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## **A Study on The Historical Continuity Between Pre-War Japan and Post-War Japan**

Jin Ki Kim  
Department of Japanese Studies,  
The College of Humanities and Social Sciences,  
Pukyong National University, Busan, South Korea  
jkkim@pknu.ac.kr

### **Abstract**

This paper purports to examine pre-War Japan and post-War Japan in a comparative perspective. This paper's assertion is that the post-War Japanese system is fundamentally the extension of the pre-War Japanese system, contrary to the common opinion that post-War Japanese system is different from the pre-War Japanese system. In tracing the continuity between pre-War and post-War Japanese system, the Allied Occupation has been analyzed. In spite of many policies of SCAP for democratization and demilitarization of Japan, many of pre-War Japanese system was not demolished because of the intensification of the Cold War and the reversal of Occupation policies. As a result, dominant elites of pre-War Japan who were in charge of the War were survived from the Occupation and came back to the Japanese government and society. Politicians, bureaucrats, and businessmen who were prosecuted by the military tribunal or purged from their offices as war crimes came back to the stage. They have the collective political and ideological orientation that the state is superior to the civil society. Second, government institutions such as the War Ministry and the Ministry of Internal Affairs which are also in charge of war have remained with the name change. Last but not least, many post-War plans, especially in the economic field, stems from pre-War experiences. In this sense, the assertion that Japan's defeat and the ensuing period of Occupation are the starting point for contemporary Japanese system has to be revised. In a nutshell, the present Japanese system in historical context has the continuity from pre-War Japanese system in terms of the political orientation of the ruling elite, government institutions, and policies.

*Keywords:* pre-war Japan, post-war Japan, occupation, SCAP, historical continuity

### **Issue Development**

The rapid rise of the Japanese economy in the post-war era has attracted much attention from many scholars in the field of political science and economics. High economic growth with colossal trade surplus and competitive advantages of several industries in the world market has evoked the discussion of industrial policy or government intervention in the free market among scholars and practitioners (Magaziner & Hout, 1981; Johnson, 1984; Schultz, 1983; Krugman, 1986; Diebold, 1980; 小宮, et.al., 1984).

The ruins of World War II was sufficient to make people believe that it would take a very long time for Japan to recover its economy. Moreover, Japan is the nation lacking in natural resources. However, contrary to the pessimistic assessments, Japan has demonstrated successful economic growth and overcome the total devastation of industrial facilities and lack of resources. Such a rapid economic recovery has easily led not a few

Western observers to the conclusion that Japanese could not have achieved this success without the state playing an aggressive and decisive role (Johnson, 1982; Kaplan, 1972).

The traditional approach to the post-war Japanese economic growth stresses the state, especially its bureaucracy, as the active actor of success. The industrial policy of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) has received attention from many scholars as well as bureaucrats, who are interested in the economic growth of their own countries. To be sure, this argument is very persuasive. As a result, the Japanese model, which is characterized by the state-controlled or bureaucrats-led economic policy, has been considered to apply applicable to many developing countries.

However, despite abundant discussions on Japanese industrial policy, little attention has been given to the international economic situation surrounding Japan, on the one hand, and the post-war Japanese policymaking structure, on the other. The one relates to the international situation of the Korean War and the Vietnamese War. It means that the rapid economic growth of Japan is heavily indebted to the beginning of the Cold war, specifically, two wars. Actually, with the collapse of the Cold war in the 1990s, the Japanese economy has been in long-term depression. The other relates to the pre-war Japanese system, which is characterized by mobilization for war.

### **Hypothesis**

This paper asserts that the post-War Japanese system is fundamentally the extension of the pre-War Japanese system, contrary to the common opinion that the post-War Japanese system is different from the pre-War Japanese system. It means that post-war Japan is just the extension of pre-war Japan in terms of personnel, government institutions and policies, despite the significant changes in appearance such as Constitution, government institutions, and several things.

For this purpose, this paper examines pre-War Japan and post-War Japan in comparative perspective. A study attempting to analyze a continuity between the pre-war Japanese system and that of the post-war period can efficiently provide us with explanations on the political and economic orientation of Japanese elites, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the diplomatic and industrial policy of post-war Japan. It means that this topic is closely related not only to the industrial policy but also to the diplomatic policy of Japan.

### **Literature Review**

In tracing contemporary Japanese system, the period of the Allied Occupation is very decisive in the understanding post-war Japanese system. It is commonly said that the post-war Japanese society is different from the pre-war Japanese system because the Occupation led to fundamental systemic changes in Japanese politics and economics. Among these changes, the most significant was the rewriting of the Japanese Constitution as the basis for democratic politics, and the signing of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, which underwrote Japan's national security. Most works on current Japanese politics begin with this period (Maruyama 1964; 辻清明, 1969; Masumi 1965-1980). If one concurs with the view that there is a discontinuity between the contemporary Japanese political system and that of the pre-war period, this division is natural.

However, those who advocate continuity perspective point to many legislation and policies during the period of a national mobilization in the 1930s. At that time, the military and bureaucracy have substantial power to control society and to mobilize economic resources. It is now widely accepted that the war mobilization system was useful in the post-war recovery and the prosperous period of high growth (榊原英資・野口悠紀雄, 1977; 野口 1996). It is also commonly acknowledged that the framework for government economic operations and the bureaucratic development of the legal system have their

origins in the mobilization era. Therefore, discussion of the relatively high economic growth rate in Japan, Germany, and Italy is always associated with the influence of mobilization for war(the effects of the fascist era).

**Allied Occupation and the Reverse Course**

In tracing the continuity between pre-War and post-War Japanese system, the Allied Occupation is very important. Despite SCAP policies for democratization and demilitarization of Japan, many of pre-war Japanese system was not demolished because of the intensification of the Cold War and the reversal of Occupation policies. As a result, many of the early purgees at the initial stage have reinstated in his post after the Appeals Board as shown <Table.1> and <Table.2>.

<Table.1> Purgees by Categories

Category	Number	Percent
Military elite	167,035	79.6
Bureaucratic elite	1,809	0.9
Political elite	34,892	16.5
Ultranationalistic elite	3,438	1.6
Business elite	1,898	0.9
Information Media elite	1,216	0.5
Total	210,288	100

Source : Statistics Bureau, Prime Minister's Office and chart in Kinoshita Hanji, *Purge Policy and After*, Tokyo : Nihon Taiheiyo Mondai Chosakai(Japan Institute of Pacific Relations), 1954, pp. 33-35. Hans H. Baerwald. *The Purge of Japanese Leaders under the Occupation*(Berkeley and Los Angeles : University of California Press, 1959), p. 80.

<Table.2> Reinstated Cases

Agency	Terms	Number of persons appealed	Number Of persons reinstated
1 <sup>st</sup> Appeals Board..... Application for administrative rescission of designation.....	Mar. 3, 1947-May 10, 1948	1,085	148
	June 24, 1948-Apr.4, 1949	2,363	1,522
2 <sup>nd</sup> Appeals Board..... Depurge of young officers of army and navy..... Administrative depurge by categories.....	Feb.8, 1949-Mar.31, 1951	32,127	10,090
	Oct. 31, 1951	-	3,250
	June 18, 1951-Nov. 6, 1951	...	177,261
3 <sup>rd</sup> Appeals Board.....	Nov. 29, 1951-Apr.28, 1952	9,943	9,306
Total		45,518	201,577

Source : Statistics Bureau, Prime Minister's Office, 1952. (Separate copy, typed.). Hans H. Baerwald. 1959. *The Purge of Japanese Leaders under the Occupation*(Berkeley and Los Angeles : University of California Press, 1959), p.

### Pre-war and Post-war Career of Japanese elites

Reinstated persons could have the opportunity to test their policy which they tried in the 1930s at Manchuria. Moreover, they have much power compared to the pre-war period because the Japanese military had dissolved. Most of the personnel who were in charge of the post-war industrial policy or social policy were reform bureaucrats and control bureaucrats. Reform bureaucrats were active mostly in economic-related ministries and agencies.

They had believed economic mobilization in Germany, Britain, and the USA during the 1st World War as good examples of business model. It is neither a capitalist model nor a socialist model. It is an idealistic model which represent the cooperation between the government and the private sector. For example, for Hoashi Kei, who had been secretary-general of the umbrella organization of the control associations, the most excellent economic model was 'economic guidance' in Nazi Germany which is different from the 'economic planning.'<sup>(榊原英資・野口悠紀雄, 1977; 野口 1996)</sup>.

Control bureaucrats were based mostly in the non-economic field. Their activity stretches widely for all the fields widely spread from the central government to the regional government. It means that the list of <Table. 3> is only one part of all the control bureaucrats. The list of former 'thought police' officials who re-emerged as politicians are much longer. A large number of them also ended up as prefectural governors, as officials in the local public safety commissions of in lower regional government positions. (秦郁彦, 1983, 2002)

<Table. 3> Pre-war and post-war Career of some bureaucrats

Name	Pre-war career	Post-war career
KISHI Nobusuke	Reform bureaucrat. Ministry of Munitions	Prime Minister
SHIINA Etsusaburo	Manchurian reform bureaucrat	MITI Minister
SAKOMIZU Hisatsune	Ministry of Finance official	Head of the EPA
MORINAGA Teiichiro	Ministry of Finance official	Vice-minister of finance, The governor of the BOJ
SHIMOMURA Osamu	Ministry of Finance official	The governor of the BOJ Official of ESB
ICHIMANTA Hisato	Ministry of Finance official	The governor of the BOJ
ISHIKAWA Ichiro	A member of the important Industries Control Association	Chairman of KEIDANREN
OKITA Saburo	The economic-control bureaucrat and the industrial control association official	The official of the Economic Planning Agency, Foreign minister, minister in charge of international economic relations
MATSUMOTO Kenjiro	the 1 <sup>st</sup> chairman of the coal industry control group, chairman of Important Industries Control Association	Chairman of KEIDANREN
UEMURA	the vice-chairman of the main	Chariman of KEIDANREN

Name	Pre-war career	Post-war career
Kogoro GOSHI Kohei	committee Chief secretary of the wartime Important Industries Control Association	Chairman of the Japan Productivity Center
OKAZAKI Eijo	Tokko section chief in Aichi and Tokyo	Vice-minister of the Ministry of Labour, vice-chairman of the LDP's public security committee
HARA Bumbei	Kagoshima Tokko section chief	An Upper House member, head of the Tokyo metropolitan police.
OKUNO Seisuke	Vice-minister of Home Affairs, Education Minister and Justice Minister	Director-general of the National Land Agency
FURUI Yoshimi	Naimusho police bureau chief, Naimusho vice-minister, governor of Ibaragi and Aichi.	Welfare Minister and Justice Minister
ODACHI Shigeo	Naimusho Minister	Education Minister
NADAO Hirokichi	Naimusho vice-minister and Oita governor	Welfare Minister , Education Minister
MASUHARA Keikichi	Wakayama Tokko section chief	Director-general of the Self- Defense Agency
OTSUBO Yasuo	In charge of the police section monitoring publications	Parliamentary vice-minister of education and of justice, chairman of the judicial affairs committee of the Lower House.
GOTO Fumio	A leader of the reform bureaucrats and Naimusho minister	Served in the Upper House

CPB : Cabinet Planning Board

MITI : Ministry of International Trade and Industry

ESB : post-war Economic Stabilization Board

BOJ : The Bank of Japan

Naimusho : the major social-control Ministry of pre-war Japan

Tokko : pre-war thought police in Naimusho.

In addition to the officials, politicians and soldiers were also reinstated. Most of the leaders of LDP were reinstated politicians, and they played a critical role that the post-war Japanese politics could be controlled by the conservative group such as reform bureaucrats and control bureaucrats. The military elite which is the greatest portion among purgees were also reinstated to the SDF which was made at the time of Korean War. In fact, most of the chief secretary and staff of SDF were returned military persons of pre-war Japanese army and navy.

The heads of each SDF services were recruited from reinstated Japanese army and navy. Yoshihide Amano (天野良英), Ichiji Sugita(杉田一次), Kengoro Tanaka(田中兼伍郎), Shinobu Takayama(高山信分), Magari Tosiyo(曲 寿朗), Seiichi Yoshie(吉江誠一), Hiroomi Kurisu(栗栖弘臣) who were the Chief of Ground SDF had been the staff members of the pre-war Japanese army. Takaichi Itaya(板谷隆一), Kazutomi Uchida(内田一臣), Ichizo Sugie(杉江一三), Teiji Nakamura(中村悌次), Sadayoshi Nakamura(中村定義), Hiroichi Samejima(鮫島博一) who were the Chief of Maritime SDF had been the staff members of pre-war Japanese Navy. Monjiro Akiyama (秋山紋次郎), Noriyuki Ishikawa (石川貫之), Motoharu Shirakawa(白川元春), Minoru Genda(源田 実), Sadamu Sanagi(佐雜 毅) who were the Chief of Air SDF had also been the staff members of pre-war Japanese army and navy.(秦郁彦. 2005) Of course, the list is much longer if increasing the extent other than the head of each SDF services.

### **Post-war Dominant Elite group**

As a result, dominant elites of pre-War Japan who were in charge of the War were survived from the Occupation and came back to the Japanese government and society. Politicians, bureaucrats, businesspeople, and military men who were prosecuted by the military tribunal or purged from their offices as war crimes came back to the stage. They have the collective political and ideological orientation that the state is superior to the civil society.

The pre-war elite structure was not undermined, and rather its fundamental nature has been maintained. This fact provides that the post-war elites shared a mentality of state-controlled or state-led economic developmental planning with their predecessor in the pre-war era. In a nutshell, the politicians, bureaucrats, businesspeople, and military officer who were critical figures not only the central government level but the regional government level in post-war Japan live on through the Occupation.

### **Pre-war Legacies of Institutions and Policies**

Continuity between pre-war Japan and post-war Japan was not limited to the personnel. In terms of institution, the continuity can be found at the central government ministries and agencies. The typical example was NAIMUSHO. NAIMUSHO had the dictatorial powers over the ordinary public and controlled all the ordinary public life in pre-war Japan. It was divided several ministries after the defeat. Its social bureau became the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Health and Welfare. Its civil engineering bureau turned into the Ministry of Construction and the National Land Agency. Its police bureau became the National Police Agency and its local bureau renewed itself as the Ministry of Home Affairs(Jichisho).

In spite of the dismantlement of organization, there were no changes in the nature of NAIMUSHO because the lower branches and infrastructure were not changed. Moreover, the NAIMUSHO members who were bureaucrats were reinstated after the judge of the Appeals Board. Other ministries such as MOF, MOFA, and the others were survived for the Occupation despite a slight change of ministry name.

Last but not least, many post-War plans, especially in the economic field, stems from pre-War experiences. Indeed, the two policies which have strongly influenced the post-war economic growth are inherited from wartime economic legislation. One is the financial relationships around which the vast conglomerates emerged. The other is the neo-mercantilist trade tradition. The main bank system, which considered as a characteristic of Japanese economy stems from the 'system of financial institutions authorized to finance munitions companies' of pre-war Japan(Wolferen 1989, 384-395).

Dual price system of rice which had existed for a few years after the defeat of Japan also inherited from the war-time policy of the early 1940s. Company union, as well as a seniority system, lifetime employment which are the characteristics of Japanese management, have been inherited from the war-time, too.(中村隆英 著 1974)

### Conclusion

In this context, the assertion that Japan's defeat and the ensuing period of Occupation are the starting point for contemporary Japanese system has to be revised. In a nutshell, the present Japanese system in historical context has the continuity from pre-War Japanese system in terms of the political orientation of the ruling elite, government institutions, and policies. Pre-war legacies in terms of personnel, institution, and policy became of the basis of post-war Japanese system and achieved the post-war economic miracle.

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