and can be viewed as merely pragmatic efforts to reconcile Marxism-Leninism to the realities of Japanese society. Sano appropriately summed up this goal when he wrote: "Marxism is nineteenth century European, and I am a twentieth century East Asian."  

Asō Hisashi's case was similar to Sano's, in that his political career was marked by many changes in strategy, but he never lost sight of the ultimate goal of "saving" the poor. From adolescence he developed a keen distaste for money and middle class mores, and influenced by the revolutionary fervor of the Russian Revolution and the Rice Riots, he dedicated himself to the establishment of socialism in Japan. This quest led him through five distinct periods, marked by changes in preferred strategies for achieving reform, but characterized overall by the pursuit of a consistent goal:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>1920-22</th>
<th>1922-25</th>
<th>1925-34</th>
<th>1934-37</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>anarcho-syndicalism</td>
<td>moderate labor unionism</td>
<td>proletarian party politics</td>
<td>union of military and proletariat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1937-40

union of tennō power with the proletariat

During the first period (1920-1922), Asō believed that the only way in which socialism could be achieved in Japan was through

confrontational tactics centered on strikes, with the ultimate aim being a complete societal shutdown. After participating in numerous strikes, he realized that this goal was unattainable as long as the workers lacked a proletarian class consciousness; thus he turned his attention to labor organizing and propagandizing between 1922 and 1925, and to proletarian party politics from 1925 through 1934.

By the mid-1930s his hope of politicizing the masses and legally realizing socialism in Japan through parliamentary tactics had waned as he became cognizant of the fact that the established parties would never allow the proletarian parties to dominate in the Diet. For this reason, Asō thought it was necessary to seek an ally who would allow his proletarian party to bypass the Diet in gaining the power needed to achieve socialism. From 1934-1936, he turned to a certain element of staff officers in the military in hopes that they would provide the might to destroy the bourgeois parties and zaibatsu which were controlling society. However, when the military firmly took over and subsequently failed to enact his socialist policies, he abandoned them and became a prime backer of Prince Konoe's "New Order" movement. In this final period of his life (1937-1940), Asō once again hoped to achieve socialism by bypassing the Diet, this time utilizing Konoe's stature as a relative of the emperor to permit his proletarian party to govern Japan.

In sum, Asō's Japanese adaptation of socialism borrowed the prerogatives of the emperor, utilized the strength of the military, but remained firmly grounded in the lives of the masses. Throughout his life, Asō continually chased after the ghost of the socialist
revolution. He saw its imminence in the strikes of 1920, in the 
proletarian party movement of the late 1920s, in the military coups of 
the middle 1930s, and in the need for a controlled economy after the 
outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937. In terms of our proposed 
model of ideological boundaries, Asō's consistent lower class orienta-
tion and commitment to the socialist revolution indicates that he re-
mained a revolutionary socialist in spite of the many tactical changes 
he employed. Thus his ideological inclination was similar to Sano's 
even though their political policies were quite different.

Akamatsu Katsumaro's case was different from Sano's and Asō's 
in that his increasing attraction to Japanese nationalist symbols 
caused him to abandon his socialist commitment to the lower class. In 
this sense, his adaptation of socialism was unsuccessful; yet, the 
lack of consistency in his political thought serves to highlight the 
tenacity of both Sano's and Asō's lower class and socialist orienta-
tions.

Akamatsu's inconsistent ideological positions were caused by 
his continuing search for an appropriate tactic which would allow him 
to reform society. Yet each time he thought that a tactic was in-
appropriate, he changed ideologies, as the chart below indicates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1922-23</th>
<th>1924-31</th>
<th>1932-33</th>
<th>1933-45</th>
<th>1945-55</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>communism</td>
<td>scientific</td>
<td>national</td>
<td>totalitarian</td>
<td>East Asianism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanism</td>
<td>socialism</td>
<td>Japanism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At first he was instilled with a revolutionary zeal by the Russian 
Revolution and the Rice Riots; Filled with a desire to enact a
socialist reconstruction program in Japan, Akamatsu joined the JCP in 1922 and rose to a leadership position in the Party the following year. While a communist, however, he harbored several "un-Marxist" notions, such as a continual sense of loyalty and reverence to the emperor, a love of fatherland, and a belief in the supremacy of human consciousness over historical materialism. Soon these feelings caused him to re-evaluate his ideological commitment to communism, and in 1923 he left the Party and remained anticommunist for the rest of his life.

From 1924-1931 Akamatsu transferred his loyalties to social democracy. His conception of this political philosophy centered on the three key elements of liberalism, economic realism, and nationalism. Liberalism signified the acquisition of democratic rights as well as the gradual progress towards socialism for the benefit of the lower class; economic realism entailed the espousal of a limited private property system with only partial nationalization of property and capital; and nationalism meant loyalty to the emperor and kokutai.

The crisis atmosphere brought on by the Manchurian Incident of 1931 resulted in a third change in Akamatsu's political thought. He now rejected the tenets of social democracy, and switched his allegiance to the burgeoning movement of national socialism. He believed that, while national socialism was similar to social democracy, it was more desirable because it elevated nationalism to an equal footing with socialism; that is, the two concepts became inexorably united under one system. However, Akamatsu insisted on adding two more elements which indicated a future change in his ideological inclinations. The first was an affirmation of imperialistic conquest. Whereas Sano opposed
imperialism and Asō hoped to use the war climate generated by imperialism to establish a socialistic economy at home, Akamatsu wholeheartedly supported imperialism for imperialism's sake.

The second new element in Akamatsu's "reformist" thought was an attraction to fascism. He was especially drawn to the fascist emphasis on national consciousness and mass demonstrations, but, at the same time, he deplored its lack of socialistic policies. He dropped this criticism of fascism after 1933 when he totally rejected socialism and was won over to the political creed of totalitarian Japanism. He now saw fascism as the wave of the future and believed that Japan would do best guided by a nationalistic middle class dictatorship. However, after Japan's loss in World War II, he abandoned any notion of reconstructionism or societal progress, and instead wrote about the need for Japanese to accept Asian thought and culture. With this in mind, he advocated the complete rejection of everything foreign, and a return to the glorious systems of past Asian masters, such as Buddha, Confucius, Lao Tzu, and Shōtoku Taishi.

In sum, Akamatsu's commitment to the lower class and radical change dwindled as he became increasingly nationalistic. In terms of the model for ideological designation, Akamatsu espoused the following contradictory positions: in his communist period (1922-23) he was a revolutionary socialist who emphasized a lower class-radical change position; in his scientific Japanism period (1924-1931), he was a social democrat advocating gradual change for the lower class; in his national socialist and totalitarian Japanism periods (1932-1945), he was a fascist emphasizing radical change by a middle class dictatorship; and
in his remaining years after World War II (1945-1955), he can be called a conservative for harking back to the glories of a past age.

The final case considered in this study was that of the "Imperial Marxist" clique of the young officer movement. As stated in Chapter 8, the three factions involved in the "young officer movement" must be considered separately in order correctly to gauge the competing ideological currents that characterized the movement. The "Hashimoto" faction of the Army had as its first priority continental expansion, and advocated the amelioration of the condition of the lower classes for the sole purpose of making them more fit for military service. In trying to achieve its ends, this faction became involved in both the March and October Incidents of 1931, as well as the Manchurian Incident. In terms of the political boundaries sketched in the model, the ideology of the "Hashimoto" faction closely approximates that of fascism because these officers espoused a radical change which would benefit the middle class more than the lower class.

The second element in the young officer movement was the "Naval" faction. Though these officers were aroused by the poverty of the lower class, they were driven to action primarily by their opposition to the London Naval Treaty which they saw as a danger to the defensive capabilities of Japan. It was because of this opposition that the lower and middle grade officers of the group initiated the May 15, 1932, Incident. In terms of ideological affiliation, the "Naval" group must also be seen as displaying a fascist-like tendency of promoting a coup primarily for military purposes, and only secondarily for reconstruction of society.
The third and final group within the movement was the "Imperial Marxist" clique. This faction differed significantly from the other two cliques in three basic ways. First, its motivation for reconstruction came wholly from a desire to rid the country of the inequalities and corruption inherent in the status quo. Secondly, it vilified the middle level staff officers in the Army (and both the "Hashimoto" and "Naval" factions numbered these among their ranks) as integral elements of the privileged class and thus "enemies of the people"; for this reason the clique discounted the idea of establishing a military cabinet after its planned February, 1936, coup. Thirdly, it strongly endorsed radical domestic reforms aimed at creating a new egalitarian society. Many in this group criticized Kita Ikki on the grounds that he was anti-lower class, whereas they wished to create their own system which would combine the elements of revolution and socialism, although they avoided such terms for fear of alienating their more "conservative" compatriots. In fact, their hope to create an "Imperial Communist" system dictates their position as revolutionary socialists in the political boundary model.

This study has analyzed four different attempts at making Marxism-Leninism more compatible with Japanese national customs and institutions by linking the two ideologies of nationalism and socialism. In the case of three of these political orientations, namely that of Sano Manabu, Asō Hisashi, and the "Imperial Marxist" clique of young officers, the union of nationalism and socialism was achieved without compromising their ultimate end of reconstructing Japan in order to
improve the lot of the masses. However, the possible inconsistencies inherent in mixing nationalism with socialism is illustrated by the case of Akamatsu Katsumaro, whose nationalistic fervor overwhelmed rather than complemented his socialist leanings to a point where he rejected socialism completely and turned instead to fascism.

In sum, despite the fact that in times of crisis, the nationalist elements might tend to replace socialist ones, this study demonstrates that socialist-oriented reformers found it possible to link the two ideologies of nationalism and socialism without violating their ideals or jeopardizing their goals. In fact, postwar communist parties in both Japan and Europe have been moving in this direction. The JCP in Japan, the French, Italian, and Spanish Communist parties in Western Europe, and the splinter Communist party of the Interior in Greece have all rejected the notion of "dictatorship of the proletariat," accepted the autonomy and independence of each communist party, and espoused a democratic advance toward socialism. In light of such trends, it would be wrong to argue, as some have, that Japanese prewar adaptations of socialism were merely opportunistic since Japanese nationalists could not be faithful to socialist principles as well as nationalist symbols. Rather than viewing these attempts to nativize socialism as opportunistic, it is more accurate to see them as efforts to indigenize theory; that is, to achieve socialist ends without indiscriminate imitation of the Russian "model" of communism. This goal was explicitly stated by Sano Manabu, who, in alluding to Mao Tse-tung's modifications of Marxism-Leninism, wrote: "Just as Mao needed a Sinification of
Marxism-Leninism, we need its thorough Japanization.\footnote{14} Although the Japanese attempts to reconcile nationalism and socialism did fail in the prewar period, the struggle to accomplish this end continues today both within Japan and in other countries.

APPENDIX A

ACTIVISTS AFFILIATED WITH THE RÖNÖHA
(LABOR-FARMER GROUP) MOVEMENT

Abe Isamu 阿部勇
Adachi Katsuaki 足立克明
Aono Suekichi 青野季吉
Arahata Kanson 荒畑寒村
Arisawa Hiromi 有沢広己
Eda Saburō 江田三郎
Honda Kenzō* 稲村順三
Inamura Junzō 猪俣津南雄
Inomata Tsunao 石見知行
Ishihama Tomoyuki 石細行
Itō Yoshimichi 伊藤好道
Katō Kanjū 加藤勘十
Kitaura Sentarō 北浦千太郎
Kobori Jinji 小堀甚二
Kuroda Hisao 黒田寿男
Kushida Tamizō 櫛田民蔵
Nakanishi Inosuke 中西伊之助
Nonaka Taneyuki 野中誠之
Okada Sōji 岡田宗司
ōmori Yoshitarō 大森義太郎
ōuchi Hyōe 大内兵衛
ōyama Ikuo 大山郁夫
ryū Shintarō 笠信太郎
Sakai Toshihiko 堺利彦
Sakisaka Itsuro 向坂逸郎
Sasaki Kōzō 佐佐木更三
Sasa Hiroyuki 佐佐弘雄
Suzuki Mosaburō 佐佐木茂三郎
Takahashi Masao 高橋正雄
Takano Minoru 高野敏
Takatsu Masamichi 高津正道
Tsuchiya Takao 土屋義雄
Tsushima Tadayuki 東島忠行
Uno Kōzō 宇野弘蔵
Yamada Moritārō 山田盛太郎
Yamahana Hideo 山花孝雄
Yamakawa Hitoshi 山川均
Yoshikawa Morikuni 吉川守邦

*Kanji missing
APPENDIX B

ACTIVISTS AFFILIATED WITH THE RODÔSHAHA
(WORKER'S FACTION) MOVEMENT

Aida Hidemune
Asano Akira
Fujii Yonezô
Fujinuma Eishirô
Fuyuno Takeo
Hara Kikue
Igarashi Nobuo
Inamura Ryûichi
Kadoya Hiroshi
Kamijô Hiroo
Karasawa Seihachi
Kasuga Shôjirô
Kawai Etsuzô
Kawamura Tsuneichi
Kiire Toratarô
Kikuta Zengorô
Kimoto Minoru
Konnai Kanemitsu
Koreeda Kyôji
Minami Kiichi
Minato Shichirô
Miyahara Shôkyû
Mizuno Shigeo
Murao Satsuo
Murayama Tôshirô
Nakamura Yoshiaki
Numata Hidesato
Oda Shigeru
Ôyama Iwao
Sano Fumio
Sekine Etsurô
Shimakami Zengorô
Shirotani Chûzô
Sugimoto Fumio
Tanaka Toshio
Tanida Tadashi
Toyoda Sunao
Yamazaki Minoru
Yamazoe Naoshi
Yokoi Kameo

230
APPENDIX C

ACTIVISTS AFFILIATED WITH THE PRE- AND POSTWAR ONE-STATE SOCIALISM MOVEMENT

Aketa Takumi
Amamori Takusaburō
Fukazawa Tei
Gengorōmaru (now Koga) (古賀)芳晴
Hayama Zenji
Hiroshi Ken'ichi
Hongen Jurō
Hotta Seisuke
Imaizumi Zen'ichi
Ishida Kyōzō
Jinma Kenji
Kashiyama Toshitada
Katayama Mineto
Kawachi Ushinosuke
Kawasaki Tateo
Kazama Jōkichi
Kikuchi Hiroshi
Kobayashi Morito
Kobayashi Yoshisaku
Koiku Hitoshi

Kondō Eizō
Konno Yojiro
Kutsumi Fusako
Matsuo Shigeki
Mitamura Shirō
Nabeyama Sadachika
Nakao Katsuo
Nishimura Saiki
Noma Hiroshi
Nozaki Seiji
Ozaki Noboru
Sano Hiroshi
Sano Manabu
Sugiura Keiichi
Takahashi Sadaki
Takeuchi Bunji
Tanaka Seigen
Tani Ichirō
Watanabe (Shiga) Taeko

Yano Sasao

Kawachi Dshinosuke
Kawasaki Tateo
Kazama Jōkichi
Kikuchi Hiroshi
Kobayashi Morito
Kobayashi Yoshisaku
Koiku Hitoshi

231
APPENDIX D

SAND'S 1930 SOCIALIST POLICIES FOR JAPAN*

A. Industry, transportation, and communication organs:

1. Nationalization without compensation of all major industrial operations (factories, mines, electricity, and so on) and transference of their ownership to the soviets.

2. Confiscation and nationalization of the private management of communication organs (post office, telephone, telegraph, and radio) and transference of these public operated organs to the soviets.

3. Confiscation and nationalization of privately managed transportation organs (railroads, automobiles, ships, and airplanes) and transference of these operations to the soviets.

4. Worker control of industry.

5. Modification of the industrial system (switching from the manufacture of luxury items to the production of essentials for the benefit of the majority; encouraging industry to accelerate agricultural development; developing nationally-operated enterprises and a national economy).

B. Agriculture:

1. Confiscation and nationalization of large landholdings in urban and rural areas and transference of public land resources (arable land, forests, and water ways) to the soviets.
2. Confiscation of buildings, cultivated land, livestock, and so on, attached to the larger landholdings.
3. Confiscation of large farms.
4. Division of the confiscated land and distribution of it in parts to poor peasants.
5. Strict prohibitions on the buying or selling of land.
6. Free cancellation of debts burdening the poor peasant.
7. Creation of large-scale, nationally-operated farms and promotion of scientific techniques in all areas of agriculture.
8. Strengthening of a national network of all agricultural cooperatives (in production, credit unions, both purchasing and selling, and so on).

C. Commerce and credit:

1. Nationalization of private banks and the transfer of public banks to the state (proletariat).
2. Creation of one national bank by integrating all existing banks.
3. Nationalization of large-scale commerce and emporiums.
5. Cancellation of the existing national debt.
D. Labor problems:

1. Seven-hour work day for all except workers in dangerous factory occupations for whom a six-hour work day will suffice; creation of a five-day work week as industrial power develops.

2. Maximum six-hour work day for those under eighteen years of age.

3. Prohibition of night work or dangerous work by women or minors.

4. National management of each type of social insurance (disability, old age, unemployment).

5. Immediate attention to improvement of sanitary conditions, construction of large sanitoriums and formation of programs against social diseases.

6. Absolute equality for men and women under the law, state-controlled nurseries for children, and protection of mothers and infants.

E. Residence:

1. Confiscation of large houses.

2. Management of these confiscated houses by the soviets.

3. Transformation of bourgeois residential areas into residential areas for workers.

4. Transference of existing public buildings to worker groups.

5. Realization of plans for large-scale residential housing.

F. Proletarian dictatorship and popular independence:

1. Right of self-determination for all peoples.
2. Right of all peoples freed from capitalism to unite voluntarily, establish a socialist economy, and continue the united struggle against capitalism.

3. Opposition to all forms of racial prejudice.

4. Guarantee of the development of popular culture based on the proletariat.
APPENDIX E

SANO'S 1946 SOCIALIST POLICIES FOR JAPAN*

A. Political policies:

1. Thorough democratization and development of socialism.

2. Control over the emperor system as an organ for the promotion of peoples' rights, representing the will of the laborers, peasants and other productive forces.

3. Immediate formation of a coalition cabinet comprised of all democratic parties.

4. Establishment of a democratic organ which would be above the Diet and which would be composed of representatives from national peoples' assemblies.

5. Establishment of a united front of all democratic groups and individuals not affiliated with any party.

6. Public election of the prime minister and the prefectural governors.

7. Election of a people's police.

8. Universal suffrage for all Japanese over eighteen years of age.


10. Organization of the first people's assembly in order to vote on the continuation of the emperor system.

B. Economic policies:

1. Revival of production by using slogans such as: "Hard work is essential; those who do not work will not eat, for Japan cannot rise again without increased production."

2. Complete dissolution of the zaibatsu.

3. Assurance through horizontal unification of the economic freedom of medium and small businesses, as well as of large scale production.

4. State control of large industry and nationalization of banks.

5. Distribution of products by cooperatives.

6. Reform of the Japanese industrial system by using American capital and technology.

C. Agriculture policies:


2. Breakup of the large landholdings and rational execution of agricultural reforms.

3. Establishment of agricultural committees, accomplishment of practical land reforms through the work of these committees, complete democratization of village government including independent market management.

4. Revival of autonomous young men's associations.

5. Disposal of state land and imperial estates, and the establishment of state-run farms as well as farms operated by the villages.

6. Nationalized fertilizer production and distribution by cooperatives.
D. Labor policies:
1. Freedom of operation for labor unions.
2. Eight-hour workday, guaranteed minimum wage and unemployment insurance.
3. Worker participation in management.
4. Establishment of democratic factory committees.

E. Social policies:
1. Formation of a public service corps.
2. Education on the basis of ability regardless of money, popular control of imperial universities, and a five-fold increase in the pay of the nation's school teachers.
3. Reform of the family structure so as to promote individual self-consciousness, equal social and political rights for both men and women, and abolition of licensed prostitution.

F. International policies:
1. Participation in ensuring international peace.
2. Overseas emigration of twenty million people.
3. Formation of a mass union of all peoples of East Asia.
4. Creation of a Japan-China-Korea socialist league.


________. Shakai minshushugi no hata no moto ni (Under the Banner of Social Democracy). Tokyo: Chūsei dō, 1930.

________. "Kagakuteki Nipponshugi kara shuppatsu shite" (Departing from Scientific Japanism), Kaizō, December 1931, pp. 72-77.


________. "Sano-kun no shi o kanashimu" (Grieving the Death of Sano), Kokumin hyōron, June 1953, pp. 24-26.


Arahata Kanson. "Tenkō shita kyōtō no omoide" (Recollections of the Leaders Who Tenkōed), Kaizō, August 1933, pp. 36-47.


Asō Hisako. "Sano-san o kataru" (Speaking About Sano), Kokumin hyōron, June 1953, pp. 52-53.


Higuchi Masao. "Sayoku zenrekisha no tenkō mondai ni tsuite" (Concerning the Tenkō Problem in the Personal Histories of Those Who Were in the Left Wing), in Shakai Mondai Shiryō Kenkyūkai, ed., Shisō kenkyū shiryō (Sources of Thought Research), special edition 95 (August 1943).

Holsti, Ole R. "The Study of International Politics Makes Strange Bedfellows: Theories of the 'Old Right' and the 'New Left.'" Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences and University of British Colombia, revised draft (October 1972).


Ishii Kin'ichirō. "Kita Ikki to seinen shōkō" (Kita Ikki and the Young Officers), Shisō, 404 (February 1958), 59-74.


———. "Shōwa seiji shi kenkyū e no ichi shikaku" (One Viewpoint toward Research on Shōwa Political History), Shisō, 624 (June 1976), 215-228.


Kaga Otohiko. "Ni-ni roku jiken to jidai seishin" (The February 26 Incident and the Spirit of the Times), Chūō kōron, 89 (January 1974), 336-345.


———. "Mosukō no Sano Manabu-shi" (Sano Manabu in Moscow), *Kokumin hyōron*, June 1953, pp. 67-68.


Kokumin hyōron. "Sano Manabu tsuito tokushū, Tōyōteki shakaishugi no kyoka" (Special Memorial Edition for Sano Manabu, the Torchlight of East Asian Socialism), June 1953.


Miwa Jusō. "Oshii hito no shi" (The Death of a Dear Man), Kokumin hyōron, June 1953, pp. 17-18.


Nabeyama Sadachika. "Nabeyama Sadachika shuki" (The Notes of Nabeyama Sadachika), Shiso geppo, 106 (September 1943), 97-134.


__________. "Yūfun no shisōka" (A Thinker of Grief and Anger), Kokumin hyōron, June 1953, pp. 6-9.


Nakada Minoru. "Chūken shōkō no kiki ishiki to Sakurakai no keisei yōin" (Factors in the Formation of the Sakurakai and the Danger Consciousness of the Middle-Grade Officers), Rekishi hyōron, 260 (March 1972), 51-60.

Nakamura Kikuo. "Kakumeika no shi—Sano Manabu-shi o itamu" (Death of a Revolutionary—Mourning Sano Manabu), Kokumin hyōron, June 1953, pp. 73-75.


Ōno Shinzō. "Shisōka ken gakusha toshite no Sano Manabu-shi" (Sano Manabu as a Thinker and Scholar), Kokumin hyōron, June 1953, pp. 10-15.


Sano Manabu. "Karuru Marukusu no bōryokukan" (Karl Marx's View of Violence), Kaihō, May 1920, pp. 76-85.

___________. "Shakaishugi 'mirai kokka' o ronzu" (Comments on the Future Socialist State), Kaihō, March 1920, pp. 2-13.

___________. "Waga kuni chisa kaikyū no shakai shikan" (Socio-Historical View of the Ruling Class in Our Country), Kaihō, September 1921, pp. 15-27.

___________. "Futsū senkyō zakkan" (Miscellaneous Impressions on Universal Suffrage), Kaihō, March 1922, pp. 96-100.


___________. "Jochū no shakaiteki igi" (The Social Significance of Women), Fujin kōron (July 1922). Reprinted in Sano Manabu, Tōsō ni yorite kaihō e (From Struggle to Emancipation). Tokyo: Waseda taibunsha, 1923.


_________. "Taiwan gikai no setchi o tasuke yo" (Let Us Help Establish a Taiwanese Diet), Taiwan zasshi (March 1923). Reprinted in Sano Manabu, Tōsō ni yorite kaihō e (From Struggle to Emancipation). Tokyo: Waseda taibunsha, 1923.

_________. Tōsō ni yorite kaihō e (From Struggle to Emancipation). Tokyo: Waseda taibunsha, 1923.


________. "Shina jihen ni yosu" (Commentary on the China Incident), Bungei shunju, 13 (October 1937), 216-235.

________. "Kokoro no ato—tenkō seimei igo" (Reviewing the Past--After the Tenkō Statement), Shisō geppo, 106 (September 1943), 7-40.
Sano Manabu. "Shinnenteki jikō ni'san--shuki 'kokoro no ato' ho-i" (Two or Three Items of Faith--An Appendix to the Memo 'Reviewing the Past'), Shisō geppo, 106 (September 1943), 41-89.


"Sano - Nabeyama no tenkō hihan" (Criticisms of the Sano-Nabeyama Tenkō), Chūō koron, July 1933, pp. 417-419.


Shishi Bunroku. "Kaiko" (Recollections), Kokumin hyōron, June 1953, pp. 36-37.


______. "Yamakawa Hitoshi: The Making of a Socialist in Meiji Japan." Unpublished manuscript, California State University at Sacramento, n.d.


______. Marukishizumu to kokkashugii (Marxism and Nationalism). Tokyo: Kaizōsha, 1927.

"Takabatake Motoyuki no shisō to ningen" (The Thought and Person of Takabatake Motoyuki), Shinseiryoku, special edition, May 1967.


Takase Kiyoshi. "Dai-ni no taigyaku jiken" (The Second Treason Incident), Jiyū, October 1962, pp. 128-137.


Takeyama Morio. "Rikugun seinen shōkō undō no tenkai to zasetsu" (The Development and Collapse of the Army Young Officer Movement), Shigaku zasshi, 78(6) (June 1969), 1-37 and 78(7) (July 1969), 1-50.


Yamakawa Hitoshi. "Kyōsantō ryōkyōtō no tenkō" (The Tenkō of the Two Communist Party Leaders), Chūō kōron, July 1933, pp. 49-59.


Personal Communications

Sano Hiroshi, President, Nihon Seiji Keizai Kenkyūjo; private interview, Tokyo, February 19, 1977.

Suematsu Tahei, construction company official, now residing in Chiba Prefecture, Japan; private interview, Tokyo, March 30, 1977; personal correspondence, April 7, 1977.

Takahashi Masae, Editor for Misuzu Shobō; private interview, March 16, 1977.

Tani Ichirō, member, Nihon Seiji Keizai Kenkyūjo; private interview, Tokyo, February 19, 1977.