The Second "Postwar": Japan's Re-encounter with Asia in the 1960s and 1970s (Du beonjjae 'jeonhu': 1960~1970 nyeondae asia wa majuchin ilbon)

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In twenty-first century Japan, the term "postwar" plainly signifies the period after the Pacific War.[1] Determining this period's precise duration, however, is another matter. Debate in Japan over the postwar began with its experience of high economic growth, a period declared to be "no longer the postwar" (*Mohaya sengode wanai*).[2] Implied in such a declaration is the sharp separation between "prewar" and "postwar" with respect to the Asia Pacific War and the idea of a period of rapid change in which a collapsed nation reemerged as a member of international society. Postwar Japan began in defeat and occupation. Inherent to the idea of "postwar" Japan, then, was the "evil" and "criminality" of war and

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[1] In December 1941 the second Sino Japanese War that began on July 7, 1937 gave way to the Pacific War. Taken altogether, however, the scope of this conflict incorporated not only China and the Pacific but also all of Asia. It may thus be referred to as the "Asia Pacific War."

[2] Keizaikikakuchō [Economic Planning Agency], Nenjikeizaihōkoku [Annual economic report], July 1956.

renouncement of the "prewar" in which lay the war's origins. In this manner, whether conservative or reformist, it was believed Japan could establish a new socially reformed and democratic society by affirming the discontinuity between the "prewar" and "postwar."

Preliminary research pertaining to the postwar period is thus strikingly characterized by an emphasis on the discontinuity between pre and postwar Japan. Such a perspective highlights the transformation of Japan under US occupation, upholding the "success of unconditional surrender." As a representative example of this, one may look to John W. dower's *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (2000). More recently, however, research has increasingly questioned the idea that occupation reforms were realized in accordance with an externally prescribed image or projected hopes and experiences.[3] Amamiya Shōichi, for example, sharply differentiates between "radical reform through defeat of the totalitarian system" and "radical reform through occupation" to emphasize the continuity between the prewar, post-defeat, and postwar periods. He accordingly argues that Japan could have pursued democracy without occupation, albeit more gradually. Thus, the debate over continuity and discontinuity with respect to postwar occupation reforms has continued unabated.

Aside from debating the meaning of the "postwar," full-fledged debate over the "postwar" in Japan began on May 15, 1995. Along with historical issues creating friction between Japan and other Asian nations since the early 1990s, the fiftieth anniversary marking the end of the war afforded Japan the opportunity to reflect on its defeat and occupation. *The Second Postwar* is a work attempting to address this yet unresolved issue in Japan. Breaking free of traditional "success story" and "occupation and reform" narratives, it seeks a new understanding of the

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[3] Amamiya Shōichi, *Jeomnyeong gwa gaehyeok* [Occupation and reform], trans. Yoo Jia (Korea: Eomunhaksa, 2012).

"postwar" in terms of the greater Asian context.

The book is the fruit of critical awareness shared in successive seminars held by the "Postwar Japan Seminar Team" at the Sungkonghoe University Institute for East Asian Studies. It pays close attention to the intensification of capitalistic and Cold War contradictions emerging as the Japanese "postwar" system took root and how this shaped conflicts and hostility between Japan and other Asian, as well as third-world, countries. Although the Japanese people actively embraced a "revolution from above" immediately after defeat, the Cold War and Korean War seemed to reveal that war could break out irrespective of Japanese provocation. Ultimately, the pursuit of economic reconstruction under the revived imperial system as the occupation withdrew could not but hinder democratic reform. The "postwar' created together by the U.S. and Japan thus took hold as a system excluding Asia and the third world.

The "second postwar" referenced in the book's title does not allude to the 1960s and 1970s in chronological terms alone; this was the period in which "high-growth Japan" came to fruition. It was also the period in which the people and states of Asia, having traversed myriad postcolonial frustrations, entered once more into the Japanese field of view. Following the Korean War in 1950, the signing of the San Francisco Treaty in 1951, the end of US military occupation in 1952, and the armistice agreement suspending the Korean War in 1953, the hodgepodge of international cohabitation characterizing prewar Asia gave way to clearly defined, separate states. In the 1960s, new security-centered partnerships were formed in the wake of the global capitalist tide and intensification of the Cold War. The book explores this process in three sections corresponding to three events: the normalization of Korea-Japan relations in 1965, the normalization of Sino-Japanese relations in 1972, and the return of Okinawa to Japan in 1972. Therein section one deals with "colonial aftermath and the onset of the Cold War," section two, "deadlocked perspectives," and section three, "the Asian problem."

The book's first section portrays the postwar encounter between

Korea and Japan as former colony and colonizer. The first chapter, "Normalization of Chosen Studies-Korean Studies Relations," provides an account of the "Chosen Studies Conference," the first postwar academic conference held in Japan in which Korean scholars participated. The author argues that financial support provided by the Asia Foundation to participating Korean scholars exemplified how the U.S. sought to expedite the normalization of relations between Korea and Japan by promoting private exchanges. Rather than merely emphasizing the importance of scholarly and interdisciplinary exchange, then, this chapter presents important evidence showing the influence of international relations and the US-led plan for an East Asian cooperative regime even in the realm of academia. The second chapter, "Beyond Empire as Compulsory Colonial Taboo," begins with the claim that the US pursuit of normalization between Korea and Japan was part of a series of measures meant for the East Asian region congruent with a global hegemonic design. In this context, the pressing issue of "coloniality" emerged together with the global resistance to the Cold War order centered on the United States and the Soviet Union as reflected in critical debates over "neocolonialism" and "neoimperialism." The argument of this chapter may serve to clarify the relationship between Korea-Japan-US relations and the colony-colonizer problem.

The second section is generally concerned with perceived feelings owing to the similarity of "postwar" subjects in Korea and Japan. The fourth chapter, "Two 'Postwars', Two 'Mournings'," describes a common system of historical interpretation in Korea and Japan reflected in the feelings and behaviors of the lives and diaries of children in both nations that suffered due to the war. The fifth chapter, "Okinawans and Zainichi Koreans, 'Postwar' History of a Mutual Gaze," elucidates the solidarity between Okinawans and Zainichi Koreans as they struggled to move from "non-citizens" to "citizens" of Japan and a united Korea, respectively. While the Okinawans achieved citizen status with the return of Okinawa to Japan, many Koreans ended up turning to residency in

Japan as Korean division persisted. The "postwar," as viewed by marginalized peoples in Korea and Japan, thus demanded life choices unexplainable through "continuity" and "discontinuity" alone. And when facing this reality, their respective gazes could not but intersect. This is a novel line of argument that will be greatly helpful to the understanding of the "postwar" in Korea and Japan.

Finally, the third section deals with the encounter of Japanese intellectuals with Asia. Topics include Oda Makoto's Korea, records of travel in North Korea, memories of America in artworks portraying the nuclear bombing, memories of colonial rule, and Tsumura Takashi's struggle with immigration control and his encounter with Asia and the third world through anti-discrimination discourse. The investigation of the reasoning and methods Japanese intellectuals employed in their turn toward Asia is important since this may yield important criteria for understanding how the Japanese perceive Asia.

Altogether, the book investigates and reveals the Japanese national character formed under the Cold War regime by analyzing the capitalist and Cold War contradictions emerging as the "postwar" system took root primarily with respect to Japanese relations with Asia and the third world. In order to do this, it draws on the concept of the "second postwar," which corresponds to the 1960s and 1970s. As is made clear in the book's introduction, not only does this investigation encompass the extensive space that is Asia, but also the various problems and interrelations between each of the individual states therein. One can only surmise the difficulty of binding together such diversity into a single volume. Despite the variety of researchers and research areas involved, moreover, the interrelatedness of the book's contents is not lost across its three sections. One must thus appreciate the manner in which the book allows the reader to grasp the overall flow.

Another notable point is the book's refreshing look at Japan's re-encounter with Asia during the period of high economic growth after having dealt with defeat and occupation. Not only were the 1960s and

1970s marked by normalizations between Korea and Japan and China and Japan and the restoration of Okinawa to Japan, as the book discusses, but also the emergence of military rule in Korea following the April 19 Revolution and the May 16 military coup d'état and the consolidation of US-Japan security relations through revisions to the Security Treaty Between the United States and Japan. While the book does not necessarily discuss this wider historical context in detail, it is certainly grounded on the idea that, in the 1960s and 1970s, when postwar restoration efforts appeared to be paying off, Korea and Japan opted to strengthen and use the Cold War order in East Asia through alliance with the United States. Ultimately, one can say, the current historical disputes between Korea and Japan are the result of this, making study of this period, and the significance of the book, all the more important.

Nevertheless, the book is not without shortcomings. Each of the essays included in the book, for example, are concerned only with progressive Japanese intellectuals. While one must acknowledge the difficulty of conducting research pertaining to ordinary people, portraying their perceptions of the re-encounter with Asia, rather than the plainly intelligible thoughts and actions of intellectuals, might have gone further to pique the reader's interest.

Lately talk of Japan's "rightward turn" has become all too common in the public sphere. With the overwhelming victory of Abe in the recent general election in Japan, even after he ran into trouble concerning a political funding issue, this view has only become more preponderant. With respect to security, nuclear, and territorial issues, this election was an important political matter signaling changes in East Asia threatening to entangle not only North Korea and China but the United States as well. It was accordingly an election paid attention to by many Asians. However, there are insufficient grounds for associating Japanese citizens' preference for Abe with the desire for constitutional revision allowing for the waging of war. But perhaps the recent election does confirm suspicions that, just as in the 1960s and 1970s when it chose rejoining

the international community and pursuing economic growth through alignment with the United States over reconciliation and cooperation with Asian states, Japan yet regards reconciliation and cooperation with Asia as a lesser priority. While the books does not address this suspicion, in terms of the manner in which it illustrates the perceptions that emerged amid the re-encounter between Japan and Asia in the 1960s and 1970s, it offers clues as to what might happen when Japan and Asia encounter each another once again. It is this aspect of the book, most of all, which will surely interest readers.