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Economic Development and Economic  
Thought of Fascism in Japan \*

by

Yoshiyuki Sekiguchi  
Faculty of Economics  
University of Tokyo

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PREPARED UNDER  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR THE JAPANESE ECONOMY #

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When in 1858 the Japanese economy was forced open to become an integral part of the world market, it did prepare the way to a rapid development of the economy for over a century to come, culminating in the birth of an 'economic giant' in today's Japan. This development, however, entailed westernization cum industrialization without indigenous formation of the modern civil society and the type of man characteristic of modern citizenry. There resulted symbiosis of a kind between ultra-modernity and traditionalism (or pre-modern features) by decimating modernity par excellence. In many ways this was a product of world capitalism with its phase differentials vis-a-vis late-starting 'national economies.'

This paper will deal with the case of Ikki Kita (1883-1937) 1/ from among various figures of intellectuals who felt antipathetic to the path of westernization cum "industrialization without modernization" of the Meiji era onward, ending up being disheartened and frustrated. This will reveal the kind of problematique the specifically Japanese type of fascism wished to pose and where it erred.

[I-1] Kita's starting point was the national aspiration for pursuing genuine modernity, specifically accompanied by the birth of true individuals as independent persons. Subsequently, however, he came to sense the Meiji Government straying into a degenerate bureaucratic rule little different from that of Tokugawa days. Even if the 'industrial revolution' about the turn of the century made Japan a prospective 'England of the East,'

it rested, in the critical eyes of Kita, on the socio-cultural-spiritual climate rather befitting a 'Tribe-community of the East' with the patriarchal perception of the "kokutai" (state polity) with ideas of "kunshin-ikka" (Japan as one great family with the Emperor at its head), "chū-kō itchi" (loyalty and filial piety being one and the same) and "bansei ikkei" (eternal line of emperors). Kita was also concerned with the emerging crisis with the rest of Asia as Japan was rapidly industrialized, and engaged in an ideological confrontation with the then popular argument of 'making up for the loss Japan suffered on the Western front (i.e., dependency on earlier-starting capitalist economies) by winning on the Eastern front (i.e., dominating Asian markets).' His sense of urgency, however, ultimately resulted in his proposed solution which Shiso Hattori was to describe as the 'earliest formulation of fascist ideology in the world.' 2/ I will take such a development of Kita's thinking as a frame of reference by which to illuminate the pre-war macro- and micro-economic thought of the ordinary Japanese people, and to put the post-war situation also in perspective.

[I-2] Before I deal with Kita's thinking per se, let me say a few words about the first two points I have made above: that industrialization in Japan was not necessarily accompanied by modernization of the whole society and proceeded with the support of the traditional framework of the society and traditionalistic mentality and mind-set, and that this socio-economic-psychological constellation was formed in the context of strong external pressures exerted by advanced countries of the time.

Among social and economic historians in Japan there has always been a keen awareness that comparison or comparative method be decisively important as an 'experiment' possible at all in historical studies, through which dogmatization of theories can be controlled and absolutization of the historical experience of a single nation can be avoided, and that "setting up an axis of a critical comparison on the world-historical scale in accurate

measures" be absolutely essential in order to illuminate the historical characteristics of capitalistic development in Japan following the Meiji Restoration; one of the characteristics which seems to form a marked contrast to Western capitalism being that advancing commercialization and industrialization was not necessarily accompanied here by modernization of the society, or rather, the traditionalistic social relations actually supported and promoted rapid economic growth. It is precisely upon such a methodological realization that during the "dark tunnel" of the pre-war days, a specific indigenous school of economic history studies, pioneered by Prof. Hisao Ōtsuka, was formed in its outline, and has since been deepened and broadened both theoretically and empirically.

It is emphasized in this School that 'industrialization' must not be taken as necessarily synonymous with fundamental and total 'modernization' of the social structure. Rather, we must note the fact that a high degree of industrial achievements was often closely associated with the pre-modern basis or framework of the society. This view would thus try to account for the symbiotic relations that existed between seemingly incompatible features of the society. Here we define the terms 'industrialization' and 'modernization' as Prof. Ōtsuka does. I quote:

"We would understand the term 'industrialization' as meaning the process in course of which the various sectors of industry come to be carried on as profit-making enterprises (or 'businesses'). For our present purposes 'industrialization' is a phenomenon independent of any particular social system...". On the other hand, we "understand 'modernization' as meaning roughly that process in course of which traditional society is disintegrated and modern society formed out of it. ... Since all traditional societies are social systems which have been built up on the foundation of some form of pre-modern small communities, it follows that our term 'modernization' includes as one of its basic aspects the process of the final disintegration of these small communities...."

Now, in the case of the bourgeois revolutions of Western Europe, modernization and industrialization thereafter went hand in hand, promoting each other's progress, whereas in Japan, in spite of the fact that a partial break-away from traditional institutions was effected by the industrialization of the post-Restoration period, and in particular by a high level of industrialization in the urban areas, the framework of the traditional social system, with its main bases in the agricultural village communities, was preserved intact. What is more, these two sectors (industrial and traditional) not only coexisted over time but were bound together, supporting one another, with the one forming a prior condition for the other's persistence. Observing these structural characteristics of 'semi-feudal capitalism' (to use Prof. Moritarō Yamada's notion) as it existed in Japan, Prof. Ōtsuka criticizes the optimistic view that industrialization must always call modernization into being sooner or later, and expounds "that industrialization stood in what one may call an ambivalent relation to modernization, that in some circumstances it supported and advanced modernization but in other circumstances entered into association with the institutions of traditional society to prevent thoroughgoing modernization."<sup>3/</sup>

[I-3] In order adequately to analyze such an ambivalent relationship between 'industrialization' and 'modernization,' particularly the absence of automatic succession of the latter from the former, due regard must be paid on international factors in identifying the pattern of industrialization of individual countries. The process of industrialization must be examined not merely in the context of history of that specific country alone but in the context of the global environment, particularly in relation to the impact from the country or countries which have been industrialized already. It is in Great Britain that industrialization was achieved at the earliest date in the human history in an indigenous way and in the most classical manner. That is why that country's experience is referred to as THE Industrial Revolution with

capital letters, which I think is a useful practice. What is important is that this Industrial Revolution with capital letters in Great Britain exerted a far-reaching impact not only on the British society but on other countries. Industrial revolutions (or take-off, or industrialization, if one prefers these terms) occurred in other countries with the British Industrial Revolution as inevitable and probably indispensable pre-conditions. This in part means that these other late-starting countries could not go through the same process of industrialization as Great Britain if only because of the tremendous impact of that early-starter.

Now, it is quite possible for late-starting countries to learn and adopt very quickly the fruit of many years' efforts on the part of the early-starter country like Great Britain. Such a rapid and massive introduction of technology, institutions, financial resources and even ideas from the early-starter is referred to as the 'economies of backwardness,' which usually is given much emphasis. Prof. F. D. Chambers, for instance, states in his 'Preface to the Japanese Edition' of his book Workshop of the World that industrial development of late-starters "would have taken much longer" except for the British technology and British experience. He further claims that in this context the 'Japanese readers' should be able to read 'with excitement' and with 'shared pleasure' the historical account of how Britain became the workshop of the world. But there is the other side to the matter which holds us back from reading Prof. Chamber's book with unbridled excitement. For one thing we often observe the phenomenon of 'Functions-wandlung' (change of functions) in that the imported 'modern' technology often reinforced the traditionalistic interests of the recipient countries economically (such as privilege-ridden businesses of the old type, carried out by landlords and merchants). Furthermore, the advanced country often was not merely the benefactor who willingly supplied transferable technology and institutional means. It also supplied the 'possibility of dependency on external sources of financial resources.' To the late-starting countries, the

early starter presented itself first and foremost as the personification of 'advanced-country nationalism' to challenge them with overwhelming economic power and impose competition on them. Late-starters in fact had to face the 'dis-economies of backwardness' in their industrializing efforts in resisting the overwhelming current originating in advanced-country nationalism.

Introduction of capital and technology only was an inevitable substitute to partially offset these 'dis-economies of backwardness.' Forced adoption of many aspects of the western civilization in order to resist the advanced countries, together with the resulting psychological discord has been a part of the historical experience of many late-starters, including Japan. It resulted in a variety of structural distortions in the receiving end where industrialization did not necessarily bring about modernization, and which came to characterize the pattern of industrialization of many late-starting countries.

[I-4] As is symbolized by frequent use of such phrases as 'imperialism of free trade' and 'development of underdevelopment,' recent years have seen some attempts at re-structuring the image of world history from within the historical experiences of non-European regions. The Japanese experience of having been forced to open up its ports to the world and start on its path of industrialization under the 'threat of the four black ships' of Commodore Perry of the United States has made us painfully aware that specific patterns of industrialization in individual countries can be adequately established only by taking into account the forms the British or Western impact took and the patterns of response the late-starters adopted. That is to say: the interaction between the international factors and domestic factors should form an essential aspect of our task in analyzing various industrializing endeavors.

When Japan opened its ports to Western powers, the Japanese economy was heteronomously and passively incorporated into the world market. At this time the possibility of a gradual formation of a balanced national economy on

the basis of its rural industries was dealt a fatal blow. Prof. Thomas C. Smith characterizes the Japanese economy prior to the opening up of the country as going through the "rural-centred pre-modern growth," and points out the existence of mass-consumption industries (such as cotton) in the rural areas surrounding advanced urban centers, and also the more marked "de-urbanization" (or decline of castle towns) in these rural areas. He stresses the creation of massive eligible labor (essential for industrialization!), as well as the genesis of modern entrepreneurship, from among these rural industries, and denies the applicability of the Gerschenkron model to the case of Japan because the Gerschenkron model posits a big spurt brought about by the introduction of capital-intensive technology owing to the lack of eligible labor.<sup>4/</sup>

At any rate, the prospect for a "rural-centred pre-modern growth" to be pursued further was denied as free trade was forced upon Japan. Sir Rutherford Alcock, the first British Envoy in Japan describes in his narrative of his residence in Japan (The Capital of Tycoon) how rapidly and devastatingly the balance in the regional and nation-wide trade structure became distorted by the sudden and powerful demand-pull from abroad for "certain articles of home consumption" (raw silk in particular). Alcock goes on to criticize Japanese "patriotic ministers" who, faced with a distinct possibility of turning the whole country into a mono-cultural economy, resisted to it by devising what today would be called a network of non-tariff barriers. Among such a "system of obstruction, expressly designed to prevent all rapid extension <of export>," Alcock lists various "inspection and taxation" measures, the "non-observance or enforcement of contracts," and the "want of system in the custom-house and inadequate wharfage accommodation," and the "official interference with labour, cargo-boats and the sale of Japanese produce." He further reports that "the spirit of official meddling and restriction seems a part of the very constitution of Japan." -- Does this not remind us of today's trade frictions and associated rhetorics? Certainly,



except to say that it was Japan that was asking for an 'orderly export of Japanese produce' at that time, while the Western powers did not allow this because they wanted to have a 'torrential' imports of raw silk. Putting aside this historical irony for the moment, we also note an interesting way Alcock describes the opening of the ports. He calls it "the effervescence of a sudden contact between two compounds so differently constituted as European and Japanese civilisations," and goes on to say that "characteristic differences in manners, customs, and habits, and the very stamp of civilisation which exists in the East, compared with the type of Western development ... interfere with the interchange of merchandise, or the pressure and influence of material interest." He saw it as a mission of 'civilised countries' to soundly destroy such cultural barriers and propagate "a political economy which Japanese are slow to believe in," which preached that free and unrestricted trade would bring about the greatest possible benefits.<sup>5/</sup> As is shown here, ever since substantial development of individual national economies came to be achieved within the world-historical context, economic frictions almost always have been political and cultural frictions as well.

[I-5] Japan thus did manage to avoid the path of becoming another monocultural colony of a Western power, although economic, political and cultural frictions were rampant. But the colonial path could be avoided only by 'industrializing the economy by foregoing the task of modernizing the society.' It is true that there were certain indigenous development of the economy and its spiritual basis that were oriented toward modernization. Particularly in the advanced areas surrounding Osaka and Nagoya and those facing the Inland Sea, those features which in Europe and America characterized the emergence of modernity are reported to have existed, i.e., the formation of local market areas and growth of rural industries and the industrial middle stratum on the basis of these local markets (This was essentially what was meant by "rural-centred pre-modern economic growth" in T. Smith's terms). Against this background there were rural bourgeoisie, a new class of merchants and land-owning farmers, and lower samurai classes inseparably associated with the above who all enjoyed an ample stock of dynamic asceticism and empirical rationalism. More study is needed to establish how and to what extent these spiritual tendencies were similar to or different from that Protestantism and the ensuing this-worldly asceticism which in Western Europe played such a decisive role in bringing about modernization. But we should take due note of the fact that there definitely was an indigenous growth of spontaneous entrepreneurial spirit among the 'rural entrepreneurs' toward the end of the Tokugawa era. J. Hirschmeier describes their ethos as 'very imaginative and enterprising; not bound by tradition.'6/

It probably was due to the existence of these fundamentals of development that Japan, unlike other Asian countries, was able to stay away from the colonial path and rather embark on a different path, one of high economic growth with the slogans of "fukoku kyōhei" (a rich nation with great military strength) and "shokusan kōgyō" (increase of production and promotion of industry). And there was an able and disciplined work force as a prerequisite for industrialization. On the other hand, however, such incipient

forces for spontaneous development were NOT allowed to grow smoothly and contribute their full to the actual post-Meiji development of the country. The Meiji Government could not afford the time a spontaneous development would have required. As a way to resist the onslaught of advanced economies the Government chose a path of making a ruthless use of the indigenous 'bourgeois development of some substance' in order to serve the cause of reverse (or parasitic) mode of development by imposing Western-styled large enterprises FROM ABOVE. This choice did a full blow to the incipient native forces for development. It also worked to preserve the older small community order on the basis of rural communities and served the landed interests and those of the new entrepreneurs with strong political affiliations. In order to reinforce this path of development in psychological and spiritual terms the Meiji Government instilled the samurai-styled asceticism and Confucian rationalism among the populace through the educational system with the Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890 as its guiding principle. Under the national order modeled after patrimonialism with the Emperor as the great family head, or what Takeyoshi Kawashima appropriately referred to as the Patrimonial Structure of the Japanese society, the indigenous ethos for modernization was suffocated. The Meiji officials were "not completely convinced that the building of an 'infrastructure' by direct investments would suffice to set the process of modernization in motion. They apparently felt that economic development depended as much on cultural and ideological as on material premises." 7/ Faced with the challenge of Western powers, the Meiji bureaucracy did come out with its own strategy of bringing about the needed 'New Deal in emotion' among the people (A. Gerschenkron) by what one might call a reverse Cultural Revolution. This educational reform and other initial efforts at industrialization laid down the ground rule for subsequent development, which, while promoting economic growth, was to create almost a fateful problematique for the nation's psyche persisting even to this day, well over a century after the Meiji Restoration.

And the starting point for Ikki Kita as a social thinker was nothing but a critique of this path of development for the country, that of Westernization and of 'industrialization at the cost of modernization,' chosen as a response to the Western impact on the country.

[II-1] Ikki Kita's maiden publication, Kokutairon and Pure Socialism (1906) was written at no other time period than the last phase of the 'establishment of the industrial capital in Japan.' For Kita the Meiji Restoration of 1868 provided the ultimate criterion pointing to the ideal of nation building as a 'modern democratic state,' to be referred back to constantly and persistently. For Kita it was part of an eternal national myth, comparable to the French Revolution. First of all, it transformed Japan from a 'kacho koku' (patriarchal state with the sovereignty residing in a monarch) to a 'komin kokka' (citizen state with the sovereignty residing in the state!). It changed the object of loyalty from the Emperor to the nation. 'Slave morals' of 'kunshin-ikka' and of 'chu-ko itchi' (respectively meaning 'Japan as one great family with the Emperor at its head' and 'loyalty and filial piety being one and the same') were newly superseded by 'democracy.' Secondly, the Meiji Restoration made Japan a land of small independent peasantry, although somewhat compromisingly and falteringly. Japan was now a country where 'the basis of democracy' existed with the right of private ownership of the fruit of one's labor and also with the middle class firmly established as the backbone of the state. It is true that such a perception of the Meiji Restoration by Kita did contain questionable elements which Shiso Hattori criticized as the origin of Rono-ha school of modern Japanese history (looking at the Meiji Restoration as a bourgeois revolution),<sup>8/</sup> but on closer examinations such a simplistic view does no justice to Kita's thinking. Kita always took democratic reforms to mean the revolution of individualism, and that was 'the ideal of the Meiji Restoration.' Kita did realize that this ideal was already undermined after the Seinan civil war of 1877. At one time it

seemed as if the national energy particularly of small independent peasantry and of peti-bourgeoisie was genuinely liberated, but it quickly was suffocated and 'the age of decline of the independent yeomanry' began. Incipient signs of impending modernity, together with establishment of individuals as truly independent persons, were trampled down, and the 'patrimonial bureaucracy little different from the Tokugawa regime' resulted. For Kita, the democracy to have been achieved by the Meiji Restoration was an illusive myth created by his sense of crisis over the lost Restoration Revolution. Pursuit of the ideal of Restoration remained Kita's leitmotiv throughout his turbulent life.

Such a perceived divergence between the ideals of the Restoration and the actual course Japan took did not close as the economy went through its version of industrial revolution. In fact, this divergence subsequently became a permanent and decisive feature of the Japanese society. Kita's 1906 book is critical of the prevailing state of affairs: Economically and industrially Japan was the 'England of the East,' but socially and culturally it was a 'Tribe-community of the East.' It was Kita's view that precisely when the industrial capital was being established and large enterprises were growing to create an 'England of the East,' the philosophy of national polity began to dominate people's mind by advocating Japan as one great family with the Emperor at its head, loyalty and filial piety being one and the same and the eternal line of emperors. Kita lamented this by saying that "thirty-nine years after that great national revolution, history seems to flow backwards," and while the economy grew, he saw "neither political freedom nor independence in morals, inevitably calling for a repetition of the revolution of individualism." He felt compelled to call on "the pitiful Tribe-community of the East to realize that if mere existence of railways and telegraphs could produce a civilized nation, then the darkest part of Africa should by now be a monarch with flowering civilization." 9/ Even when industrialization was in full swing with the resulting growth of the economy, he could hardly expect modernization in the mode of thinking or in the behavior pattern to really emerge. He

realized that traditionalistic and reactionary social and spiritual climate may very well facilitate economic growth. What is criticized most sharply here by Kita is indeed that divergent relationship between modernization and industrialization.

[II-2] At the very outset of his Kokutairon and Pure Socialism he declares that the book "attempts to overwhelm the so-called academism." For one thing this was a statement of his intention to fulfill the true roles intellectuals should play in a late-starting country both theoretically and practically. The social reality of a backward society was too complex to be analyzed in a comprehensive manner by the prevailing academic attitude of calling it science when it merely was a translation of specialized fields of study developed in the West. Nor could it come up with viable criticism. Kita ventured to offer both.

But this was not all. Ever since the Meiji Restoration Japan had always imported the RESULT of scientific endeavors in the West and not the process through which it had been obtained, i.e., there were always correct answers ready to be imported. That was the way in which Japan transplanted Western learning and technology. In order to catch up with the West, Western learning was imposed on the Japanese spirit. But the result was the birth of a large number of intellectuals whom Aizan Yamaji described as only receiving the already completed thinking (in the West) with conspicuous lack of true modern thinking spirit of developing one's own thought on the basis of real life of the people. The 1890's and 1900's saw the process of this type of academics forming a class of their own by alienating themselves from the resident local intellectuals, with an ever growing divergency between they and reality.<sup>10/</sup> It was in 1907, only a year after the publication of Kita's book, that Soseki Natsume resigned from the Imperial University of Tokyo, having resolved to lead his own life by dissociating himself from the life of 'floating weeds who would accept whatever Westerners say with no independence of mind.' It was also about

this time that Kanzo Uchimura was saying that 'best commentaries on the Bible come not from those graduates of theological seminaries but from rice paddies and factories and kitchens,' and emphasized that 'without work knowledge fades.' About this time, too, Keinosuke Ashida started a campaign of pragmatism, by urging every category of people to write down about their life. It was against such a background that Ikki Kita mounted a heavy criticism against both those who were 'merely translating and reporting theories of foreigners,' and those who 'merely narrated the imported ideas to the people from above with the help of the prestige derived from the Government's endorsement as the new orthodoxy.' What he attacked was the servility and obsequiousness of these academicians (and of businessmen) in relation to the political power of the day. Kita succinctly perceived a miniature of the entire nation (or a civil society in disguise) in the way academic community thrived. To Kita the citizenry had no clear identity, as academic world had little identity of modern nature, submerged under the sea of community-oriented and patrimonial structure of ideology. Among those most severely criticized by Kita are academics advocating 'kokutairon' (theory of state polity), such as Yatsuka Hozumi and Tetsujirō Inoue, and those academic socialists who 'tried to build socialism on the theory of state polity' as well as those ideologues of state socialism.11/

[II-3] Toward the end of the Meiji era privileged zaibatsu capital was 'riding high on steam and electric power,' 'armoured by education and wealth,' and took the leadership in industrializing the economy. This placed rural-based small- and medium-scaled workers in grave economic hardship. Not only that, it was destroying what Kunio Yanagida referred to as the 'intangible assets (of farmer-artisans) to value own honesty, diligence, and sincerity as well as the high level of craftsmanship.' Against the decline of wholesome economic ethic and empiricism as well as rationalism, the reactionary ideology of state polity flourished, with emphasis on the now familiar points about Japan being one great family, loyalty and filial piety as identical and emperors in an eternal line. Aware of the manifold crisis brought about by such an inverted form of industrialization, how could one be complacent and sing sweet songs of economic growth? -- This was the way Kita saw the prevailing reality in Japan. And the only cure he could prescribe was, for the moment at least, his version of socialism (which he called scientific socialism or social democracy).

He maintained, however, that there were certain factors in Japan which required 'very special' attention in trying to realize socialism in this country. Mindlessly translated socialism of the West was not seen to be capable of bringing about a genuine indigenized revolution. He emphasized that 'no social democracy existed without the value of component individuals being fully appreciated,' and that 'in such a place as Japan, where, unlike the West, there has been neither theories nor revolutions of individualism, it is necessary to foster adequate development of individualism as a prerequisite to social democracy.' We see here that (although Kita later turned fascist) his immediate concern as of the end of the Meiji era to overcome the then crisis was a firm establishment of 'modern persons' and destruction of traditional Asiatic statism which stood in its way (and not the destruction of capitalism). It was in this sense that Kita saw establishment of a bourgeois society as a prerequisite to socialism in Japan.



Kita thus attacked mercilessly such armchair socialists as En Kanai and Kinji Tajima. Advocates of state socialists such as Teikichi Shiba, Kanjiro Higuchi and Aizan Yamaji were also sharply criticized as the 'most mysterious creatures' trying to 'build socialism on kokutairon or the theory of state polity.' For him, 'the society made up of individuals with no value attached' was nothing but 'a conglomeration of slaves' or palia-socialism, which must be distinguished from his pure-socialism. Particularly in state socialism Kita sensed indications of 'bureaucratic autocracy with the idea of all-powerful state' (resurgence of Egyptian-style slave labor!), and tried to reveal the true nature of state socialism, after taking away all its disguise, as being merely a new variety of the old advocacy of 'returning sovereign properties to the Throne' on the basis of Asiatic Gemeinschaft mentality and patrimonial ideology. 12/ Kita argues: "Read for yourself what Mr. Kanjirō Higuchi says in his Kokka shakaishugi shin kyōikugaku (New Pedagogy of State Socialism). He says, "Historical factors exist to make it easier to establish socialism in Japan. Our Nation is a big family. The respected Imperial family is the patriarch of this great family. In front of the Emperor the four classes are equal. The Emperor benevolently looks on us as equals. Thus, there exists an age-old belief that the country belongs to this great family. ... This is a laudable belief present in no foreign countries. Land assets belong to the Emperor. The patriarch has the prerogative of confiscating any assets of the family members for the sake of that big family. ..." Oh, these words make our backs sweat in torrents. Shame yourself! Shame yourself! If this is state socialism, it is neither statism-nationalism nor socialism. It is an absolute and unfettered monarchism. ... The Japanese people may be short in physical stature, but they are by no means children who would stop quarrelling with toys and sugar the Emperor might give."13/

[II-4] Such a prototype of Kita's thinking, carved out by the on-going rapid industrialization or the process of industrial capital being

established, was in itself a product of his sense of crisis, but a deepened and accumulated sense of crisis drove his thinking into convergence at fascism. Needless to say, the sense of crisis is no simple reflection of the objective reality but refers to the image of the world as perceived by the thinker, a crisis conjured up within himself.

Since Japan had a meagre domestic market and the timing coincided with the pre-mature imperialism in foreign policy, rapid industrialization of Japan meant the process of emerging crisis with Asia within the context of the crisis in Asia. Kita's 1912 book, Shina kakumei gaishi (A Private History of the Chinese Revolution), written following his involvement in the Chinese Revolution of 1911 expresses concern over the role of Japan as one of the victimizers of Asia while the rest of Asia had become or was threatened to become colonies or semi-colonies of the Western imperialism. This was a book with the intention of admonishing those in power for being Asians and yet acting to create crises in Asia. As is pointed out by Kōichi Nomura, 14/ Japan had been 'preoccupied with preserving its own existence' since the end of the Tokugawa era but subsequently the victory in the Russo-Japanese War and the completion of an industrial revolution relieved the country from the sense of national crisis to a degree so that it 'could now afford to ponder over its reasons for existence (raison d'ê<sup>^</sup>tre).' From among several competing types of national missions was finally chosen the theory of a union between Eastern and Western civilizations (Tōzai bummei yūgōron) as espoused by Shigenobu Ōkuma as its champion. This theory wholeheartedly endorsed the path of industrialization pursued ever since the beginning of Meiji (i.e., Westernization), and looked upon the cultural mission of intervening in unifying Eastern and Western civilizations (or 'modernizing Asia) as a 'destiny for Japan.' Here was a complex feeling of solidarity with and superiority over Asia. It was a product of the initial Meiji attitude of seeking 'civilization and enlightenment,' and, under a thin veneer, it really amounted to a policy pursued by dependent imperialism, that of 'making up for the loss Japan

suffered on the Western front, particularly vis-a-vis Britain, by winning on the Eastern front, particularly by dominating the Chinese market.' Kita's reaction to this policy line was also vehement. To look at China as the 'Chinese market' and not as an 'Asian issue' in the context of Anglo-Japanese Alliance would only create a crisis situation with revolutionary China, and Sino-Japanese split (or crisis with Asia more generally) would only deepen the crisis in Asia, argued Kita. Did the Japanese want to become executioners of white man's capital or a leader of East Asia? Japan should stop being an 'agent of the British foreign office in London' or the 'Indian policemen in Britain' (many Indians were being employed as policemen in Britain), and effect a switch in its foreign policy to a more pro-Chinese and anti-British line. So argued Kita. 15/

By this stand on foreign policy issues, Kita now deepened his thinking into a two-axis system of criticizing the kokutairon on the domestic front and two-civilizations-union theory on the diplomatic front. This also led him to a re-examination of the concept of socialism and a critique of the prevailing notions of socialism. Kita maintained that socialism should serve to promote Japan's national mission and also be beneficial to independence and revolution of China.

By closely examining the revolutionary reality in China, Kita had now discovered that there was such a concept as revolutionary dictatorship for the purpose of achieving democratic freedom and that there was a 'general rule of history to the effect that all the revolutions, old and new, be carried out by armed forces, particularly by junior officers and soldiers.' Despite certain important differences between the two nations, the Chinese 'then under the slave master's whip' would come to closer contacts with Japan, with a Japan which had lost sight of the spirit of the Meiji Restoration and now was merely a 'Tribe-community of the East.' Concomitant sense of crisis prevailing in Japan would serve as a catalyst to prompt the mobilization of the ultimate Imperial authority and a coup d'état -- this was the new

direction Kita's thinking took, as put forth in his Kaizō hōan (See below).15/

Having criticized Japan's alliance with Britain, Kita went on to claim that it was Japan's God-given mission to wage in a war with Britain to force its withdrawal from east of the Suez (as well as to support China in her war with Russia). Thus, he ultimately sought a solution of the crisis (particularly the crisis with Asia, and thus with China) in the 'Great Asia Policy' with the 'gospel of the sword,' and stood on the principle of 'great revolutionary imperialism,' which 'advocated distributive justice of national life among nations by use of the sword.'17/ Although such a stand of Ikki Kita did originate in the critical reality in which Asia found itself, it then made a big jump to seek the 'ethic of survival' in the 'logic of survival.' As K. Nomura's superb analysis shows, Kita went to the diagonal opposite of where Kanzō Uchimura stood, who, while denouncing Shigenobu Ōkuma's policy of alligning with Britain, persisted in his effort to seek the 'logic of survival' in the 'ethic of survival' itself. Uchimura's point can be summarized in a few short sentences: "If one tried to Japanize the world, Japan would perish in the end. If one tried to globalize Japan, one would end up with having Japan a world power." Uchimura condemned the logic of 'survival of the fittest' as the logic of the 'gold-gilded country of hypocrisy,' that of the ultimate ruin of what once was the glorious West. At the same time, however, he returned to the Puritan ethic as the very starting point of the modern West, which he still found very much alive deep in the soul of the Western civilization, and took that ethic as the launching pad for thoroughgoing criticism of both the Western civilization itself and Japan as its running dog (this criticism took the form of opposing the Russo-Japanese war).

[II-5] After World War I, Kita's sense of crisis was accelerated to a frenzy in the context of the Russian Revolution and the so-called general crisis of capitalism. In Shanghai in particular he saw his own prophecy

fulfilled when in 1919 his former Chinese friends stood at the forefront of anti-Japanese movement in the explosive climate of the 'Movement of 4 May.' For him this was the crisis with Asia. Thinking that 'if left unattended, the corrupt Japan would be further corrupted, with disastrous consequences on its global policy, on its China policy and indeed on itself,' he became convinced that the only possible solution lay in 'disecting away the classes with political and economic privileges,' and thus in 'clarifying the spirit of the Meiji Restoration once again.' Here Kita had his plans of domestic reform, 18/ which was outlined in his Nihon kaizō hōan taikō (A Plan for the Reorganization of Japan), published in 1923. His version of Mein Kampf, advocating the Shōwa Restoration and calling for domestic reforms through coup d'état and armed liberation of Asia, also meant a bulwark against 'internal disintegration' (meaning Communist revolution) for Kita.

His plan of reorganizing Japan consisted of the following items. First, ownership rights were to be restricted by limiting private property, nationalizing big enterprises and carrying out land reform among others. This in effect was an advocacy of Mittelstandsozialismus (middle-class socialism), which would do away with zaibatsu groups and execute land reform 'without ever giving a sense of uneasiness to the middle class and below.' Secondly, the national economy was to be subjected to rational plans and the 'state to be reorganized in a productive manner.' Strong emphasis was laid on the construction of an independent economy. Thirdly, rights and welfare of the people, particularly of workers, were to be stressed. Again, emphasis was laid on the 'right to life of the people,' 'protection of human rights of the people,' and particularly the 'rights of workers.' George M. Wilson sees 'a rationalizing intention in a Weberian sense' in Kita's political and economic programs and also 'a kind of welfare-state approach to modern social problems' in his social program. 19/

Kita's starting point was the insistence that 'Japan cannot become a true leader in Asia unless it executes the domestic reforms.' Without

deviating in principle from this position, however, Kita went a step beyond a categorical statement of this principle in his Kaizō hōan, claiming that 'militaristic expansion abroad be the ultimate objective of the domestic reorganization,' where domestic reforms were looked upon as a preparation for the ultimate objective of armed expansion (or armed 'liberation' of Asia). In this sense his 'social reform plans for the Japanese people' in fact had become 'a typical fascist ideology with expansion abroad and domestic reforms directly tied together.'<sup>21/</sup> Furthermore, Kita maintained that Japan being an 'international proletariat' was rightly entitled to improve its armed forces and that Japan's effort at correcting international injustices through war or war threat should 'receive unreserved recognition.' 'Unless distribution among nations, rather than domestic distribution, be determined, Japan's social problems would never be solved,' he persisted. His logic was that 'if the present Japan with its military clique and zaibatsu groups in dominant position advocated such a program, it might repeat the blunder of Germany (meaning the defeat in World War I),' but 'if a reorganized and thus rational Japan cried for international justice, no logic would be able to refute such a claim.' Assuming specific domestic reorganization, a have-not county of Japan should place priority on international distribution, and successful solution of domestic social problems depended ultimately on the success of armed expansion abroad. Here was completed a world of an unrestrained 'gospel of the sword.'<sup>22/</sup>

complicity in a military insurrection that occurred in Tokyo on February 26, 1936 (February 26 Affair). What followed is a well-known part of Japanese history. With the military staff in collusion with the zaibatsu groups, the Japanese fascism single-mindedly pursued state control FROM ABOVE and undisguised invasions. Fascism with the Emperor at its head as a national system did away with radical fascism as a movement, and Kita had to be executed for no other reason than his Kaizō hōan, which by then had become a Bible of radical fascism with its advocacy for reforms FROM BELOW.

The shift in his thinking from his criticism of 'kokutairon' and his theory of pure socialism to radical fascism was, for Kita himself, nothing but a road of 'perfect consistency' with no need to 'revise even one stroke (of Chinese characters he used in his writing) in principle.' 23/ His position indeed remained consistent in his criticism of the traditional and Asiatic patrimonial state and of the kokutairon-based socialism. He also was consistent in his unyielding diagnosis of the pathology of Japanese-styled modernization (or, more precisely, industrialization that tended to crush genuine modernizing efforts). As is pointed out by Osamu Kuno, 24/ Kita's stand apparently was the ideological source of 'ultra-statism of the Shōwa period as distinct from the traditional statism of the Meiji era.' In the clarity and thoroughness with which he criticized the traditional and Asiatic patrimonial state, he indeed showed 'what a pre-war thinking man could do' (He is reported to have quietly declined to join others for wishing the Emperor long life immediately prior to his execution).

Despite his subjective sense of consistency, however, a wide discrepancy does exist between his early emphasis on individualism, democracy, and pure socialism on one hand and his later advocacy of a coup d'état by the Emperor and the military, revolutionary dictatorship and solution of internal problems once and for all by external expansion on the other. If his thinking was going through limitless transfiguration underneath the subjective sense of

consistency, we are called upon to further delve into how and where he erred as he went to the limit of 'what a pre-war thinking man could do.' In this paper let us examine certain aspects of his concept of 'individualism' in order to clearly identify where ideological trappings could lie.

[III-2] When Kita criticized the traditional and Asiatic patriarchal statist ideology, his basis was 'individualism' above all else. In a country like Japan, where individualism had not taken firm roots, one of the prerequisites for socialism was seen to be a firm growth of individuals as free persons. In the absence of such individuals socialism would inevitably result in a country of slave labor under bureaucratic domination which would mindlessly revere authority and blindly follow whatever decisions the international socialist party would make. Japan's nationalism must naturally be liberated from the Tribe-community of kokutairon, but at the same time socialism in Japan was seen in need of special reinforcement from such a perspective. Only then could genuine indigenous modernization and innovation be possible. In arguing in this manner, Kita sought the historical origin of 'awakening of individuals as persons' in the 'freedom of religion' in the context of the Reformation. As this freedom of belief was joined by the 'political freedom' advocated by Rousseau and the 'freedom of trade' of Adam Smith, there resulted the 'middle-class society as the basis of political freedom' in America as a comprehensive model. Such was Kita's perception of modern history.<sup>25/</sup>

However, Kita mistakenly diagnosed the so-perceived 'individualism' of the West as liberation of egoism on the part of 'atomized individuals.' As a logical consequence he saw a clear need, therefore, to rectify such a 'dis-figured individualism' to become a more advanced and more universal, i.e., true 'individualism.' In his view, the true 'individualism' was associated with the 'conviction that one should not be sacrificed except for the purposes of the state.' For him, this was the 'fundamental principle of democracy.' In the final analysis 'independence of individuals' as well as



'awakening of the people' amounted to the creation of individuals 'who would endeavor for the cause of sustaining and advancing the state in their roles as constituent elements of that state,' and to the 'awakening of all the people to the fact that they are component parts of the state.' He claimed then that 'pure socialism definitely would inherit individualism as a process of evolution.' Thus, one can say that Kita's version of 'individualism' and 'socialism' was characterized by a conspicuous lack of tension with the state and statism from the very outset.<sup>26/</sup> What supported such perceptions of individualism and socialism of Kita was the organic theory of state or social Darwinism. He first tried to liberate individualism and socialism from mechanistic atomism as 'a stepchild of 19th-century Europe' and to re-interpret them in accordance with social Darwinism, and then to assign them the role of universal criterion for social criticism. This indeed made it possible for him to mount brilliant attacks on the Asiatic restorative patrimonialism, arguing for the transition from 'patriarchal state' (patrimonial state with sovereignty residing with the monarch) to 'komin kokka' (civil society with the sovereign state!), from loyalty to patriotism. At the same time, however, this proved to be a trapping stone for Kita in that it distorted his thinking to political romanticism of ultra-statism. National expansionism was understood not as an issue of capitalism and imperialism but rather as related to survival instinct of an organism, where the logic of survival of the fittest was put forth as embodying international justice.

[III-3] When Japan was defeated in World War II, the 'patrimonial structure of the Japanese society' in the words of Takeyoshi Kawashima was seriously undermined with the hitherto Emperor system, zaibatsu groups and the family system all disembodied. Many of the reforms included in Kita's Kaizō hōan were also carried out. At the risk of possible misunderstanding, I feel inclined to say that economic programs of Kita's radical fascism (or the right wing left extremist according to G. M. Wilson's classification on the criteria

of S. M. Lipset)<sup>27/</sup> did point out at least where the problems lay in sharp terms, if not equipped with the methodology and capacity to actually solve them.

A series of post-war reforms, including the land reform, zaibatsu disbandment and break-up of the family system, basically liberated the Japanese from the hitherto restraints of pre-modern community, at least in institutional terms. And such 'modernization' (or democratization of the economy) was important in bringing about a record economic prosperity through an expanded domestic market. But what destroyed the pre-modern small community was the outside force that descended on Japan in the wake of World War II. The Japanese people as individuals did not necessarily go through the process of thoroughgoing inner self-transformation to attain the modern bourgeois mentality as a positive principle of society formation. Rather, they retained their traditional community-oriented values and mentality as well as behavior pattern to a considerable extent (one could say that community was still internalized in their mentality). They were merely 'atomized' to be left to wander in the broad society.

When the communal principles permeate the society, it is characterized by a double-standard of morality: Within the communal group the inherent relationship of reciprocity (or paternalism) prevails among the members of that group, while in dealing with non-members of that community, utter apathy or undisguised hostility is shown. Or one could say that the same morality can have a number of different applications. What is not allowed among the members may well be permitted vis-a-vis non-members. As in a popular Japanese saying, one can feel free to do all sorts of shameful things while on a trip. If one is dealing with a 'stranger,' unrestrained pursuit of private gains and even fraudulent behavior are permissible. In the post-World War II Japan such communal mentality remained in its essential aspects, while actual communities were destroyed, atomizing individuals. What resulted was the conglomeration of outsiders, all strangers to each other, which Max Weber called palia-

society, not deserving to be called society par excellence. No considerations for others were called for in this place, and nothing held back individuals from pursuing their own interests. It was into such a pattern of human relations that the post-war high technology was introduced, making for a thoroughgoing 'business' economy. One now wanted to win for the sake of winning itself, without considering other people, other enterprises or other countries. This achievement orientation of business enterprises functioned as a supporting pillar for Japan's unprecedented economic growth, while at the same time accelerating destruction of the environment again at an unprecedented pace. It has also served as a cause of serious trade frictions and economic frictions with many parts of the world. It is difficult to deny that such a mechanism was in operation at least in part. Even today it seems hardly possible to dismiss Kita's problematique of a century ago as irrelevant, that of co-existence between 'England of the East' and the 'Tribe-community in the East.'

1. Works of Ikki Kita are quoted from Kita Ikki chosakushū (Collected Works of Kita Ikki) [KIC], 3 vols., Tokyo, 1959-1972. Cf. Yoshiyuki Sekiguchi, 'Kiki no ishiki to nihon-gata fascism no keizai shisō (Consciousness of Crises and Economic Thought of Japanese Fascism)' in: Kindai nihon shisōshi taikai, Tokyo, 1971, VI, pp. 3-72.
2. Shisō Hattori, 'Tōjō seiken no rekishiteki kōkei (Historical Background of the Tōjō Regime)' in: Hattori Shisō chosakushū (Collected Works of Shiso Hattori), Tokyo, 1955, VII, p. 269.
3. Hisao Ōtsuka, 'Modernization Reconsidered - with Special Reference to Industrialization - ' in: Developing Economies, Dec. 1965, pp. 390-392.
4. Thomas C. Smith, 'Pre-modern economic Growth: Japan and the West' in: Past and Present, Aug. 1978, pp. 127-160.
5. Sir Rutherford Alcock, The Capital of the Tycoon: A Narrative of a Three Years' Residence in Japan, 2 vols., New York, 1893, I, pp. 285-288; II, pp. 48, 335, 387, App.; Cf. Kanji Ishii and Yoshiyuki Sekiguchi (eds.), Sekai shijō to bakumatsu kaikō (World Market and the Opening of the Japanese Ports), Tokyo, 1982, pp. 5-7.
6. K. Ishii and Y. Sekiguchi, op. cit., pp. 11-18; Johannes Hirschmeier, The Origins of Entrepreneurship in Meiji Japan, Cambridge, Mass., 1964, ch. 3.
7. J. Hirschmeier, op. cit., pp. 120-121.

8. S. Hattori, 'Kita Ikki no ishinshikan' in: Chosakushū, VI, pp. 41-80.
9. KIC, I, pp. 90, 271, 211, II, pp. 61, 224.
10. Yoshihiko Uchida, Nihon shihonshugi no shisōzō (Ideological Figures of Japanese Capitalism), Tokyo, 1967, pp. 120-131.
11. KIC, I, pp. 1-5, 34, 209f.
12. KIC, I, pp. 1,3,32,38,58f, 209f.
13. KIC, I, pp. 404, 427-429.
14. Kōichi Nomura, 'Kokuminteki shimeikan no shoruikei to sono tokushitsu (Several Types of National-Mission Ideas and their Characteristics) in: Kindai nihon shisōshi kōza, Tokyo, 1961, VIII, pp. 137-173.
15. KIC, II, pp. 50, 86, 92-95, 106-109, 116.
16. KIC, II, pp. 32-34, 41, 147, 159, 187-189.
17. KIC, II, pp. 1, 3, 7-8, 92, 106, 178, 212 et passim.
18. KIC, II, pp. 278, 356-358.
19. George M. Wilson, Radical Nationalist in Japan: Kita Ikki, 1883-1937, Cambridge, Mass., 1969, p. 72f.

21. Seiichi Imai, 'Kaisetsu (Introductory Note)' to: KIC, II, pp. 422, 426.
22. KIC, II, pp. 291-351.
23. KIC, II, p. 360f.
24. Osamu Kuno, 'Chōkokkashugi no ichi genkei (An Archetype of Ultrationalism)' in: Kindai nihon shisōshi kōza (Contemporary Japanese Thought), Tokyo, 1956, ch. IV.
25. KIC, II, p. 10f; II, p. 150.
26. KIC, II, pp. 88f, 350, 360, 365.
27. Wilson, op. cit., pp. 90-95.