

Revolution as a Criticism of the Empire: Nosaka Sanzo and His Comprehension of the  
Notion of “Two-stage revolution” from the 1910s to 1945

by

Yuanfang Zhang  
B.A., Peking University, 2008  
B.A., Waseda University, 2008

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## **Supervisory Committee**

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### **Supervisory Committee**

Dr Katsuhiko Endo, (Department of Pacific and Asian Studies)  
**Supervisor**

Dr Richard King, (Department of Pacific and Asian Studies)  
**Departmental Member**

## **Abstract**

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### **Supervisor**

Dr Richard King, (Department of Pacific and Asian Studies)

### **Departmental Member**

This paper discusses the origin of the notion of two-stage revolution in Japan and its development by a member of Japan's communist party, Nosaka Sanzo. The Communist International stipulated the task of Japan's two-stage revolution in 1927. In the following years Nosaka Sanzo creatively developed the connotation and the nature of the two-stage revolution in Japan based on his comprehension of the economic and political features of imperial Japan. I begin my narrative on how Nosaka came to understand the labor problem in Japan's imperial economy in the 1910s, and continue by outlining how he developed this idea as a criticism of the Japanese empire from 1927 to 1945. The research will contribute to the understanding of the communist movement in imperial Japan.

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## **Dedication**

To My Beloved Parents

## **Introduction**

This research studies the notion of “two stage revolution” in prewar and wartime Japan and its development by a member of the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), Nosaka Sanzo. In 1917, the success of the October Revolution in Russia left an indelible mark on world history. In the following years, the Comintern, an international organization that was established after the success of the Russian revolution, attempted to niche this type of revolution in the world. As a result, the JCP received the order from the Comintern to launch such a revolution in 1927. This thesis discusses how such a type of revolution in Japan was determined, and how the notion of two-stage revolution was developed in interwar and wartime Japan. By focusing on the notion of two-stage revolution, I examine the relationship between Nosaka Sanzo, the Comintern, and China. I analyze how Nosaka’s thoughts on Japan’s economic and political system are reflected through his comprehension of two-stage revolution.

### **Socialist revolution in Japan:**

#### **A Symbol without Referent or a Criticism against the Empire?**

No one can deny the significance of the landmark Chinese revolution under the leadership of the CCP in the middle 20<sup>th</sup> century, which successfully overthrew the rule of imperialism (Japanese colonizers) and bourgeois capitalism (the national government headed by the Kuomintang). After a CCP-led government was established in 1949, China extended its revolutionary policies into the economic field, aiming at confiscating private property in both agriculture and industry under the name of “socialist revolution”. Ever since then, China’s socialist revolution has become a *de facto* momentum that encourages

former colonized people to struggle for national and economic independence in a global context.

Given that China had set a typical example of how socialist revolution as an efficient measure is employed to replace former imperialism and bourgeois capitalism, the social influence of this sort of revolution was at best nominal. Post-1949 China was always designated with a tag of “socialist China”, due to the socialist revolution that the CCP claimed to have launched. But the status of socialism is radically destabilized by the predominance of the state in manipulating laborers according to its own principle and law. The employment of measures for manipulating and controlling laborers under the guidance of the CCP suggested that the social mobilization and manipulation of laborers had employed identical measures with the ones in capitalist countries, regardless of whether it was a “socialist country” or a “capitalist country”.

Such ambiguity should remind us of that the so-called socialist revolution and the ensuing socialist stage could not separate themselves from the previous capitalist or imperialist models, except in the ideology that it represented. Hence, I argue that this socialist revolution was a symbol without referent, underpinning the necessity of replacing the capitalist production while remaining as a void. In a final analysis, it was deficient in constructed and matured social mechanisms that could represent what was truly a “socialist stage”.

Ambiguous as it is, it is still necessary to adopt the parlance of “socialist revolution” as a criticism of the capitalist mode of production. Indeed, it is the analysis on this aspect that is lacking in pre-existing studies. What is essential in bridging the gulf between a predominant capitalist stage and a China-defined socialist stage is a series of

social policies that the state implemented concerning laborers. The state regulates everyday lives of laborers not through “repressive, negative and direct forms of control” but applies such social policies or programs for those laborers to accept and embrace of their own accord (Yu 2009). In fact, the manipulation of laborers by such social programs can be encapsulated into “a unique culture” that could represent local customs and values. For instance, in prewar Japan, this “unique culture” was represented by the deification of the Japanese Emperor, to which the state referred in order to secure the necessary authority to manage the political body over the masses (Harootunian, 1990). However, previous studies bypassed the nature of this so-called “unique culture”, and their treatment of culture in their research is limited merely to an emphatic discrimination of “Japaneseness” from non-Japanese outside this ethnic community. For example, one of the studies that focus on the revolutionary experiences of the Japanese Communist Party in the occupation period ascribed the origin of its postwar policies to the party’s concern with the unique aspects of Japanese culture and historical development (Levi 1991). It is true that policies are formulated in a certain historical milieu, but I argue that we should make a further inquiry. If it is suffice to say that a “unique” cultural background has shaped revolutionary policies, then how does the former element affect the latter? If we turn our historical gaze on a specific period to look for answers, then we will find that we are making an historical inquiry on how a specific social program that embodies the aspirations of a certain social apparatus takes effect in that society to mobilize laborers.

It is from this perspective that this thesis seeks to discern the historical background in which the conception of revolution is reconstituted. The unifying thread of this thesis is that a member of Japanese Communist Party, Nosaka Sanzo, accepted and developed

the notion of a specific type of revolution in prewar and wartime Japan from the 1910s to 1945. This notion, known as two-stage revolution, sought to pose a prescription to remedy the inherent flaws in the measure imperial Japan employed to control and mobilize laborers. Previous studies have paid attention to Nosaka's efforts of engaging in Japan's politics as a chief proponent of such a movement in postwar Japan. However, their arguments seem to be limited merely to constructing the notion of revolution that represents the unique culture of Japan. As I discussed above, the state apparatus focuses on the task of manipulation of labor power, regardless of whether it is in the stage of capitalism or in the stage of alleged socialism. If we see the function of the state in propelling the development of its economy from this perspective, the argument such as "uniqueness of Japanese culture" does not become the aim of this research merely to reiterate a generalized notion of culture that has already been made. For example, previous studies argue that due to the "unique social cultural background" of Japan in the Second World War, democratization and the notion of democracy have been attached great significance in postwar Japan. Against such a backdrop, they have acknowledged Nosaka's role in the postwar democratization in Japan and his mediation between the American occupiers and Japan's government in the postwar rearrangement of domestic political structure as a part of his postwar revolutionary experience (Kukkonen 2003, Cohen 1987). However, from an historical perspective, the role Nosaka played in postwar Japan is not as simple as what those scholars have argued - that he was trying to comply with the principle of democracy in restoring political control over the defeated Japan. In terms of the notion of democracy, Joe Moore has gone beyond the confines of social history and sees democracy in the autonomous labor movement as a crucial element in

the course of postwar management of laborers under the supervision of the state in news agencies (Moore 1983). Following this logic, my research explores Nosaka's commitments in prewar and wartime periods and demonstrates how democracy re-emerged in postwar time as a measure of management of laborers, rather than as a repeat, with an ideological tone, a representation of democracy void of any reference.

### **Structure and Content of each Chapter**

The thesis consists of three parts: what the notion of "two-stage revolution" as generally defined is; how Nosaka came to know it; and how he developed this notion, especially under the influence of the Comintern and Mao Zedong. This research focuses on his prewar and wartime experiences through an examination of his interpretation of the notion of "two-stage revolution".

### **What is "Two-Stage Revolution?"**

In my research, I first determined how "two-stage revolution" was described by the Comintern in 1927. In chapter one, I introduce how the notion of two-stage revolution was defined by the Comintern in an important thesis. Then I define the principles and terms mentioned in that thesis and examine the origin of that thesis.

In 1927, the Comintern, the international organization that was backed by the Soviet Union to supervise the activities of each communist party, summoned some members of the Japan's Communist Party for a meeting in Moscow to circulate an important thesis, known as the "1927 thesis". Among the protocols of the resolution, the Comintern stipulated the nature of Japan's revolution as follows:

"The Meiji Restoration in 1868 paved the way for Japan to develop its modern economy. However, immediately after this historical event, political power was still held

by the feudal landlords. Japan's modern state was based on the alliance that bourgeois formed with those landlords.”<sup>1</sup>

“Feudal remnants” in the agrarian sector of Japan's economy indicated that “the bourgeois revolution begun by the Meiji Restoration had not yet been completed....Hence, a bourgeois-democratic revolution that should be led by the proletariat would complete the tasks that remained unsolved by Japan's weak bourgeoisie and would then be followed immediately by a socialist revolution.”<sup>2</sup>

I introduce how the Comintern understood bourgeois-democratic and socialist revolutions in chapter one. In the introduction section I summarize the Comintern's notion of bourgeois revolution as a social movement that aimed at eliminating the feudal elements in Japan's economic sectors, such as landlords, and private ownership of land in the rural areas, while at the same time having the possibility of being quickly transformed into a socialist revolution. Socialist revolution in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was always referred to as the one that sought to establish a Soviet regime under the leadership of the proletariat, as Russia's 1917 revolution had already shown to the world. However, Nosaka did not treat the idea of socialist revolution in this way. He assumed that, were a socialist revolution to take place, it would allow Japan to overcome the “social unevenness that was brought about by the modern capitalist economy”<sup>3</sup>. To put it another way, rather than establish a new government, Nosaka would consider a socialist

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<sup>1</sup> Ishido, Kiyotomo; Yamabe, Kentaro, ed. *Kominterun Nihon ni kansuru tezeshu*(Tokyo : Aoki Shoten, 1961), p.30

<sup>2</sup> See Germaine A Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis of Development in Prewar Japan* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1986). Chapter 3

<sup>3</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 2 (Tokyo : Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.204

revolution as an effective solution to solve Japan's social problems in its economy, especially the agrarian crisis. The anticipation of the goals entailed a further development of this notion in the following years by Nosaka.

### **Why Would Nosaka Come to Accept the Conclusion?**

In chapter two, I focus on how Nosaka came to accept this idea. In July 1927, Nosaka and other members of the JCP were notified of the Comintern's 1927 thesis in a meeting by Nabeyama Sadachika. In terms of this resolution, Nosaka agreed with its analysis of Japan's revolution insofar as it defined the characteristic of Japan's economic system. The question I am dealing with: under what circumstance would Nosaka accept the proposal of the two-stage revolution? I describe Nosaka and other relevant figures in his working experiences before 1927 to show how he came to know and accept it. The discussion is organized relating to Nosaka on two levels. First, how did Nosaka come to realize that a revolution should take place? Second, based on this understanding, how did Nosaka begin to know that this revolution should take a "two-stage" form?

Before I move on to the discussion of these two related questions, I suggest that it is necessary to trace Nosaka's thoughts back to his views on Japan's social inequality. This social inequality, due to the uneven development of Japan's economy in the late Meiji period, was the direct trigger for Nosaka to dedicate his life to the historical undertaking of revolutionary activities. Most importantly, his feelings on Japan's social inequality inspired him to refer to the utopian social structure under the name of "socialism" for a solution to the problem of how to change the social reality.

With regard to this first question: why Nosaka would be inclined to accept the notion of revolution, I focus on Nosaka's comparison of different types of social

movement in Japan. Between the 1910s and 1920s, the labor movement in Japan was influenced by different thoughts and strategies. Amid them Osugi Sakae and Suzuki Bunji's thoughts made an impression on Nosaka. Nosaka acknowledged the power of anarchism that was represented by Osugi Sakae and Kotoku Shusui, who suggested relying on radical measures, such as direct action, to overturn Japan's government in the 1910s. But he did not agree with them as "they seemed to deny the necessity of applying politics as the tool to deal with the labor-employer relationship"<sup>4</sup>. He was also impressed by Suzuki Bunji, the former leader of Japan's most influential labor union in interwar Japan, as Suzuki attempted to regulate laborers to collaborate with the employers in a healthy and harmonious way.<sup>5</sup> The flaw lay in the fact that laborers' legal rights might be sacrificed under the name of maintaining Japan's economic system. Compared with those two trends, revolution is a relatively acceptable option since it could permit Japan's proletariat to pursue their interests through economic and political struggle. However, Nosaka figured that revolution should be launched in an appropriate way. Here arises the question: what form should this revolution take?

With regard to the second question of why this revolution should contain two stages, I explore Nosaka's analysis on the status and the social consciousness of Japan's masses. As I demonstrate, the acceptance of a form of revolution known as "two-stage" by Nosaka is the result of Nosaka's mapping of the structure of Japan's social classes. To analyze Japan's social classes, Nosaka attended a researching organization known as *Sanro*. *Sanro* was an institution affiliated to the *Yuaikai*, Japan's most influential labour union in the interwar period, and its task was to analyze Japan's interwar economic and

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<sup>4</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 2 (Tokyo : Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.21

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 196

political system. Nosaka was responsible for organizing the daily work of this organization. Under his guidance, *Sanro* investigated the cause of Japan's social problems, such as agrarian problems, and the social reification in Japan's cities. Through these investigations, Nosaka understood that the revolution should not be simply targeted at seizing the political power of the state, as Russia did in 1917. Instead, Japan's socialist revolution could only occur "after Japan's working people have developed a sense of social consciousness through building strong labor unions and reaching concerted actions among working classes...and this is the requirement of a stage before the socialist revolution, namely, a bourgeois revolution"<sup>6</sup>.

Chapter two also includes the discussion of Nosaka's differences with two other early leaders of the JCP, Yamakawa Hitoshi and Fukumoto Kazuo. I show how Nosaka confirmed his conception that the revolution should take a two-stage form through debates with Yamamoto Hitoshi and Fukumoto Kazuo.

### **In What Ways did Nosaka Develop This Idea?**

Chapter three and chapter four concentrate on how he developed this idea. Nosaka started to develop the notion of two-stage revolution in 1931, when he arrived in the Soviet Union and worked in the Japanese division of the Communist International (the Comintern). The development of this idea by Nosaka consists of three stages: 1) his assistance in the Japanese division of the Comintern in formulating the 1932 thesis, an official statement from the Comintern to confirm the nature of Japan's two-stage revolution; 2) his contribution to developing a theoretical strategy to fulfill the preparatory conditions for Japan's two-stage revolution; and 3) his development of this

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<sup>6</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 2 (Tokyo : Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.314

strategy under Mao Zedong's influence in China. Through these three stages, Nosaka developed the notion of two-stage revolution that was first enunciated in the 1927 thesis by unveiling the details of the character of Japan's revolution, and the details of the social classes in Japan's society that could be mobilized to launch the revolution.

Nosaka's development of this notion began with his perception of a flaw contained in the 1927 thesis, and hence the modification he made to that thesis. Having realized that the 1927 thesis underestimated "the social influence of the emperor system (*Tenno sei*)",<sup>7</sup> Nosaka figured that in order to solve this problem, it was necessary to define what this system was. "The emperor system could not be confounded with the Emperor". He recalled years later.<sup>8</sup> From Nosaka's texts, at least two conclusions can be drawn on this system. First, "Japan's emperor system was allied with feudal landlords"<sup>9</sup>. By arguing this, Nosaka hinted that this system should be analyzed through the lens of Japan's agrarian problem. Second, Nosaka further stated that "after the Meiji Restoration, the political power was transferred from the feudal landlords to those newly emerged industrial capitalists in this system". Hence, Nosaka considered this system a stimulus for the development of Japan's modern economy. The dual characteristics of the emperor system, as Nosaka conceived it, played an important role in his grappling with a redefinition of the revolution in Japan.

Following this logic, Nosaka insisted on integrating this element into a new thesis for the Comintern and confirming the goals of Japan's two-stage revolution in 1932. This confirmation had something to do with an incident that took place in China. In 1931, six

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<sup>7</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 7 (Tokyo : Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.70

<sup>8</sup> Omuri Minoru, *Sengo Hishi (Vol 3): Sokoku kakumei kosaku* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1975), p.247

<sup>9</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Ye Ban Can San Xuanji Voll* (Beijing : Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1963), p.231

months after Nosaka arrived in Russia, the imperial army started to invade Manchuria. The Comintern was astonished to learn that the Japanese empire was so quick in responding to a domestic crisis by resorting to external expansion. The committee that was responsible for analyzing Japan's problem inside the Comintern mistook the nature of Japan's economy for a "highly developed economic system"<sup>10</sup>, while disregarding Japan's lagging elements in its economic and political system known as "the feudalistic remnants". As a result, they rescheduled Japan's revolution, shifting the nature of a two-stage form into an "immediate proletarian revolution".

Under these circumstances, Nosaka realized that it was necessary to correct the erroneous line from the 1931 thesis, and confirm the nature of revolution as the one that the 1927 thesis had indicated. When he settled down in Moscow, he started to work in the Comintern from 1931 to help formulate another thesis that could clarify Japan's two-stage revolution based on an analysis of its social background. That thesis was published in 1932, known as the Comintern's 1932 thesis. In that thesis, Nosaka helped his colleague in the Comintern make a statement that, due to "barbaric, feudal elements in Japanese society", Japan should first launch a "bourgeois-democratic revolution" to uproot these elements from its current system, and then prepare for a socialist revolution to entail a second transformation to a socialist stage.<sup>11</sup>

Soon after the publication of the 1932 thesis, Nosaka took another assignment from the Comintern: to analyze the political structure of Japan's wartime empire and connect his analysis with Japan's two-stage revolution. At this point, Nosaka had already realized

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<sup>10</sup> Ishido, Kiyotomo; Yamabe, Kentaro, ed. *Kominterun Nihon ni kansuru tezeshu* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1961), p.49

<sup>11</sup> See Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 7 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.54-88

that the Japanese empire would enlarge the scale of the war it waged in East Asia, and in view of the political situation in the world, Nosaka combined the goals of two-stage revolution with those of resistance movements that took place inside the Japanese empire. In 1936, he addressed the public in a letter from the Comintern stating that in order to establish an effective strategy for Japan's two-stage revolution in the future, a popular front should be built in Japan's mass society. This popular front, consisting of Japan's proletariat, peasant, and petit bourgeoisie, "would be effective in mobilizing the masses and leading them to participate in the struggles with the purpose of completing the bourgeois revolution as the first stage of Japan's two-stage revolution"<sup>12</sup>

The significance of formulating the strategy for Japan's two-stage revolution lies in his efforts to expand the social influence of the party through wartime underground propaganda among the people whom he incorporated into his "popular front". This popular front was important, as it not only paved the way for a future two-stage revolution in Japan, but also became the predominant instrument for the JCP to sustain its mass policies in the postwar occupation period. However, little effort has been done in research on how Nosaka managed to establish and perfect this idea of popular front. I focus on this problem in the last chapter to show Nosaka's efforts under the influence of Mao Zedong in China.

The problem that attracts my attention in chapter four is Nosaka's liaison with China. In 1940, he volunteered to work in Yan'an, the center of anti-Japanese movements that were organized by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). An intriguing question I ask concerns how Nosaka was influenced by Mao Zedong, the leader of the

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<sup>12</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Ye Ban Can San Xuanji Voll* (Beijing : Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1963), p.132

CCP, and embraced Mao's wartime analysis on the anti-war strategies. Nosaka worked with the CCP under the leadership of Mao. In my research I investigated some related records in this period and found that Nosaka was also influenced by Mao's wartime philosophy. He accepted some conceptions that appeared in Mao's works and integrated them into his thoughts on Japan's two-stage revolution. This is the focus of this section.

In this chapter I first discuss Nosaka's attempt to expand the influence of Japan's two-stage revolution as president of a school in Yan'an. This school was opened for the Japanese prisoners of war in order to help them correct themselves and become the individuals who could disseminate notions of peace and democracy during and after the war. Among the prisoners Nosaka tried to demystify the concept of a "sacred war" promulgated by the Japanese empire. Making the emperor system as the main target for his criticism, Nosaka started to convince those former soldiers of the Japanese army to become involved in Japan's popular front. Next I move on to examine how Nosaka embraced the quintessence of Mao's philosophy in his development of the popular front. Nosaka's acceptance of Mao's views was related to the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943, which suggested that every affiliated party in each country should strengthen its own independence in the anti-war activities. I discern how this historical event added significance to Nosaka's development of the two-stage revolution. Finally, I focus on his experiences in the CCP's negotiation with an American diplomatic and military mission that was sent to Yan'an in 1944. I show how Nosaka's draft on rebuilding Japan in postwar time corresponded to his revised comprehension on the notion of Japan's two-stage revolution under the influence of Mao. Texts are analyzed based on a comparison of both Nosaka and Mao's ideas on two-stage revolution.

**Conclusion**

In 1946, after a 16-year exile outside Japan, Nosaka finally returned to his country. In a new era for Japan's development, Nosaka addressed the masses, explaining that Japan should experience a "two-stage revolution" in the postwar period. In his proposal for building a democratic Japan, Nosaka stated the necessity of relying on a popular front to carry on the revolutionary tasks. Furthermore, he suggested that Japan's emperor should be kept to play the role of a national symbol. In this section, I evaluate the significance of Nosaka's commitments in the prewar and wartime periods and its meaning to Japan's postwar era.

**Research Method**

This thesis is mainly carried out through the method of textual and historical analysis. Texts include Nosaka's prewar and wartime writings from 1933 to 1945, Nosaka's autobiography regarding his life before 1940, and other writings that have not been compiled into his anthology. Referential texts also include the Comintern's thesis and Mao's wartime writings, all of which helped me to discuss how these related works enabled Nosaka to accept and develop the notion of two-stage revolution.

## **Chapter One: Two-stage Revolution: A Notion from Above**

This chapter addresses the concept of two-stage revolution that was advanced by the Communist International, otherwise known as the Comintern, in 1927. This notion reflects a duality in Japan's imperial economy that was seen as necessitating a socialist revolution divided into two stages.

In late 1927, a group of Japanese Communist Party (JCP) members clandestinely gathered in a house in Asakusa, Tokyo. The meeting was convened by Nabeyama Sadachika, an individual whom they called a "leader from above". At that time the attendees might not have realized that the message this "leader from above" was carrying now would make a significant mark in world history.

Nabeyama came from the Comintern, an organization that was established in 1919, two years after the outbreak of the Russian October Revolution, a revolution that demonstrated to the world that Russian Bolsheviks could overthrow the Russian bourgeois government through a proletarian revolution. Under such circumstances, the Comintern was founded to take the responsibility of leading the struggles in a global scale to overthrow the current bourgeois capitalist system. In fact, communist parties in many countries were founded with support from the Comintern. Once established, these parties were affiliated with the Comintern and were expected to receive instructions and follow orders.

The JCP was an example of a party that received assistance from the Comintern. However, unlike other parties, the JCP went through a tortuous development after its birth in 1922. Just one year after it was founded, Yamakawa Hitoshi proposed his "Theory on a Shift of Direction" and called for the dissolution of the party. In 1926,

under the instruction of Fukumoto Kazuo, an intellectual who had just returned from Europe, the party was reorganized based on Fukumoto's theory. However, this theory was fiercely criticized by many senior members of the party. Then in 1927, the Comintern summoned principal leaders of the party to come to Moscow for a meeting. At the conference the Comintern criticized Yamakawa's and Fukumoto's thoughts, and passed a new resolution that would replace the two thoughts as the guiding framework for the activities of the party. That resolution was formulated as a thesis and was brought back to Japan by Nabeyama half a year later. It was that important message that those JCP leaders who were gathering in Asakusa were expecting to hear.

That thesis was issued at a time when the Japanese empire was about to launch military actions overseas. Just one year before the formulation of the thesis, Japan's bourgeois government had passed a law that forbade any social movement or large-scale campaign:

Anyone who has organized an association with the objective of radically altering the national polity (*kokutai o henkaku shi*) or denying the system of private property, or anyone who has joined such an association with full knowledge of its object, shall be liable to imprisonment with or without hard labor for a term not exceeding ten years.

Any attempt to commit the crimes in the preceding clause will be punished.<sup>13</sup>

That law, also known as the Peace Preservation Law, was considered to be an ordinance to suppress social discontent and ensure that labor movements were not used as a tool by dissident social groups. The passage of the law by the government was a direct response

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<sup>13</sup> Sheldon M Garon, *The state and labor in modern Japan* (Berkeley : University of California Press, c1987), p.130

to groups that had been influenced by Fukumoto's 1926 radical hypothesis on the nature of Japanese capitalism, stating that revolutionary activities should be carried on to transform society. At the same time, the adoption of the law marked the government's ban on the JCP.

Although the thesis aimed at criticizing Yamakawa and Fukumoto regarding the negative aspects of their thoughts, it is more important to see the thesis as a diagnosis of the economic crisis from which Japan was suffering in 1927. The root of this crisis can be traced back to Japan's economic system. In the analysis of Japan's economic system, the Comintern determined the nature of Japan's economy as relying largely on its neighboring countries and colonies:

As the development of Japanese capitalism has a stake in China and is closely bound to the latter, Japan couldn't hold a neutral stance on the Chinese revolutionary situation that is now growing vehemently. Since Japan's iron and coal are mainly imported from China, China is Japan's primary source of raw materials. On the other hand, China is Japan's major market for its industries: 35% of Japan's gross output is exported to China's ports. Finally, China is Japan's major outlet for investment. A total of 25 billion Japanese Yen has been invested in industries, mines, and railways in China, especially Manchuria. Hence, the Japanese empire would not stand by if the Chinese revolution was rapidly expanding; it is Japan's duty to intervene in China to help suppress the revolution... In terms of Japan's foreign policy, Japan is now taking an antagonistic stance toward the new regime in the Soviet Union. Aside from that, Japan will never give up its intention to fight against the US in a war sometime in the future.<sup>14</sup>

The Comintern further stated that Japan's reliance on other countries was a result of its mode of domestic economic development:

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<sup>14</sup> Ishido, Kiyotomo; Yamabe, Kentaro, ed. *Kominterun Nihon ni kansuru tezeshu*(Tokyo : Aoki Shoten, 1961), p.28-30

In 1868, Japan's Meiji Restoration opened up a new path for the development of its modern economy. However, the political power was still held by landlords, warlords and the royal family, which were seen as Japan's feudal elements. Nevertheless, those traditional elements that have existed in Japan's society ever since ancient times should not be regarded simply as the remnants of the feudal society that could be discarded from history. Suffice to say that they have provided institutional convenience for the primitive accumulation of Japanese capitalism.<sup>15</sup>

In that analysis, the Comintern commented on the dual roles of what it referred to as the "feudal elements" in Japanese capitalism, given that they were overwhelmed by and also integrated by primitive accumulation of capital. Despite that, it further stated that "Japanese bourgeoisie bore the characteristics of those former feudal classes."<sup>16</sup> As a result, the Comintern pointed out the necessity of wiping out the feudal elements in Japan's economic system through a bourgeois revolution. Then after the completion of that revolution, another revolution should be launched, aiming at overthrowing the bourgeois government and building a socialist regime.

The Comintern's 1927 thesis interpreted Japan's economy as follows: since there existed an irreconcilable relationship between capital and the traditional sectors in Japan's economy that capital aimed to replace, the formulator of the thesis could not neglect that relationship and had to acknowledge the backwardness of Japan's economy. As a result, given that the backwardness of the economy was mainly embodied in Japan's rural economy, the Comintern deemed it necessary to carry on a bourgeois revolution in Japan because of the backwardness of Japan's rural areas. However, it did not specify how revolution would be an effective way to solve this problem.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid, P30

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, P31

Regardless of the backwardness of Japan's rural areas, since the time of the Meiji Restoration, Japan's modern economy had flourished, bringing Japan's bourgeois capitalists to a predominant position in the state. Applying the state as an effective tool, Japanese capitalism had infiltrated into every corner of the large cities, especially heavy industry. The Comintern suggested that it was the state that bourgeois capitalists attempted to rely on in order to propel the spread of capitalism:

The struggle for the democratization of the state, the abolition of the monarchy, and the removal of the present ruling cliques from the government in a country with such a high level of capital concentration will therefore inevitably change the struggle against feudal remnants to a struggle against capitalism itself.<sup>17</sup>

From this quotation, we can see that the Comintern had justified the state as embodying a high concentration of bourgeois capital. These bourgeois capitalists had yet to wipe out all the feudal survivors in Japan's political and economic system, particularly in rural areas. Hence an immediate bourgeois revolution was required in order for Japan to complete this historical task. At the same time, the Comintern also pointed out that after this stage:

In Japan, the necessity for the occurrence of a bourgeois democratic revolution has always remained (due to the existing feudal remnants in the structure of Japan's political power); meanwhile, the objective preconditions for the transformation of this bourgeois democratic revolution into a socialist revolution have also matured (the highly concentrated level of capital, the combination of state and

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<sup>17</sup> Ishido, Kiyotomo; Yamabe, Kentaro, ed. *Kominternun Nihon ni kansuru tezeshu* (Tokyo : Aoki Shoten, 1961), p.31, trans by Germaine A Hoston in *Marxism and the Crisis of Development in Prewar Japan* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), p.67

trust organizations, the bloc consisting of bourgeoisie and feudal landlords).<sup>18</sup>

Here lay the ambiguity of the Comintern's thesis. On the one hand, it acknowledged that Japan needed to solve the problem in a way that bourgeois democratization could be carried out in order to wipe out all the feudal elements. This argument suggested that Japanese bourgeois capitalism was not fully developed. On the other hand, it argued that the socialist revolution in Japan should proceed quickly. The Comintern blurred the definition of these two types of revolution. The reason for the Comintern's confusion was its lack of knowledge regarding the measures the Japanese empire employed in its primitive accumulation of capital and its relevant policies concerning laborers. In order to cover the inherent flaw in that thesis, the Comintern stated that the preparation for both types of revolution was not fully facilitated as "the political consciousness for Japan's proletariats has not matured enough for them to support revolution".<sup>19</sup> However, it did not specify what this consciousness meant for JCP members. What that thesis had confirmed by 1927 was that Japan's capitalist economy had already completed the primitive capital accumulation. In terms of the structure change in the political system accompanying this process, the Comintern considered that bourgeois capitalists had replaced the original feudal classes. Apparently it overestimated the revolutionary situation in Japan and the forces for revolution in Japan.

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<sup>18</sup> Ishido, Kiyotomo; Yamabe, Kentaro, ed. *Kominterun Nihon ni kansuru tezeshu* (Tokyo : Aoki Shoten, 1961), p.32

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p32

As some historians argue, the reason for the contradiction that was reflected in the Comintern's 1927 thesis lay in practical concerns:<sup>20</sup> the Soviet Union's attempt to mobilize the Japanese masses to overthrow Japan's government was due to its concern with the future, especially the empire's threat to its national security. Because of this unilateral concern on the part of the Soviet Union, the thesis has not attempted to clarify what "socialist" meant. In fact, never have Russian revolutionaries given a clear definition of what a socialist regime or a socialist revolution was, since soon after the Soviet regime was established, in order to fortify the base of this so-called socialist regime, Lenin had to adopt the "new economic policy", which still acknowledged the concentration of industries in the state. All the images for the "socialist stage" came from the prediction made by Lenin that world history would finally move away from capitalism and that Russia's revolution was a threshold of this transformation.

In short, although the Comintern indicated the nature of revolution in Japan, it still left many problems for the JCP members to solve. Moreover, it did not specify the concrete tactics and strategies that revolutionaries should take. The most important issue was how to understand Japan's complicated capitalist economy and how it was related to revolution. Those problems remained and needed to be addressed further in the following years. My thesis will address these issues.

In fact, if we turn our gaze toward this period, we can see that the Comintern's thesis had a basic flaw in that it assumed that history would proceed following a law of linear evolution in terms of its transformation from feudalism to capitalism and then to

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<sup>20</sup> See notes 43 in Germaine A Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis of Development in Prewar Japan* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986). Chapter 3

socialism. All the analysis regarding the contradictions between the lagging feudal elements in the economy and the developed capitalist economy attested to the Comintern's desire for launching a two-stage revolution in Japan with the purpose of speeding up this linear process. However, regardless of the accuracy of the Comintern's analysis, the envisioned social evolution under the name of revolution necessarily and inevitably would conceal any contingency that might *de facto* stall such a process. This contingency, which I discuss in the following chapters, deals with how laborers would subject their desires to a social mechanism that aimed at regulating laborers to sell their labor power as commodities (chapter two), and how capitalism managed to improve itself in the advent of its inner crisis through an alternative method which was referred to as fascism (chapter three). For instance, in the mid 1920s, before the outbreak of Japan's financial crisis, proletariats, especially industrial laborers who had already found jobs in factories, became the subject of a social program that was aimed at improving their outlook and facilitating their coordination with industrial employers. This process constituted the subsuming of laborers into the capitalist economic system with the help of institutional interference. In a short, social evolution could not be simply divided into stages that mapped out different phases of a supposed linear history. If the stipulation of a two-stage revolution in the Comintern's thesis was to have any significance, it was only necessary insofar as it attempted to discern what the revolution could achieve via its criticism of Japan's capitalist economy and how it could achieve it.

As mentioned, the Comintern's 1927 thesis was formulated to give strategic and theoretical instruction to the members of the JCP. Hence in the following chapters I need to find a member who accepted the general decree of two-stage revolution from the

Comintern's thesis. Our protagonist not only accepted the rationale of that thesis, but also continued to develop the principles related to the notion of two-stage revolution. At the same time, rather than see revolution as a void of mediation and cultural representation, this person took the revolutionary notion and applied it as a criticism of Japan's imperial economy and politics. The protagonist also clarified what the duality of Japan's capitalism meant in his analysis. That is to say, he was able to explain how "those feudal elements" were connected to Japan's economy, and this further inspired him to incorporate his interpretation into his proposal for two-stage revolution.

Among many historical figures, it is Nosaka Sanzo that I refer to. Not only because he chose to see the entwining issues of Japan's revolution and imperial economy and politics as mutually correlated, but also because he was the person who mainly played the role of developing the notion of two-stage revolution after 1927. Soon after the development of the original thesis, the Comintern twice had to revise its main argument regarding the nature of Japan's revolution due to the changing international situation. Nosaka began to engage himself in the Comintern's internal affairs and his thoughts were reflected in all the policies in Japan. This was particularly true as the Japanese empire gradually embarked on the road to military expansion in Asia, especially China. In the 1930s, Nosaka turned his gaze on the imperial system for mobilization and began to develop a strategy for this two-stage revolution. This was a reflection of directly addressing the contingency that the 1927 thesis had ignored. I begin to outline how Nosaka came to grasp the notion of two-stage revolution in chapter two.

## **Chapter Two: Politics of the Labor-employer Relationship in Nosaka's Eyes**

In the previous chapter, I discussed the general principles and flaws in the Comintern's 1927 thesis on two-stage revolution in Japan. This chapter discusses how a JCP member, Nosaka Sanzo, came to realize the necessity of launching such a revolution in Japan. I trace Nosaka's career before 1927 to discern how he gradually grasped the notion of revolution through his observation of the imperial economy with regard to the process of primitive accumulation of capital in Japan. First, I focus on what Nosaka conceptualized as the main social problem spawned by the imperial economy. Then I explore the social ideology that one of the capitalist agents employed to coordinate between laborers and capitalist employers. Based on this, I discuss two thoughts that Nosaka encountered in his understanding of the labor-employer relationship, namely, Suzuki Bunji's doctrine of coordination and Osugi Sakae's anarchism, and how he criticized them in favor of the notion of revolution. In the last two sections, I examine how Nosaka and his colleagues led an analysis on the social background of imperial Japan and enabled him to confirm the necessity of launching such a revolution that needed to be divided into two stages.

The first question related to Nosaka in my thesis is how he understood Japan's economic system. I trace his thoughts back to his early career to answer this question. Nosaka's criticism of Japan's economic system could be traced back to the time when he began to realize that the process of capitalist accumulation in Japan caused social inequality. As a college student in Kobe in the 1910s, Nosaka started to realize that social inequality manifested itself as a dichotomy between rural areas and cities:

In 1881 the finance minister Matsukata Masayoshi, started to implement a series of financial policies, which was later known as the “Finance of Matsukata” (Matsukata Zaisei). State-run industries and mines were privatized and sold at almost the same price to capitalists who had close relationship with the bureaucrats. On the other hand, the deflation policy gave a hard blow on the rural areas. The number of peasants who had relinquished their land and had their status relegated as tenants had remarkably increased. In a period, industries and workshops in villages which contributed to the prosperity of rural areas suffered a wholesale bankruptcy.<sup>21</sup>

The realization of the discrepancy between rural areas and cities aroused Nosaka’s objection to capitalism for the first time. Peasants’ interests were sacrificed, and agriculture was placed into a subsidiary status in the process of industrialization.

Nosaka took his birth place as an example:

The industries in Hagi were still restricted to orange-farming, marine products manufacturing and pottery. The population of this town did not change too much, and it remained around forty thousand. As a sharp contrast, young people poured into major metropolis. To put it in another way, with the slogan of “expanding overseas with great ambitions”(Kaigai Yuuhi), which was a *de facto* expansive policy, these young people started to immigrate to Korea, China and South America.<sup>22</sup>

The dramatic disparage between big metropolitans and rural areas drove him to think about the consequence of this social polarization, which led him to further his comprehension on Japan’s capitalism. Due to Japan’s capital accumulation, most laborers in rural areas had to be absorbed into this capitalist system, leaving their land desolated, as they became cheap laborers in cities.

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<sup>21</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 1 (Tokyo : Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.61

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p.62

With regard to the pauperization of the laborers, he began to pay attention to the impoverished people who were living in the slums of cities. He was impressed by the everyday lives of those poor people living there, as the fragments of the pathetic images forming a montage that always reminded him of what they were suffering and what caused this situation. It was the lives of those people that drew his attention to the social inequality endemic to this system:

There was a railway station called Takadori that was located near Kobe. North to this station was a slum area. In a damp corner of the street, the cramped space was jammed with many dilapidated houses. The residents of this community lived on some handiworks to survive, but I felt that they were as if leading their lives in the depths of a cave (it means that they couldn't see any bright future in their lives). The government did not implement any policy to relieve the pain of these subaltern people, leaving them spent their whole lives in poverty and darkness. When I passed this community, I started to feel that our society was plagued by such severe social inequality and unevenness.<sup>23</sup>

However, at this stage Nosaka had no idea of Japan's social stratification that arose from its economic modernization. He had not realized the role that the state was playing in promoting the development of capitalism in Japan. Given the lack of knowledge on accumulation of capital, a primitive impulse emerged in his heart that inspired him to abolish the unevenness that he had witnessed in this society. It was for this reason that when he came across the book *News from Nowhere*, written by an Englishman, William Morris, he was impressed by its content. This book described a merely mythical society that was based on a principle of ultimate egalitarianism. This was the first opportunity that Nosaka got to know the idea of communism. Through this

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p.117

book, and ideal as it seemed, it drew his attention and provided a new thinking on replacing the current social system.

A glorious ideal as it was, even Nosaka understood that it could not be realized at that time in a draconian situation. Neither did this book point out the nature of the state in facilitating the formation of a capitalist market. Then he had a chance to encounter another book that discussed this problem from the opposite perspective. Richard Ely in his book, *Principles of Economics*, analyzed the idea of socialism which had imposed a deep influence on Nosaka's mind. In this book, Richard Ely argued that capital should not be abolished but be socialized so that the bourgeoisie as a class would disappear. Thus, the expansion of the economic function of the state was inevitable as to ensure that all the properties could be rationalized in the process of socialization in economic sectors.<sup>24</sup>

The equalization of capital and the distribution of wealth were acknowledged by Nosaka as the measures that were directly focused on eradicating social inequality. However, he was not content with Ely's arguments as they were just reformative policies that were aimed at remedying the defects of the social system. In any event, socialism began to catch Nosaka's eyes, as this thought provided a presumption that social inequality under the current capitalist economic system could be wiped out. However, he had no channel to study it systematically as all the books were under a severe censorship at that time, and socialism was deemed by the state as a word with political sensibility. As a result, many intellectuals who had sympathetic feelings for the impoverished and subaltern people in society chose to approach these people to understand their feelings.

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<sup>24</sup> Richard Ely et al, *Outlines of economics* (New York : Macmillan, 1923), p.597-601

It was Nosaka's sympathy toward these impoverished people living in the slum of Kobe that drove him to develop his intellect of knowing and understanding the lives of these people. "I would like to pay a visit to Kagawa Toyohiko, who volunteers to help those impoverished people living in the slum of Niigawa, a place east to Kobe".<sup>25</sup> Kagawa Toyohiko was a Christian in prewar Japan who had been preaching for a long time to the masses to treat each other with authentic love. In most of his life, Kagawa dedicated himself to facilitating a cooperative relationship between laborers and employers in a way that "laborers could work full-heartedly for their employers, while at the same time employers would show genuine concerns of the laborers' lives and their desires."<sup>26</sup>

Judging from Nosaka's later writings, it is clear that he would obviously not agree with Kagawa's thoughts. As I show later, Nosaka held a critical attitude toward such cooperativism in the labor-employer relationship. It constituted an indispensable link between the state and laborers in a broader sense that the state could implement a series of social policies to foster laborers in support of the maintenance of this economic system. However, this relationship did not grant laborers an equivalent status with those employers. Alternating experiences of getting hired and fired constituted a major part for laborers' lives. Since Nosaka sought to find a solution that could solve social inequality, it went without saying that he would struggle to find a prescription for the problem of why laborers had to be fired by their employers even in the event of economic prosperity. It was his experience in the *Yuaikai* that helped him understand those matters.

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<sup>25</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 1 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.117

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, p.243

### **Nosaka and the *Yuaikai*: Social Cooperativism as Imperialism Disavowed**

Nosaka's career as a labour leader began with his participation in the Friendly Society (*Yuaikai*), the most influential trade union in pre-war Japan. Although after 1924 he was marginalized in this group due to his divergence from the union's predominant guiding principle, his early career as a social intellectual specializing in labour issues was built when he was working in the union. Indeed, his viewpoint on how to solve social inequality was based on his experience at that time.

The *Yuaikai* was established in 1912 and, as its name implied, it aimed at fostering mutual assistance among labourers with the purpose of promoting cooperation between workers and their employers. Before he embraced the notion of revolution in 1918, he was involved in this influential trade union's daily work and thus had the opportunity to understand the views of labour leaders and social intellectuals from the union. It was those views that helped him understand both rationality and the flaws of the philosophy prevalent in the mind of senior leaders in the *Yuaikai*. Hence, it allowed him to make the eventual decision to accept the notion of revolution. In other words, these views provided him with ideas that he rejected in favour of revolution after 1918.

Nosaka came to know this organization through a series of public speeches facilitated by Horie Kiichi in 1913. He attended the speeches and was impressed by their genuine concern for Japanese labourers. He noted, "The speakers used plain words to deliver the necessity of achieving solidarity among labourers. They also conveyed a feeling to me that I could not avert but show respect to those people who were dedicated and steadfast in their career."<sup>27</sup> He recalled later that after attending the speeches, he

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p.188

became aware of the social consciousness among labourers that the *Yuaikai* aimed to foster:

More trade unions should be built to foster consciousness and a healthy physical body for those labourers...the ultimate goal for those organizations was to bring about the awaking of labourers all over the world from their dormant state.<sup>28</sup>

With concern as to how the state managed to shape the consciousness of labourers through agents such as the *Yuaikai*, Nosaka joined the organization in 1915 and got acquainted with the leader, Suzuki Bunji. In the 1910s, under the leadership of Suzuki, the *Yuaikai* was organized to help labourers sell their labour power with guidance from the state apparatus:

In order to solve the social inequality between labourers and employers, capitalists need to recognize the personality of labourers; Labourers also have to unify, cooperate and aim to improve their personalities, skills and knowledge... the *Yuaikai* in its developing years was organized to 'improve the affection and mutual assistance', to develop knowledge, to foster good morality, to improve the skills and status of the labourers. When it was vigorously developing, it started to emphasize the sacred aspect of working, cultivation and unity.<sup>29</sup>

Nosaka spoke highly of the establishment of the *Yuaikai*, as it was the only legal form at that time that could help labourers to get motivated in the face of their bitter life due to social inequality. But as Nosaka's comment demonstrated, labourers were united in order to receive collective social training to foster a sense of discipline and compliance. Rather than root out the cause that resulted in the inequality between labourers and employers, the effect of the social propaganda in the *Yuaikai* lay in the

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p.189

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p.196

formation of labourers' subjectivity, which was considered to qualify them to sell their labor power. To put it another way, labourers could only sell their labour power in the way the state expected.

I show how Nosaka responded to this trend in the following sections of the chapter. Apparently when Nosaka decided to join the *Yuaikai*, he became interested in the *Yuaikai*'s aims and principles in its early years of development. It was a spontaneous response for Nosaka to accept them after he had witnessed the sufferings of the labourers both in cities and rural areas. However, when he became involved in the daily work of the *Yuaikai*, he had not been aware of the class antagonism. The first reason for his lack of this consciousness was that, due to suppression by the government, labour movements were in a dormant state:

Socialism movements in the Meiji period and labour movements were being sternly suppressed by the government. It was really a 'winter time' in which an oppressive and stifling atmosphere inhibited the masses from initiating social movements. In such a situation, if a legal and sustainable group was allowed to be built, only an organization with the features of the *Yuaikai* could survive in such an environment.<sup>30</sup>

The second reason was that the senior intellectuals in the group, including Suzuki Bunji, were devoted to cultivating a harmonious relationship between labourers and employers. As supportive of the *Yuaikai*'s purpose as Nosaka was at that time, his attitude toward this organization was contingent at best:

Although I joined the *Yuaikai* in 1915 and became a regular member, dedicating myself to working for it enthusiastically, it did not mean that I had subscribed to the *Yuaikai*'s main principles and creeds, especially its guiding

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p.197

thought that was aimed to help form a harmonious relationship between labourers and employers. [However] I did not have a clear and explicit perspective on Japan's social classes at that time, though I did seek to reform this organization to be a basis from which labourers could challenge the despotism of the capitalist employers. I expressed this idea in my diary on 29<sup>th</sup> May 1914 before I joined:

Labour-related issues in Japan will become significant in the near future. Now labourers are still in a dormant state. However, the time for their awaking must come... In spite of that, the form of a labour agent under an autonomous rule of labourers themselves is still prohibited in Japan.<sup>31</sup>

What he referred to as “labour agent under the autonomous rule of labourers themselves” reflected his conceptualization of the commodification of labour power. I analyze the reason for this in the following sections. When he joined the *Yuaikai*, he admitted that he did not realize the essence of capitalist exploitation in cities and rural areas. What he had witnessed in this organization was the *Yuaikai*'s social coordination between labourers and employers, as Suzuki Bunji advocated, and its effort to instil loyalty to employers into labourers. This attempted social coordination finally became Nosaka's criticism of it in favour of the establishment of a type of “labour agent under the autonomous rule by labourers themselves” through revolution, as I show later.

It was not long after he began to understand *Yuaikai*'s principle when Japan declared war on Germany in the First World War. As the First World War continued and Japan's involvement increased, the *Yuaikai* experienced a drastic development in 1915, including not only an increase in members but also labour-related disputes in which the *Yuaikai* had to be involved.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p.315

The First World War provided an opportunity for large enterprises to prosper. In contrast, laborers had to be sacrificed in terms of their personal interest. The hardship of daily lives caused by conditions such as lack of food, rising prices and the decline of real wages became acute in both cities and rural areas. Under these circumstances, labor disputes increased year by year. The details were as follows:

Year	Cases of Labor Disputes
1910	10
1914	50
1915	64
1916	108
1917	398

Source: Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 1 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.310

Nosaka admitted, “The steep rise of labor disputes suggested that laborers had already realized the importance of struggle through unity, hence causing inevitable confrontation between laborers and employers”.<sup>32</sup> Social movements culminated in the Rice Riots in 1918. Nosaka spoke highly of the social influence of this movement because it not only demonstrated the power of Japanese masses but also revealed the demand of the masses for bourgeois democracy through universal suffrage.<sup>33</sup>

Under such circumstances, a greater number of laborers joined the *Yuaikai* with the anticipation of reforming this organization as a community that could hear the voices of laborers whose commitment was an indispensable part of the social production while their status and voices were marginalized. This truth entailed the use of an effective and

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p.310

<sup>33</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 2 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.162

democratic organization that could promptly represent those subaltern workers' voices and desires. However, Suzuki Bunji's attitude remained the same. His intellectual identity consolidated his role as a mediator between laborers and employers; hence, he refused to acknowledge current changes in society. Because of Suzuki's leadership style, the whole climate of the *Yuikai* was "stagnant, negative and hesitant",<sup>34</sup> and it did not keep up with the trend in pushing for laborer movements. Nosaka criticized Suzuki, and attributed Suzuki's steadfast attitude toward maintaining a cooperative spirit between laborers and employers to Suzuki's consciousness as an intellectual:

Labor unions had their own laws of operation and they could not depend only on the power of a single person. If the union had trusted an individual's ability and charm too much, the principle for this organization would be defied.<sup>35</sup>

Here Nosaka denied the *Yuikai*'s social policies, represented by the cultivation of labourers' minds. It was under these circumstances that Nosaka began to reform the *Yuikai* as a union in order to organize concerted movements among the workers through democratic measures in mobilizing laborers to participate in Japan's bourgeois politics.

In order to achieve this goal, Nosaka began to analyze the role of laborers in the capitalist economy. When the war broke out, laborers could not keep their jobs as they did before, and this truth could not be simply explained by Suzuki's interpretation of whether employers would adopt a kind and humanistic way of treating laborers. Rather, Nosaka began to be aware that this was a problem of Japan's economic system itself:

Speaking of those poor laborers, I realized that I shouldn't show my concern and pity to them as I did in the past when I passed by the slum of Niigawa and Takatori. My

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p.319

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p.200

perspective on viewing this question has also changed. At this time, I read Yokoyama Gennosuke's *The Life of Japan's Subaltern Classes* (Nihong no Kaso Shakai) and was then suddenly enlightened. This book gave a clear description on the miserable lives of laborers, the impoverished in metropolises, and tenant peasants from a perspective of the ordinary laborer. What is more important is that capitalist makes laborers for long hours but get low pay. Judging from this aspect, Japan's laborers were none other but the pool of labor power for Japan's industries.<sup>36</sup>

As Nosaka realized, those impoverished people living in the slums of cities lost their jobs due to the various contingencies in Japan's economy. The employers and owners of industries were always in a dominant position to decide how much profit they would keep through manipulating the hiring relationship between them and those laborers. "If Japan had won at the end of the war, inflation would have occurred, industries would have prospered, and substantial profits would have accrued due to this event; however, the enormous boom would have been captured by the industrial capitalists. The proportion of the benefits the laborers could share was only negligible."<sup>37</sup>

What Nosaka had learnt from both books and his practical experience revealed to him that Japan's economic system caused social inequality insofar as capitalists wielded the power of manipulating labor-employer relationships through the state's interfering function. He had a deep insight into relating this inequality to the state's attitude of treating the filthy laborers as a reserve army for Japan's industrial capitalism. Laborers, no matter whether they were hired or fired, and regardless of their working places, would always suffer from exploitation if this system were not abolished. In this extremist condition, laborers would even be discriminated against, as foreign laborers from Japan's

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<sup>36</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 1 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.243

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, p.253

colonized areas would also be. As Japan's industrial economy had stripped the laborers of all desires other than their aspiration to sell their labor power as a commodity, those laborers complied readily with the orders of the state apparatus.

The fact that the laborers were virtually the reserve army for Japan's economy led Nosaka to realize the ruthlessness of the way the state treated ordinary laborers. By the 1910s, imperial Japan had already started its overseas expansion and extended its boundary to the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan. Nosaka led a trip to Taiwan and got first-hand knowledge of Taiwan's laborers who were pleased with the demand brought by the Japanese empire's capital expansion. Because of that trip, he further enriched his knowledge of the labourers in Japan.

On that trip, Nosaka had witnessed how Japanese bankers and large economic groups saw Taiwanese as a pool for labor reserve armies, especially Taiwan's aboriginals who were living in mountainous areas. The colonisers confiscated the homeland of the aboriginals, leaving them with nothing but their labour power to sell as a commodity. The aboriginals, however, were difficult to "civilize" according to the Japanese empire. In order to customize policies the whole colonizing process in Taiwan, the Japanese empire maintained some local cultural customs in Taiwan. For example, they built temples for local people to pay religious homage in. According to Nosaka's investigation in the following years, the temples were ideal localities to sustain the process of the formal subsumption to capital, as monies were collected from the pilgrimages of the local people and subsequently used as funding for financial capitalists.

To summarize: in the First World War, Nosaka started to realize that Suzuki Bunji's argument on facilitating collaboration between laborers and employers could not

be applied to solve Japan's labor problem. Suzuki's argument reflected that the state steered laborers to reproduce their labor powers in order to maintain the continuation of primitive accumulation of capital, which Nosaka criticized as the culprit of Japan's social inequality. However, it did not solve the problem of whether laborers could sell their labor powers freely or not. Nosaka sought to promote another pattern for laborers to sell their labor power in a more democratic and organized way, and this was why he spoke highly of such social masses' movements as the Rice Riots of 1918 because they were initiated and led by laborers themselves; more importantly, they appealed for democracy. The next section of this chapter talks about Nosaka's comprehension of the application of democracy in labour movements and its relationship with revolution.

### **Getting Confirmed: Nosaka's Preference for the Notion of Revolution**

Nosaka renounced the social consonance between laborers and employers and, instead, advocated struggle between different social classes, especially workers and their capitalist employers. But it was still not the time for him to generate a sense of revolution. Rather, he remembered an impression about the anarchical activities that he used to witness when he was young. "I began to focus on Osugi Sakae's anarchism; and under his influence, I became more and more critical about the Yuaikai's policies".<sup>38</sup>

For Nosaka, the anarchical approach included direct actions that were launched by laborers in pursuit of their goals. However, it was not the first time that he had encountered this idea. Nosaka had witnessed its social influence in 1911 for the first time, when an astounding event occurred and caught the attention of the media both in Japan and abroad. Kotoku Shusui, who was later often considered an anarchist martyr, plotted

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid, p.320

an assassination of the Emperor but failed. He was sentenced to death, and the details of this failed attempt were kept confidential, leaving the masses unaware of the difference between anarchical manners and social revolution. “At that time anarchism and socialism were always confused in terms of theoretical framework and practice...however, I also realized that the reliable method to realize socialism should not be defined as the individual heroism and terrorism.”<sup>39</sup>

Nosaka made a distinction between anarchism and socialism, the goals of which made him devote his life to realizing them. Because of the negative aspect of social influence, “political control and supervision had to intervene in social movements”, but due to the “current social and labor policies, the real concern of the consciousness of laborers was missing”.<sup>40</sup> It was against this background that Nosaka became attracted to Osugi Sakae’s philosophy of the labor movements:

The labor problem must be solved by laborers themselves. Hence political, somewhat highbrow arguments given by intellectuals (such as Sakai Toshihiko) were apparently not needed in leading labor movements...In comparison with those intellectuals, I had a closer affinity for Osugi’s thoughts. The glamour of his ideas lay in the fact that he openly insisted on courageous direct action against the system through syndical and revolutionary movements.<sup>41</sup>

Nosaka praised Osugi’s philosophy because his ideas educated the laborers to “form a unity that could be utilized as an efficient weapon to fight against the system”.<sup>42</sup> Showing a favorable attitude toward Osugi’s philosophy, Nosaka also rejected the

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid, p.129

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, p.284

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, p.290

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, p.293

tendency to facilitate cooperation between laborers and employers, as Suzuki Bunji always proposed, and despised the superior manner that was held by some intellectuals.

However, his preference for Osugi's prescription did not last. Osugi denied labor power as a commodity; further, he called for the overthrow of the current system. Nosaka did not agree with this argument insofar as he considered labor unions an efficient instrument to deal with the labor-capital relationship. After the First World War, Japan's workers automatically formed and participated in labor unions.<sup>43</sup> In view of this fact, Nosaka probed into the political situation during and after the war and found that rather than overthrow the bourgeois government in Japan, the laborers should resort to the collective power of labor unions in order to bargain with their employers. Since the post-war economic boom also raised the price of commodities, laborers' real wages were in fact decreased.<sup>44</sup> As a result, the incidence of strikes in Japan increased from 11 in 1910 to 282 in 1919. Based on this development, Nosaka considered laborers' complaints to be a signal of their aspiration to increase the price of their labor power.<sup>45</sup>

On the other hand, Nosaka noticed that one of the significant changes in social life after the war was that the idea of democracy had already extended to the circle of Japanese middle class.<sup>46</sup> With the introduction of democracy from Europe, the Japanese middle class was entitled to enjoy universal suffrage in bourgeois politics. In the following years, Nosaka thought that this notion of democracy should be applicable to laborers insofar as it could provide an institutional guarantee for laborers to sell their labor power to employers.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid, p.310-311

<sup>44</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 3 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.146-147

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, p.149

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, p.146

When he realized the institutional change in Japan's politics, he began to connect this change with laborers' lives and wanted to see how democracy could bring opportunity to laborers. It was an opportune time for him to develop such ideas for, soon after the war, he set out for Europe to study labor problems. He arrived in London in July 1919. From 1919 to 1920, Europe faced a fierce and chaotic situation. In many countries revolutions broke out but they all failed quickly. Nosaka compared the characteristics of the revolutions and found that as long as the socialist parties who led the revolutions forced the new government to extend the scope of democracy to the masses, they would stop pushing for revolution to further evolve to an advanced stage. To put it another way, post-war revolutions in Europe were mainly aimed at wiping out domestic authoritarian regimes and promoting the spread of democracy. In particular, Nosaka noticed that in these revolutions, labor organizations had contributed considerably to the social changes because it precipitated governments' acceptance of the bid made by laborers to improve their economic lives. He took Germany as an example:

The German ADGB trade union has wielded influential power and has a decisive voice in determining issues that are related to economy, politics, and international disputes...Nowadays, although the German socialist party is holding political power, it doesn't necessarily mean that its policies have won the support of an overwhelming majority in the Cabinet. Rather, behind the scene, the ADGB trade union, which has already demonstrated its power in economic struggles, is attentively watching the performance of the party.<sup>47</sup>

As Nosaka saw it, the new social party, which had grasped the political power of Germany, marked a landmark because a democratic institution had replaced the former imperial government. After the advent of revolutionary surges in Germany, the social

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p232-233

democratic party started to palliate the agitated masses, especially the proletariats, by facilitating a cooperative relationship between laborers and bourgeois capitalists. Since Nosaka acknowledged that an influential trade union was functioning behind the politics, it was this labor union rather than the social party that determined the trend of German politics. As a result, the ADGB trade union urged the bourgeois government to apply a social reformative policy in order to regulate the laborers in terms of their collective movement. The temporary goal for labor movements, according to Nosaka's evaluation, was to "be legally organized within the boundary of trade unions".<sup>48</sup>

On the other hand, in order to grasp the nature of the capitalist state, he referred to Lenin's landmark work in Britain and started to realize that "The capitalist state was a political agency for capital to be relied on in order to serve its own interests in accumulation and multiplication." At the same time, he also read Engels's *The origin of the family, private property and the state*, and found it even more persuasive than Lenin's work:

Rather, it [the state] is a product of society at a particular stage of development; it is the admission that this society has involved itself in insoluble self-contradiction and is cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to exorcize.<sup>49</sup>

Nosaka realized that the capitalist state was the origin of all the labor-related disputes in contemporary Japan. After reading this book, he pointed out that the Japanese state was also intermingled with a general fetish of the Japanese Emperor:

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid, p.235

<sup>49</sup> Friedrich Engels, *The origin of the family, private property and the state* (Harmondsworth, England : Penguin Books, 1985) p.208

From the perspective of laborers, they hold an idealized impression of the state. Since the Japanese Emperor is apotheosized and now is holding the ultimate power of the state, he plays the role of coordinating the conflict between working classes and their capitalist employers.<sup>50</sup>

Nosaka believed that since the Japanese state bore the nature of the capitalist state, as defined in Lenin and Engels's writings, it was the origin of all the laborers-related problems; however, the labourers did not realize the nature of the Japanese state because they were still worshipping the Japanese Emperor and seeing him as a national idol. This circumstance provided the state with a tool to mystify and apotheosize laborers' industriousness as a spirit that only the Japanese Emperor could embody and represent. As a result, when the state relied on this hypothesized spirit to impose its social policies on laborers, they tended to be subject to this spirit and worked for the economic system. This was how Nosaka saw laborers as commodities in the Japanese Empire's social networks through the mediation of the state. In the mean time, Nosaka's narrative implied that he began to consider the Japanese emperor to be an indispensable constituent of the state's bureaucratic system. This provided him with the evidence to accept and develop his thoughts on revolution in Japan.

During his three-year stay in Europe, he also paid attention to the Russian October Revolution and was impressed by the preparations of the leading class for the revolution. In lieu of policies focusing on the social coordination between laborers and employers that were implemented by most bourgeois governments in the world, Russian Bolsheviks implemented a series of policies that aimed at nationalizing all industries and manipulating laborers according to the needs of the state. The unconditional confiscation

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<sup>50</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 2 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.307

of all the industries by the proletariat-led government caused social upheaval in the country and intensified the emotional hostility of the peasant class.

Nosaka's witness of the so-called socialist system in Russia stimulated him to think about the appropriate form for revolution in Japan under the name of "a socialist revolution". The fact that famine stalked the land of Russia suggested that even revolution should still treat labor-related issues based on reality; otherwise a socialist country would end up as a tragedy.

The Bolsheviks' revolutionary policies after the outbreak of the Russian Revolution suggested that revolution should rely on political measures in dealing with class relationships, and the nationalization in economic sectors from 1918 to 1921 suggested that even proletariats-led government resort to political and economic methods to organize laborers in the country for political purposes, not to mention bourgeois capitalist countries. Nothing can justify his idea on an appropriate form for "labor union movements" other than the conclusion from his writings (1926) that he compiled as a summary of his thoughts on social relations. In his *On Labor Unions*, he argued:

The labor union was an efficient mechanism to deal with disputes on laborers' wages within the capitalist economic system... The task for labor unions in a capitalist economy was to help control the supply of laborers in order to meet the demand of capitalist industries... Furthermore, the labor union movements in the current stage that dealt mainly with economical disputes would finally evolve into a new form of political struggles.<sup>51</sup>

Nosaka maintained that struggles based on labor unions should be organized in the framework of a contemporary capitalist economy. In fact, labor unions could concentrate the power of laborers to help solve the problem that was brought about by the

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<sup>51</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Rodo kumiairon*, (Tokyo: Kibokaku, 1930), p.53-59

accumulation of capitals, as he had witnessed when he was young. In his thesis, Nosaka pointed out the solution to the emergence of “surplus population”, or what he had referred to as the pool of labor power in the past. He suggested that the reason for the emergence of surplus population was capital’s desire for multiplication. If this excerpt was contrasted with Osugi’s philosophy, it would lead to a total divergence from the latter’s statement. Nosaka mentioned several times that in the 1910s, the magazine *Modern Thought*, which was edited by Osugi Sakae, was well circulated among the masses. Having read this magazine he must have been aware that Osugi proposed to organize the national economy and determine the process of production based on the consumption required by the people, rather than the desire of capital to multiply. Hence, he found that Osugi’s anarchism was too ideal to be accepted because it negated any political form that could be applied in the struggle against capital.<sup>52</sup> As a result, if the issue of the labor problem was analyzed in the framework of a capitalist economy, there was only one way to solve it: to rely on political methods.

Labor unions were reliable agents that needed to be made full use of as a method of nurturing initiatives of laborers. More importantly, the development of movements based on labor unions was the precondition for the ultimate resort to solve the problems of Japan’s economic revolution:

Large-scale industry concentrates a crowd of people unknown to one another. Competition divides their interests. But the maintenance of wages unites them for leading collective resistance---combination. Thus combination always has a double aim, that of stopping the competition among themselves, in order to bring about a general competition with the capitalist. If the first aim of resistance was merely the maintenance of wages,

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<sup>52</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 4 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.21

combinations, at first isolated, organize themselves into groups as the capitalists in their turn unite in the idea of repression; and in face of always united capital, the maintenance of the association becomes more necessary to them than that of wages...Once it has reached this point, association takes on a political character.

Economic conditions had first transformed the mass of the people of the country into workers. The domination of capital has created for this mass a common situation, common interests. This mass is thus already a class as against capital, but not yet for itself. In the struggle, of which we have noted only a few phases, this mass becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself. The interests it defends become class interests. But the struggle of class against class is a political struggle.<sup>53</sup>

Nosaka cited this excerpt from Marx's writings to show that "economic struggles would definitely be transformed into the form of political ones". This understanding, combined with his analysis of the economic struggles through the form of labor union movement, reflected his intention of hailing the labor union movement based on economic and political struggles as an advanced form over the coordinating policy between laborers and employers that was espoused by Suzuki Bunji. As a result, the nature of Japan's labor unions bore two characteristics:

1. In the process of transformation from economic to political struggles, the social consciousness of the laborers could not be separated from the bourgeois consciousness.

2. Once the laborer movements could be initiated independently and autonomously, the ideal for a socialist revolution could be achieved.<sup>54</sup>

From this quotation, "independent action" was referred to by Nosaka to imply that industrial laborers could autonomously organize their movements in the historical task

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<sup>53</sup> Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, (London: M. Lawrence), p.145. Quoted from Nosaka Sanzo, *Rodo kumiairon*, (Tokyo : Kibokaku, 1930), p.59-60

<sup>54</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Rodo kumiairon*, (Tokyo: Kibo-kaku, 1930), p.62-63

that was known as the socialist revolution. However, this socialist revolution could only be launched if the prerequisite had been realized, namely, the completion of the transformation from launching economic struggles to launching political struggles, which he featured in the first place. By commenting that, “The social consciousness of the laborers could not be separated from the bourgeois consciousness”, he implied that laborer power was still treated as a commodity in Japan’s bourgeois economy in the current stage. This point was the greatest difference between Nosaka’s views on the role of laborers and Osugi’s. If the socialist revolution was considered the final goal for laborers, it was apparent that Nosaka was suggesting that one more step was needed. It was this transition that Nosaka focused on in the following decade.

Up until this point, it should be clear that Nosaka was impressed by Russia’s 1917 revolution, as it showed vividly how powerful it would be if laborers had been united to pursue the political goals defined by the revolutionary class in this country. More importantly, he showed his preference for a socialist revolution rather than Osugi Sakae’s anarchism. After 1921 he gradually became an advocate of revolution, and focused on how this revolution should be organized in Japan. Nosaka was not expecting a revolution to occur in the near future, and that it could take the same form as Russian communists’. The particular form for the revolution, known as “a two-stage revolution”, which first appeared officially in the Comintern 1927 thesis (cited at the beginning of this research), was an outcome of his next five-year mediation in all the activities he undertook after 1922.

### **Nosaka's Commitment to the Sanro in Confirming the Nature of Revolution**

In 1922, after he returned to Japan from Europe, Nosaka was happy to note that under the influence of the Russian Revolution, Japanese laborers had been mobilized to resist the anarchists' philosophy of taking direct action to overthrow the capitalist system instead of applying appropriate political methods. However, this trend needed to be contrasted against the state's intention to supervise the labor union movements in Japan. This intention became even more explicit in 1923, when a powerful earthquake attacked the Tokyo region, which later induced social riots that had culminated to its apex ever since the end of the First World War. The state took some urgent measures to suppress social movements and ensure social stability. It was for this reason that anarchism and syndicalism suffered from a new round of suppression from above. The primary setback for anarchism was that the chief leader, Osugi Sakae, had been secretly arrested and immediately executed. At the same time, Japanese labor movements also set the elimination of the influence of anarchism as their priority. As the most influential labor union in Japan, the Sodomei, the successor to the former *Yuaikai*, made an appeal that labor movements in Japan should adopt a moderate form instead of the radical and syndical one.<sup>55</sup> One of the efforts that were made by the state, as Nosaka observed, was to improve the living condition of those laborers, partially<sup>56</sup> in order to placate the discontent of laborers from below. Correspondingly, the Sodomei started to exclude the communist party members from this organization, as the latter's belief in social revolution was a grave threat to the state bureaucrats.

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<sup>55</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 5 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.29

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, p.31

The freezing out of communist leaders from the Sodomei entailed Nosaka to formulate another strategy in the labor union movements. In fact, the enlarging influence of the reformist leaders who had embraced and accepted those social policies issued by the state to fix and improve its relation with laborers made it impossible for communists to reach an agreement with them in order to form a united front.

In 1924, under Nosaka's supervision, a new affiliated organization was established in the Sodomei. The "Researching Institution on the Industrial Laborers" (*Sangyo Rodo Chosasho*, or *Sanro* in abbreviation) was built to investigate working conditions in Japan, basic payment level and other relevant issues with the purpose of understanding the characteristic of Japan's capitalist economy. On establishing this organization, Nosaka intended to follow what Marx called "the economic laws in the capitalist society" to analyze Japan's economy.<sup>57</sup> As president of Sanro from 1924 to 1927, Nosaka was able to apply what he learned from Marx's *Das Capital* in supervising and editing theses and reports. His achievements laid a solid foundation to accept the notion of a two-stage revolution in Japan.

Nosaka's achievements could be summarized as two aspects of his service in the Sanro. First, the Sanro started to pay attention to Japan's agrarian problem which entailed a revolution in the first place to wipe out the agrarian crisis that was brought about by capitalism. Second, his research provided an analysis on how industrial laborers in cities had already been reified by bourgeois life in society, thus leading to the conclusion that revolution should guarantee that laborers could also enjoy bourgeois democracy. Aside from these achievements, Nosaka used the Sanro and its publications as the frontier to

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid, p.58

carry on the polemic against two major influential lines in the JCP, which were Yamakawaism and Fukumotoism, especially the latter. The theoretical debate about the two lines was entwined with his analysis on Japan's social life with regard to its reflection of laborers.

The Sanro carried out systematic investigations of Japan's agrarian problem, which posed the question that he had been asking ever since he had noticed the social inequality in his youth. Having worked for the Yuaikai for a few years, Nosaka had already realized that Japan's impoverished masses, including the peasants in rural areas, were the reserve armies for labor power in Japan's economy, hence they had a shared destiny that their jobs could not be secured due to contingencies with industrial proletariat in cities. But he was not sure how they had been exploited by capitalists and stripped of everything except their abilities to work and sell their labor power. In the Sanro, taking Japan's agrarian problem as a sample, Nosaka understood the social mechanism that determined this historical process in Japan.

In 1919, Japan's financial economic groups started a new round of capital accumulation as they expanded overseas to hire cheaper laborers and procure resources in capitalist production. The major conflict between the expansion of capitalism in rural areas and the local peasants was caused by the coercive policies that the state applied to confiscate land for development. Being aware of the fact, the Sanro argued, "Since landlords in rural areas own the lands, they could set up various barriers to stop peasants from cultivating the land."<sup>58</sup> For the peasants who had been stripped of the opportunity to farm the land, they were provided with cheap products, and were exploited by the

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<sup>58</sup> Sangyo Rodo Chosajo, *Sangyo rodo jiho. Dai 1-ji* ( Hosei Daigaku Shuppanyoku, 1986), p.122

intermediary traders so that they had to implore the chances of commodification from the state apparatus. In this process, peasants' social consciousness was shattered.<sup>59</sup>

Based on the data from the Sanro's investigation, the proportion of money peasants spent on maintaining their vigor was but far less than that spent on sustaining their basic lives. This ensured that peasants who had lost their land would be firmly bound to the capital economy. The Sanro pointed out that in most cases the assimilation of the peasants took place when all-pervasive capitalism burgeoned in Japan by creating a dual economic model in society that revealed itself as bipolar: the developed metros and the impoverished and exploited rural areas:

Japan's major financial capital was invested in building modern railways and other forms of highway so that young men from rural areas could be assimilated via those routes into industrial factories in cities and metropolitans. They were bought by those employers as commodities and were trained to work in those places. Their life condition in cities was miserable, as if they were living in the bottom of a dark well...at the same time, the urban bourgeoisie obtained food and raw materials from rural areas, produced their commodities and sold them to rural areas in return via the modern routes.<sup>60</sup>

Nosaka paid special attention to the funding of the infrastructure needed to transport laborers from farms to cities. As the Sanro noticed, the flow of the funding was a special demonstration of how the integration of rural laborers into the capital system could be registered in the daily lives in these areas:

In rural areas, a majority of taxes that were collected from the blood and sweat of the former peasants were spent as an essential part of the budget for infrastructure construction by the local governments to build highways, and this policy

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid, p.114

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, p.72

was forcibly carried out in rural areas. As a result, a network of highways was built to connect every village to cities, including scattered and isolated villages and towns. In the next stage, as the value of local big landlords' properties appreciated, and as the bourgeoisie in cities needed to look for their commodity markets due to the reduction of the distance between cities and rural areas, it was now possible for the residents in rural areas to apply particular means to exploit themselves based on the taxes that they had already paid.<sup>61</sup>

As a result, rural temples became the main source of funding that was collected by the merchants and industrial capitalists in cities through banks and other financial institutions. What was interesting was that the funding meant to auspice the local temples was actually from the local rural residents themselves. They were lured to donate to the temples from their own pockets—the money that was supposed to be paid by the employers to regenerate their vigor in order to reproduce labor power!

This process in rural areas was not pushed forward smoothly. Many peasants, especially those who used to be hired by landlords to farm for them, refused to be assimilated into this system. Even some landlords were not willing to turn over their ownership of their lands to the state because the reciprocal agreement they had to accept from the state might change their current status in villages. The Sanro conjectured that the reasons for the stumbles the state encountered in forcing through this process were the state's demand for cheap land.<sup>62</sup>

To deal with this crisis, the state instilled a sense of cooperation in the rural laborers. This initiative tried to emphasize mutual cooperation in the daily lives of laborers, and appealed to them to establish living communities in villages where they

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid, p.72-75

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, p.80

could live without discrimination. In fact, since Nosaka had a few years' working experience in the *Yuaikai* and had already given this some thought. He spontaneously criticized such a policy as the one that might preclude rural laborers from developing their class consciousness. Nosaka discredited the effect of such a policy in stirring up a social crisis between cities and rural areas, dramatizing agrarian problems in Japan.

In Nosaka's eyes, accompanying Japan's capital accumulation at the cost of rural areas, labor unions based on the principle of autonomy should be built in cities; in villages, similar rural communities should be built according to the peasants' intentions. In its publications, the Sanro indicated on a few occasions that labor unions should be established based on laborers own wishes. For example, in 1926, the bulletin of the Sanro criticized the state-sponsored communities or labor unions as being founded not by "the masses' autonomous intention to organize them" but by the bureaucrats' requirements.<sup>63</sup>

In imperial Japan, however, Nosaka did not think the autonomous organized labor unions could be established because the state kept an eye on labor unions. This situation implied that laborers should continue to struggle through the labor union movement in order to foster their revolutionary consciousness, on the condition that their labor power was still treated as a commodity.

Following this logic, in 1925 the Sanro proposed three principles for the labor unions that were due to be organized and led by laborers rather than supervised by the state. The first principle was that the union should concentrate the power of laborers to carry on economic disputes against capitalist employers. This could only take place during large-scale industrialization when laborers could get equal access to the tools for

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p.114

production. Under such circumstances, labor unions should strategically lead negotiations with employers, such as requiring higher wages and setting up a program for hiring and dismissing laborers.

The second principle was to facilitate mutual assistance among the laborers. In the union, laborers should mutually help each other to sustain everyday life. Unlike the state-organized unions that only cared about encouraging laborers to dedicate their capabilities and skills to the positions they were holding in the industry, this union should focus on the unification of laborers to tackle the predicaments that might impinge on labourers' lives after they lost their jobs. For example, mutual assistance included aid for those who suffered from injuries, illness or needed to conduct funerals. Help was also extended to aged and dying laborers. Aside from these issues, mutual assistance should be extended to the disputes that laborers launched against capitalists.

The third principle was to recruit as many laborers as possible into labor unions without distinction of sex, political inclination and occupation. By August 1925, Japan's laborers had amounted to 4,000,000, while the number of laborers with labor union affiliation merely reached 250,000. This principle was considered an overarching provision for founding labor unions to unite individual laborers.<sup>64</sup>

The principles of the labor union that the Sanro proposed were different from the state-sponsored ones. According to Nosaka, the latter were to monitor the workers in the union and enable them to follow discipline under such surveillance.<sup>65</sup> By mentioning the state's guidance of labor unions, Nosaka was implying that the disciplines formulated by the state were aimed at ensuring a harmonized condition between the state and laborers,

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid, p.9

<sup>65</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Rodo kumiairon*, (Tokyo: Kibokaku, 1930), p.17

as Suzuki Bunji had argued a decade ago. On the contrary, the proclamation by the Sanro about new features of the labor union movement emphasized the importance of fostering the proletariats' consciousness among laborers. It went without saying that Nosaka considered this consciousness the momentum that could be relied on to launch a socialist revolution in Japan in the future. This was proved in one of the essays that were published by the Sanro:

What Marx demonstrated in his writings shows only one stage of the political movement in which labor classes have derived their political consciousness. This consciousness could finally be derived autonomously after laborers had engaged in rounds of economic struggles.<sup>66</sup>

Nosaka realized that in the middle 1920s when capitalism had already infiltrated into every corner of a country, the way for laborers to develop their class consciousness was to get them involved in all kinds of economic struggles. As we can see here, in Nosaka's opinion, labor union movements should be considered a preliminary stage in preparation for revolution in the future; moreover, laborers who participated in labor unions that were organized according to the aforementioned principles could develop their revolutionary consciousness through all kinds of economic struggles. However, another question arose: what could laborers achieve through these social movements if labor unions were organized under such principles? To put it another way, what was the relationship between the achievement laborers could have made and the socialist revolution?

Through focusing on Nosaka's analysis on laborers' problem, I suggest that labor movements could not directly lead to the maturing of social conditions to launch a

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<sup>66</sup> Sangyo Rodo Chosajo, *Sangyo rodo jiho. Dai 1-ji* ( Hosei Daigaku Shuppanyoku, 1986), p.29-30

socialist revolution. In the previous section, I discussed how Nosaka became aware that the consciousness of laborers could not be separated from the bourgeois social life before they could be relied on in political movements such as revolution. I mentioned that the difference between Nosaka and the anarchists' ideas in terms of laborer problem lay in the fact that Nosaka still recognized the necessity of the application of bourgeois democracy insofar as it guaranteed the opportunities for laborers to sell their labor power. To put it another way, Nosaka did not negate the role that the bourgeois capitalism should play in the process of social transformation toward a socialist revolution. In fact, bourgeois democracy should be the first goal for laborers to achieve before a socialist revolution could be launched.

Under Nosaka's supervision, the Sanro investigated the current bourgeois consciousness. In April 1926, almost a year before the outbreak of financial crisis in Japan, the Sanro published an article analyzing the dominant power of news in society. This article revealed the underlying social mechanism that caused a general lacking of social class consciousness in the proletariats.

In the first place, this article indicated, "news had already been commodified". In order to win the competition in the market, every news agency spared no effort in designing strategies in order to make their products appealing to consumers, who were excited by "fantastic beauty pictures, merchandised coupons" and other forms of enticing pictures. On the other hand, these news agencies had expanded their social influence through all kinds of public assemblies, such as public expos, concerts, baseball games, etc. They took those opportunities to bring their principles to consumers. Although these principles varied, they shared some common values such as "to circulate news as a

commodity”, “to distribute the form of bourgeois life”, “to obtain profits from marketing strategy”. As a result, even proletariats’ eyes were intoxicated in the dazzling images of the news and media, since they had already been “controlled by commodified news” and identified as consumers.

Having acknowledged the efficacy of the marketing strategies used by the news agencies, the Sanro realized that it was now very difficult to distract the masses from the magic power of such visual impact. Unlike some cultural producers who proclaimed that even the best solution for the leftists was to let people be commodified,<sup>67</sup> the Sanro stuck to its principle that human minds could not be controlled and possessed by material desire and lust. On the other hand, the absorption of laborers into bourgeois life was convenient for Nosaka to develop a strategy focusing on laborer movements, namely, an appeal to democracy.

Through his working experience in the Sanro, Nosaka understood that in the mid 1920s as society had already been reified by capitalist commodities would continue encroaching on the consciousness of the proletariat, he acknowledged the strategy of leading proletariats to participate in universal elections in Japan’s bourgeois politics. In anticipation of eliminating the undemocratic elements in Japan’s politics and economy, epitomized by the state-supervised labor unions, Nosaka expected that laborers would participate in bourgeois politics before the occurrence of a socialist revolution in the future. To put it another way, in order to launch a socialist revolution, the full process for revolution should be split into two stages.

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<sup>67</sup> Mark Driscoll, *Absolute erotic, absolute grotesque: the living, dead, and undead in Japan's imperialism, 1895-1945* (Durham, NC : Duke University Press, 2010), p.163-164

As discussed in chapter one, this confirmation of revolutionary goals in Japan corresponded exactly with the Comintern's 1927 thesis in the way that both Nosaka's preliminary thought in his early revolutionary career and the Comintern's decree considered the necessity of splitting up Japan's revolution into two-stages. Now there is still one question left: How did Nosaka relate the extension of democracy to Japan's revolutionary goals? By asking this question, I suggest that Nosaka had elevated the role that democracy played in Japan's political life to an advanced level that was indexed to the development of Japan's capitalist economy. Nosaka's thought on democracy vis-à-vis Japan's revolution was mainly developed in his clash with two predominant party lines from 1925 to 1927.

### **Democracy as an efficient tool in the course of revolution**

The analysis on democracy in the course of revolution could be traced back to 1923 within the JCP, when Yamakawa Hitoshi, one of the party's senior founders, submitted his suggestion of a "shift of direction" to the party. He argued, "Since the turn of the century, the Japanese socialist movement had gradually been drifted away from the masses...The time has come for the socialists in Japan to embrace the masses that they had left behind."<sup>68</sup>

Nosaka did not negate Yamakawa's thought totally. In fact, at first glance, Yamakawa's theory in the magazine "Match" (*Zenshin*), Nosaka spoke highly of Yamakawa's ideas and his philosophy. He even commented that his thought was strategically important as it removed the misgivings in his mind on how the party should be organized in order to survive as an illegal party in the tense atmosphere after the First

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<sup>68</sup> Rodger Swearingen and Paul Langer, *Red Flag in Japan-- International Communism in Action, 1919-1951* (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard U.P., 1952), p.15

World War. “In order to achieve the goals for revolution, members of the communist party should keep in close touch with the masses”.<sup>69</sup>

Nosaka’s acceptance of Yamakawa’s thought represented his subscription to the mass line that the JCP should apply in approaching democratic politics. The mass line was rational insofar as the masses could understand the JCP’s revolutionary strategies and propaganda, and would support the party in the bourgeois politics. However, according to Yamakawa, instead of being forerunners of revolution, the JCP should form a “cooperative party” with other Japanese masses’ parties in order to engage in the bourgeois election.<sup>70</sup> As a result, Yamakawa denied the necessity of maintaining a legal communist party in Japan; instead, he suggested that in order to help develop a sense of revolutionary consciousness of the masses, the individual communist member should “go to the masses” and organize them in their daily lives. This argument denied the JCP as a vanguard party in pushing for Japan’s revolution.

This is how Nosaka disagreed with Yamakawa. With regard to the role of democracy in social movement, Nosaka acknowledged the necessity of labor union movements under the principle of democracy insofar as laborers could achieve the goal of selling their labor power without the state’s supervision. He considered that the shortcoming of Yamakawa’s thought lay in the fact that the latter was confused with the ultimate goal of democracy. Nosaka considered the measure of democratic struggle through all kinds of activities in political life, such as the struggle for universal suffrage, was indispensable only when it was necessary in nurturing the revolutionary consciousness. To put it another way, Nosaka had emphatically confirmed the connection

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<sup>69</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi*, Vol 6 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.97

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, p.98-99

between the struggle through the labor union movement and its political implication. This connection entailed a rational existence of the JCP, as it could guarantee the political inclination of those laborers who became involved in the movement. He denied that laborer unions could replace the party in leading the proletariat to engage in political struggles.

Yamakawa's thought indirectly caused the party to dissolve in 1924. Fortunately, the Comintern would not tolerate the JCP's self-dissolution, and its command requiring the JCP to be re-established in 1925 provided a new chance for Nosaka to reevaluate the historical role of the party in Japan's revolution.

In 1926, some former members of the JCP were sent back to Japan from the Comintern to rebuild the party. In this process a well-versed Marxist intellectual successfully popularized his thought in the party. Regarded as "a second Lenin", Fukumoto Kazuo believed that capitalism in Japan had already reached to the level of imperialism, an analysis he learnt from Lenin, and that this form was the advanced-evolved world capitalism. Hence, it was now time for Japan's capitalism to decline. It was for this reason that a radical and immediate revolution should be launched by the masses aiming at overthrowing the current bourgeois government.

However, ever since Fukumoto's thought was approved by the Comintern as the principle to rebuild the party, criticism had not abated. Some party members were avid proponents of this thought, while other members, especially the young intellectuals, were suspicious of the applicability of Fukumoto's theory insofar as it dogmatically applied Lenin's idea on how a revolution should be launched, and Marx's analysis of the mechanism of social economy in capitalist countries.

Nosaka was one of the Japanese communists who had realized the problem of Fukumoto's thought before 1927. As he was supervising the operation of the Sanro, he managed to deliver his opinion through all the networks he possessed. In order to augment the impact of the Sanro's publications in society, Nosaka chose to cooperate with Shinchosha Publishing Agency, an influential agency that had funding from the sponsoring capitalists. The chief editor of *Symposiums on the Social Problems* (Shakai Mondai Koza, thereafter Koza), one of the influential published books, agreed to help the Sanro include some articles for publication.<sup>71</sup> The most important thesis was *The Development of Japan's Capitalism* (Nihon Shihonshugi Hattatsushi), which was written by Nosaka's student Noro Eitaro, and was published in 1926.

Nosaka commented on Noro's study on the history of Japanese capitalism saying that it served the purpose of "an analysis of the current situation" (*genjyo bunseki*).<sup>72</sup> While Noro acknowledged that Japanese capitalism had indeed expedited social progress in Japan ever since the Meiji Restoration, he elaborated on how Japan's peasants were forced to leave their lands in rural areas and became labor power in cities, and how the former feudal landlords were funded by financial plans of the state and thus became an indispensable constituent element of Japan's political system.<sup>73</sup> Nosaka found that although Noro's study focused on history, it had indeed cast light on the current situation, as in the 1920s the state had implemented a series of laws and policies to suppress the autonomous movements that were led by peasants in rural areas, which had worsened

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<sup>71</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi*, Vol 5 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.210

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, p205

<sup>73</sup> Noro, Eitaro, *Nihon shihon shugi hattatsushi* p36-50, in *Shakai mondai koza* Vol 3, Oya Soichi, ed (Tokyo : Shinchosha, 1926)

Japan's agrarian problem. Nosaka agreed with Noro's argument; that this model for the development of Japan's capitalism was based on the sacrifice of rural areas.

Aside from his agreement with Noro's research, the other effort he made in criticizing Fukumoto's thought was his appeal for universal suffrage amid the laborers under the leadership of the JCP. In the same year when Noro published his thesis, Nosaka supervised his colleagues in the Sanro to publish a new handbook to expound the necessity of the proletariat's participation in bourgeois politics. This handbook was named as "*The political Handbook for Proletariats*" (Musansha Seiji Hikei).

In this handbook, Nosaka tried to explain this issue from two perspectives: the instruction for the proletariat's participation in universal elections and the reliance of socialist revolution on Japan's peasants. Particularly, Nosaka placed much emphasis on the second problem, as his concern with the indispensable role of peasants in revolution was diametrically opposite to Fukumoto's thought, which refused to acknowledge the historical role peasants were playing in the social masses because the lagging consciousness of peasants disdained the pure proletariats' consciousness.<sup>74</sup> Nosaka must have noticed that even in socialist Russia, peasants were the most reliable class that could be united. He deemed even Lenin would not force the revolution in Russia into an immediate transition toward the socialist stage. In 1921, the Soviet Union applied a new economic policy. The central government allowed peasants to keep their produce for free trade, while it still controlled the major industries and banks. Nosaka acknowledged that this policy would achieve the similar expectation on industrialization in Russia as capital

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<sup>74</sup> Seki Yukio, *Yamakawa-izumu to Fukumoto-izumu* (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1992), p.299

accumulation would under the patronage of state in those capitalist countries.<sup>75</sup> As the Sanro showed, even the proletariat-led revolution in Russia should rely on the power of peasants in the way that after they obtained political power, they needed to stick to those social policies that were aimed at maintaining good condition of rural laborers' outlook and physical bodies in order to safeguard the regime.

The writings on Russia that were published in 1926 reflected Nosaka's intention to correct Fukumoto's thoughts inside the party. Nosaka acknowledged the urgency and importance of solving Japan's agrarian problems in the economic sector, not only to show his dissent against Fukumoto, but also to formulate a clear idea on constructing the strategy for Japan's revolution.

To summarize, I must reiterate here that from 1923 to 1927, both the reformists, such as Yakamawa , and Nosaka, who belonged to the revolutionaries, shared a similar point that principles of bourgeois politics, represented by democracy, was also applicable in Japan's revolution. The only difference between them was the ultimate goal of resorting to democracy in the revolution. At the same time, with regard to another dominant line of the JCP, Nosaka did not agree with Fukumoto's thought as long as Nosaka considered it an imperative that laborers should still be treated in the framework that underlay the bourgeois economy. To put it another way, although Nosaka envisioned a socialist revolution occurring in the future, this revolution should be formulated to ensure that laborers could engage in bourgeois politics and enjoy democracy and freedom in order to sell their labor-power in an unobstructed state. That was why he denied the

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<sup>75</sup> Sangyo Rodo Chosajo, *Kkoku musanseido no gensei*, p6, in *Shakai mondai koza* Vol 2, Oya Soichi, ed (Tokyo: Shincho-sha, 1926)

anarchist measure and agreed with the notion of revolution as a feasible political measure.

### **Chapter Three: Two-stage Revolution as an Evolving Notion**

As discussed in the previous chapter, the primitive accumulation of capital caused the emergence of social unevenness between laborers and employers, and between cities and rural areas. As a result, a bourgeois-democratic revolution was necessary, embodying a stage that could solve the problem of commodification of labor power through labor unions out of laborers' own accord, before a socialist revolution was to be launched.

The necessity of launching such a two-stage revolution was confirmed by the Comintern in 1927. This chapter talks about the way in which the idea of revolution was developed by Nosaka as a criticism of the measure the Japanese empire employed to mobilize the masses in support of its war on China from 1931. If such a notion of revolution sought to be disseminated among the masses, it had to rely on social mobilization to instil such revolutionary consciousness into laborers. However, even Japanese imperialism had realized capitalism's own flaws in procuring resources due to the dramatizing social inequality. The Manchuria Incident marked a beginning of the empire to employ war as the last resort to overcome the domestic predicament in face of the Great Depression in 1931. As a result, imperialism masqueraded itself as a meritorious motive that sought to extricate Japanese masses. Under such consequences, Nosaka found that the evolution of the notion of two-stage revolution in Japan had to compete with the viability of the new social relation in the fifteen-war period from 1931 to 1945.

This chapter addresses Nosaka's development of the notion of two-stage revolution accompanying the struggle he led to reveal an ideology that was employed by the Japanese empire. It will show Nosaka's criticism of the wartime state apparatus and his

conceptualization of the notion of revolution as a measure that could sever laborers from imperial social production.

### **Historical Regression and Progress Concerned with the Comintern's Description of the Nature of Revolution in Japan**

Soon after the issue of the 1927 thesis, the JCP suffered such nightmarish prosecution that the whole party was almost purged by the government. Many leaders and cadres were prosecuted, assassinated, or put into prison. Nosaka was lucky enough to dodge such a calamity, and began his sixteen-year exile life outside Japan. He managed to reach the headquarters of the Comintern in 1931, and started to work under the supervision of this organization.

He arranged to work in the Bureau of the Far East. This bureau was responsible for collecting information regarding most East Asian countries, such as Japan, China, Indonesia and Southeast Asian countries. Particularly, it paid special attention to the situation in China, where revolutionary surges culminated in the early 1930s. The Comintern's interpretation of China's problem determined that it would revise the 1927 thesis soon after it was issued. Ever since 1925, China's nationalism had been gradually stirred up and the masses were mobilized in social campaigns to fight against the warlord government in North China. The warlords were considered a relic of China's feudalism and were thus objected to by both the masses and the National government in South China, which was supposed to be organized representing bourgeois capitalism. This regime was headed by the National Party, otherwise known as Kuomintang (KMT), the most influential party in China at that time. The KMT mainly represented China's bourgeois classes. Aside from that, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was also declared an illegal party by both the warlord and the National governments. In order to

complete the goals of an anti-warlord movement, the Comintern mediated between the two parties and enabled CCP members to join the National Party and assumed positions in its government. On the basis of the cooperation between the two parties, a united front was established which admitted the masses to join with a shared goal of overturning the warlord government in North China. This front achieved great success in military campaigns led by the National government in 1927. However, this front broke down when the National government achieved a nominal unity after it had beaten the warlord government. In the same year the CCP was declared illegal again and was almost purged by the National government.

The demise of China's united front in its revolution entailed a further consideration on the character of bourgeois capitalism. Wang Ming, Chinese representative in the Comintern, published a thesis and repudiated the betrayal of the National government. Stubbornly following the Comintern's interpretation of world history, in his critique Wang Ming argued that it was the bourgeois capitalists that messed up the revolutionary situation in China. The distrust of capitalists entailed the Comintern's reconsideration of the feasibility of the united front in all the oriental countries, including Japan.

It was against this background that in April 1931, the Comintern issued a new thesis that totally revised the previous thesis on two-stage revolution in Japan. According to that thesis, the political power of Japan and the character of revolution were revised as follows:

Japan is a highly developed imperial country, thus it is necessary to judge its nature by the standard of imperialism...The state power has already been seized in the hands of bourgeoisies and landlords, to which financial

capital has hegemony. Furthermore, the emperor system has been degraded as a tool for exploitation by the ruling classes. The basic conflict in Japan's society is the intensification of class struggles between bourgeoisies and proletariats. As a result, revolution should be considered as a proletarian revolution that broadly embraces the bourgeois-democratic responsibilities.<sup>76</sup>

However, the Comintern did not make a sudden shift from what it argued in the 1927 thesis. In fact, it began to revise step by step the 1927 thesis in 1928, and a series of new drafts aimed at a revision of that thesis were gradually issued by the Comintern. Before Nosaka left Japan, he managed to read those that were brought back from the Comintern by Kazama Jokichi. As a result, he was astonished to find that the Comintern was prepared to change the tones on revolution in Japan.

The Sixth Congress of the Comintern, which was convened in 1928, and the tenth plenum of the Executive Committee Conference in 1929 had passed resolution to change the "July Thesis" (the 1927 thesis, noted by Nosaka) in order to formulate a new thesis.

(Before the ratification of this resolution) The Comintern had already distinguished two types of revolutions: in the highly developed countries such as Britain, the US, France and Germany, it was possible to launch a proletariat revolution (socialist revolution); in those moderate-developing countries, where agrarian problems still remained in the economic system, the revolution should consist of two stages in order to complete the course of social change. However, the Comintern further indicated that it was wrong to apply dogmatically the form of revolution in a country without considering the current situation. It was for this reason that the Comintern started to correct its definition on the nature of Japan's revolution in the 1927 thesis.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi*, Vol 7 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.34-35

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, p.35-36

Here Nosaka felt unclear about the Comintern's thesis. Compared with the 1927 thesis, it seemed that the Comintern had experienced a retreat from the original argument it had given in 1927. Nosaka insisted on thinking through this problem in a way that would take into account Japan's reality. Judging from his personal experience including his impression of Japan's reality, he felt that the stipulation of a two-stage revolution was right, and that it was erroneous to make a 180-degree change from it:

After the Sanro was established, it had taken in assignments of making analysis not only from the aspect of examining Japan's economics, but also from the aspects of investigation on Japan's social and political background. The analysis also included Japan's international relation in the world. The Comintern's 1927 thesis was issued a few months after the publication of Noro's work, *The Development of Japanese Capitalism*, and these two reports were consistent in the main argument. Noro's work was also the fruit of the Sanro's theoretical dedication. Furthermore, it also formed the foundation of my thoughts. Thus, I am confident of the accuracy of the stipulation on two-stage revolution in Japan".<sup>78</sup>

In the previous chapter, I talked about Nosaka's acknowledgement of Noro's work, as Noro's analysis on the development of Japan's capitalism constituted strong evidence to refute Fukumoto's argument on Japan regarding its capitalism which had evolved to a highly-developed but now declining stage known as imperialism. Here I would like to emphasize that both Fukumoto and the Comintern's 1931 thesis mistakenly conceived Japan's revolution as a direct socialist one insofar as they defined imperialism as the moribund stage of capitalism. However, Nosaka did not agree with their arguments. As early as October 1927, when Nosaka was still in the position of Sanro's main supervisor, he managed to organize the publication of a few articles in

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid, p.32-33

*Political Criticisms* (Seiji Hihan), in order to introduce to the public the idea that under the circumstances of a financial crisis, the Japanese empire might refer to a new round of war-oriented policies aiming at solving domestic riots. Combining its gradual infiltration into neighbouring areas with the embarrassing situation financial capitalists were encountering due to the disequilibrium between the dual aspects of Japanese economy, as discussed in chapter one, through Nosaka's perceptions, these articles indicated clearly that the only prescription for Japanese capitalism to survive through the crisis was to reformulate its capitalist experience into a new type that could pacify the discontent of social classes in Japan. This new type, however, attempted to preclude the occurrence of social riots that might culminate as a nation-wide anti-capitalism movement. It was this type which Nosaka foresaw in 1927 that determined his opposition to the Comintern's predominant definition on Japan's revolution from 1928 to 1931. I focus on this "new type" in the next section.

Fortunately, that 1931 thesis was short-lived. In September, a landmark event occurred in China's Northeastern province, Fengtian. That incident attested to Nosaka's conjecture about imperial motivation. Japan's imperial armies created a plot for an explosion in Fengtian, but then blamed the incident on a conspiracy by Chinese dissidents. This incident was used as a pretext for Japan's consequent full invasion of China to "protect the legal rights of Japanese living in this area". Most Japanese executives in the Comintern considered it as a signal sent from Japan to wage war on China due to the latter's internal problems arising from its economy.

The outbreak of the incident in Manchuria reminded the Comintern that due to the imperial ambitions of Japan, the resolution on a one-stage revolution as was defined

in the 1931 thesis should be revised. Before Nosaka was involved in this task, some specialists on Japan's problem in the Comintern had already done research on Japanese imperialism. Nosaka mentioned two important theses that were issued before the promulgation of a new thesis that Nosaka made a contribution to in 1932.

The writers of those theses assisted Kuusinen in formulating a new thesis to summarize the perspective on the new situation in Japan after the outbreak of the Manchuria Incident. Nosaka cited one of the two theses and considered that the following excerpt from that thesis hinted that the "socialist revolution" in Japan should be postponed:

Since Japan is a powerful imperial country now...laborers are serving the empire, while the social consciousness of peasants has stagnated at the level of the serf. Landlords and their allies, financial capitalists, imposed an autocratic rule in Japan that relied on the function of military and police units in Japan's emperor system. Although Japanese imperialism is powerful, its powers are held only by the bureaucratic organs that are represented as the emperor system.<sup>79</sup>

Nosaka referred to those theses before he assisted Kuusinen in formulating a new thesis. He pointed out the missing point that had been neglected by the previous analysis: "their common goal is to pry into the economic aspects of Japanese imperialism, while neglecting the complicated structure of the state...Aside from the theses on Japan after the Manchuria Incident, many of the previous studies were focused only on Japan's economic problem."<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Quated from Ibid, p.58

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, p.60

In order to fill in the missing component of the research on the Japanese empire and its relationship with its revolution, Nosaka felt that he needed to find enough material to analyze Japan's political structure:

When I was working in the Sanro, I managed to get some knowledge about the political structure of Japan through my activities in composing 'Hikkei' (handbook). Hikkei was published to urge on the enforcement of a popular election in Japan based on the analysis of Japan's classes and political structure. I deemed that the analysis would be still helpful in drawing out the new thesis".<sup>81</sup>

He streamlined the gist of what he had already clarified in Hikkei, and expressed it in an explicit and acceptable way to other executives in the Bureau, in order to show what the relationship was between Japan's emperor system and the occurrence of the Manchuria Incident

First, Hikkei indicated that the bourgeois politics of the Japanese empire was tarnished by the remnants of feudal landlords whose influence had largely penetrated into politics. Nosaka referred to this aspect to show that Japan's modern politics represented none other but an authoritarian rule by the Japanese Emperor *per se*.<sup>82</sup> Second, this system had also endowed autocratic organs with privileges, such as Elder Statesman (genro), Inner Minister (Naidaijin), and The Privy Council (Sumitsu-in). Particularly, one of the rights related to Japan's military action was *iaku Jyoso ken*. In terms of this right, according to the Japanese imperial constitution, the Minister could directly report to the Emperor on affairs related to military campaigns without submitting the resolution to the Japanese Diet for review and approval.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid, p.61-62

<sup>82</sup> Sangyo Rodo Chosajo, *Musansha seiji hikkei* (Tokyo: Dojinsha, Showa 3 [1928]), p.96-98

<sup>83</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi*, Vol 7 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.62-63

Having clarified the characteristic of Japan's political structure, in Feb, 1932, Nosaka published the first thesis after he arrived in the Comintern. In that thesis, based on the analysis Nosaka had made and showed to his colleagues, he clearly stated that revolution in Japan should be divided into two stages by negating the proposal for a "socialist revolution" in the 1931 thesis, and announced that a bourgeois-democratic revolution should be launched before a socialist revolution. The goal for this democratic revolution, according to Nosaka, was to overthrow Japan's imperial politics and implement universal suffrage to the masses without class distinctions.<sup>84</sup>

In March 1932, Kuusinen presented the outline of a new thesis to staff working inside the Comintern. Nosaka was also invited to attend that presentation. That report was also translated into Japanese and was published in Japan.

The content of that report, although formulated by Kuusinen, virtually included Nosaka's suggestion on Japan's political structure. The Comintern also admitted that point and acknowledged Nosaka's role in the formulation of the report, though it delivered its acknowledgement without mentioning his name:

The mistake that many comrades made in the past was that they applied the theory to analyze imperial economy. They only noticed one aspect of the accumulation of capital, namely, financial capital, and based their argument on this point to stipulate the nature of revolution in Japan as a proletarian revolution. In such a circumstance, they did not make effort to think through Japan's revolution from an overall consideration of aspects related to Japan's problem.<sup>85</sup>

Nosaka corrected the original tendency to examine Japan's problem from an economic perspective, and shifted the focus of the public attention onto Japan's political

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid, p.65

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, p.69

system represented by the Emperor and the institutions centering on him. Moreover, Nosaka was happy to find that Kuusinen's report had produced some new knowledge on the emperor system which had never been mentioned in the past with regard to Japan's invasion:

Japan's emperor system is an authoritarian apparatus, a mighty and lived framework for the autocracy of the exploiting classes. It represented the interests of bourgeois and landlords, and was based on the alliance of bourgeoisies and big landlords... The most powerful dominating constituent element in the emperor system is the Ministry of the Army, which is now playing an independent role in sustaining this system<sup>86</sup>

Nosaka gave high comment on the report, as it clearly indicated the constitutional elements of Japan's political structure: the emperor system, and financial capitalism<sup>87</sup>. It made a great step forward from 1927, as no previous statements had described the emperor system as an effective political apparatus that was responsible for making decisions on Japan's military actions. Nosaka considered, that due to the nature of the emperor system, revolution should be aimed at sabotaging the emperor system in the first stage of the two-stage revolution. Needless to say, Nosaka was glad to find that thesis not only returned to the correct line, but also developed the argument in the Comintern's 1927 thesis. The development was summarized by Nosaka as follows:

1. To overthrow the emperor system;
2. To abolish the present landlord ownership of lands;
3. To launch a revolution for the interests of proletariat and peasant when it is necessary.

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<sup>86</sup> *Ibid* n 70 also please see Ichido Kiyotomo; Yamabe, Kentaro, ed. *Kominterun Nihon ni kansuru tezeshu* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1961), p.114

<sup>87</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi*, Vol 7 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.71

On the last point, Nosaka admitted that, “In order to procure a final success of the two-stage revolution, it is necessary to win the support from the masses and build the party rooted in the masses”.<sup>88</sup>

With the consent of all the members inside the Bureau, the Comintern officially signed the publication of the 1932 thesis, with the title *Japanese Imperialism and the Nature of Japan's Revolution*. After the issue of that thesis, Nosaka commenced further development of the notion of two-stage revolution in the fifteen-year war period from 1931 to 1945.

### **The Disturbance of Wartime Fascism: Readapting the Goal for Revolution in the New Situation**

In the following years from 1933 to 1940, Nosaka started to develop a strategy for the two-stage revolution that was confirmed in the 1932 thesis. Since 1932, the Soviet Union and the Comintern had noticed the intimidating signals that were sent from Europe and East Asia which might constitute a direct threat to the security of the Soviet Union. From the east, the Japanese empire had already colonized China's Manchuria, the area bordering the eastern territory of the Soviet Union. From the west, from the time Hitler was sworn in as the head of government in Germany in 1933, the Soviet Union considered it as a signal that Germany might resort to war in the near future. It is in that historical background that Nosaka's development of the two-stage revolution should be placed.

At the plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern that was convened after the official publication of the 1932 thesis, Nosaka submitted a report to the committee. Following the definitions on the nature of Japan's emperor system, Nosaka

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid, p.74

indicated that “the war that was waged by the Japanese army on China in 1931 was due to extend to the land of the Soviet Union, and hence revolution in Japan should aim at safeguarding the socialist Soviet Union”<sup>89</sup>. In 1933, the Comintern employed all the propagandizing measures to reveal the Japanese empire’s ambition for the sake of the Soviet Union’s own interests. For example, on Jun 15<sup>th</sup>, 1931, *Red Flag (Akahata)*, the newspaper run by the JCP, stated:

The imperial Japan now begins to throttle the revolutions that are taking place in the Soviet Union and China. It is now active in waging a new imperial war...we should oppose against the empire’s interference of and invasion into the Soviet Union and China.<sup>90</sup>

The Comintern’s new policies and the 1932 thesis embodied the concerns of the Soviet Union with its own security. Being aware of it, Nosaka clarified the necessity of combining the goals of two-stage revolution in Japan with the goal of protecting the Soviet Union. The combination of these two tasks heralded a shift in Nosaka’s thoughts from solving the labor-employer relationship regarding the commodification of labor power, to pushing for an upsurge of domestic class struggles on a national level. To Nosaka, the new task entailed a necessity for launching a massive mobilization, which aimed at building a comprehensive unity that consisted of different social classes in Japan. “We must actively and courageously approach the masses for the establishment of a united front. We must turn the ‘imperial war into a civil war’, and initiate the social movement under the goal of protecting the Soviet Union on the condition of the existence

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<sup>89</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Ye Ban Can San Xuanji Voll* (Beijing : Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1963), p.36-37

<sup>90</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi*, Vol 7 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989),p.86-87

of a sound and comprehensive united front...Our final goal should be to establish a Soviet regime and uproot the emperor system in Japan”.<sup>91</sup>

The slogan of “turning an imperial war into a civil war” suggested that Nosaka intended to preclude any attempt made by the Japanese empire to expand the war from East Asia to the Soviet Union. Nosaka defined the “civil war” in his report as “all kinds of activities and movements to resist to the mobilization by Japan’s emperor system to engage into the war”, which showed that at the current stage two-stage revolution should be embedded in the resistance movement to Japan’s institutional arrangement for the preparation of an expanded war. However, as I show later in this section, Nosaka also thought that struggles inside the empire to fight against the empire’s mobilization of the masses could not be separated from the goal of the two-stage revolution, which is to say that anti-imperialism and two-stage revolution in Japan were intertwined. Therefore, in this section I must place my narrative on Nosaka’s idea about the two-stage revolution in the framework of the mechanism for wartime mobilization. This mechanism, which Nosaka referred to as fascism, resulted in his conceptualization of Japan’s revolution in accord with a national desire for democracy and freedom against domestic mobilization in the wartime period.

Between 1932 and 1935, the Japanese empire had gradually expanded its sphere of influence over mainland China, from Manchuria to North and Southeast China. Nosaka revealed the ambition of the empire as follows: (Quoted from *Asahi Shinbun*) “The economic significance for the Manchuria Incident should be a secondary matter...as the

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<sup>91</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Ye Ban Can San Xuanji Voll* (Beijing : Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1963), p.38-39

prior gain after the outbreak of this incident should be the integration of our nation (*Kokumin*)<sup>92</sup>.

No matter what appellation the empire applied, it succeed in orchestrating a notion of Asian community that incorporated all the colonized ethnic groups into a unity, a universal, mono-ethnic nation known as Japanese. In order to maintain the integrity of the empire, “patriotism and exclusionism are all the propagandizing measures that the Ministry of the Army (Gunbu) is employing to mobilize fascist groups, including social democratic parties and unions, to support the rule of the empire”<sup>93</sup>. The patriotic behaviours fit in with the need of capital expansion in colonized areas through a variety of ways. As Nosaka noted, “As early as 1932, military authority has already stationed six hundred thousand troops in Manchuria...apart from that, they further sent many soldiers there under the excuse of consolation and immigration...those people were sent there to ‘establish a paradise of Manchuria’ and ‘bring prosperity to Manchuria’.”<sup>94</sup>

Nosaka’s statement on the Japanese empire’s expansion toward China under the name of immigration revealed a fact, that even before the outbreak of the Manchuria Incident, the Japanese empire had already started its colonization in China. This revelation reflected the Japanese empire’s management of its economic system through a process of redistribution of its laborers and resources within the broad region of East Asia. If the expansion of this empire to Northeast China before the 1930s could be called as “osmotic expansion”<sup>95</sup>, then in the 1930s the expansion of the Japanese empire

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid, p.19

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, p.19

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, p.15-19

<sup>95</sup> Hyun Ok Park, *Two Dreams in One Bed: Empire, Social Life, and the Origin of the North Korean Revolution in Manchuria* (Durham : Duke University Press, 2005), Chapter one

here became even more apparent than before as Japanese financial capital groups resorted to war through the power of the state. Accompanying this process major financial capital groups in Japan were in the course of completing the integration of capital under the name of “rationalization of capitalism”.<sup>96</sup> As Nosaka acknowledged, this rationalization was aimed at facilitating the concentration of social capital to ensure that capital flowed into the agents in colonies for military purposes. The concentration of capital exacerbated the social inequality, as it imposed a burden on the Japanese masses, including working classes and petit bourgeois in Japan, whom were sacrificed by the state. The rationalization of capital could not be achieved without the political interference of the state power that relied on authoritarian mobilization. What is thought-provoking here was that the state power did not simply rely on coercive measures to force the implementation of policies. On the contrary, in order to build a harmonizing relationship between financial capitalists and the Japanese masses whose interests were sacrificed in the empire, the Japanese empire sought to foster a spirit of dedication to the process of capitalist accumulation and expansion among the masses. That spirit resulted in the formation of a social culture that embedded itself in the Japanese wartime mechanism, and became an imperative for social mobilization. It was the technique of the empire-led cultivation of such spirit that drew Nosaka’s attention with regard to his comprehension of revolution in Japan.

Nosaka pointed out that the Japanese empire attempted to extricate the masses out of impoverishment and exhaustion caused by the global financial and economic

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<sup>96</sup> Sangyo Rodo Chosajo et al, *Seiji hihan vol3* (Tokyo: Hosei Daigaku shuppanyoku, 1988-1989), p.39

depression through their “patriotic deeds” to the nation. He further exposed the deceptive nature of this wartime mobilization by stating the facts as follows:

Manchuria, as it sounds like a hoot when it is referred to as a “paradise under the heaven harboured by the Emperor” by the Japanese imperial propaganda, is itself a “paradise” of those landlords and capitalists *per se* who have already reached the summit of power in the emperor system. Laborers and peasants, however, are killed or further exploited due to the empire’s expansion.<sup>97</sup>

Here Nosaka made it explicit that the expansion of the Japanese empire since 1931 gave impetus to the development of the imperial economy by recruiting laborers to work for financial capitalists in Manchuria, the main colony of the Japanese empire in the early 1930s. According to Nosaka’s observation, under the leadership of the Ministry of the Army (Gunbu), the Japanese empire started to mobilize the masses to safeguard the empire by shaping their subjectivities under the name of “patriotism”. Both elements constituted the features of Japan’s wartime fascism.

In terms of the first element, Nosaka ascribed the origin of fascism to the state, or precisely, to the role the Gunbu was playing. He argued that unlike Germany, Japan’s fascist mobilization was not based on the charisma of the social elite in the central organs of the state, but rather originated and was consolidated in the circle of Japan’s lower-rank officers in the Ministry of the Army:

They lament the sufferings of the workers, and are sympathetic about the miserable mishap of the peasants. However, they don’t mean to confiscate capital but to protect the interests of capitalists, landlords and the authoritarian state relying on the effective state control.”<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 7 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.123

<sup>98</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Ye Ban Can San Xuanji Voll* (Beijing : Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1963), p.45

In order to achieve this goal, they make up lies and mobilize the masses in order to consolidate the power of the emperor system...since the driving force of this movement was the Ministry of the Army, especially its lower-rank officers, it seems that the emperor system is now on its way to be reformed as the tool for the recruitment of soldiers by the Japanese army.”<sup>99</sup>

Given the overarching role the Gunbu played in the mobilization, the influence of this complicated mechanism, as Nosaka deemed, was not only restricted to the political bureaucrats in Japan’s political system. As the global economic depression had worsened the daily lives of the masses from 1929 to 1933, Nosaka realized that the intensification of social contradictions caused by this economic depression would leave a good opportunity for the Gunbu to take advantage of. “Japanese fascism...will spread to the strata of peasant, petit-bourgeois, the unemployed, aboriginal, and worker. It will become ingrained and expand its influence over the masses.”<sup>100</sup>

The spread of fascism to social life in the empire was accompanied with the state’s promulgation of “socialism” in opposition to capitalism. Because the development of capitalism in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century had created a deep social gulf between cities and countryside, and laborers and capitalists, and in order to push forward the expansion for the empire seeking for overseas resources, the Japanese empire had to demonstrate to the masses that it was capitalism that should be blamed for their miserable sufferings. As a result, the subsequent policies under the name of socialism were effective in alleviating social discontent. His criticism of the argument made by the Social Masses Party is typical and shows how Japan’s fascism was outwardly an ideology that sought to uproot

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid, p.51

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, p.90

the current economic system by coaxing the laborers to be involved in the wartime system. The argument made by the Social Masses Party is summarized as follows:

- 1, Japan's fascism is the collusion of the *zaibatsu*, the bourgeois parties and the senior officers in the Ministry of the Army;
- 2, The lower ranking officers in the Ministry of the Army tend to embrace the idea of socialism;
- 3, Hence, we should unite with those lower ranking officers to smash the scheme of fascism in the society.<sup>101</sup>

It was apparent that fascism had already corrupted the minds of leaders of the Social Masses Party, as they showed a cooperative attitude toward the lower-ranking officers under the banner of "smashing political fascism". Nosaka deemed that it was also for this reason that fascism could base its roots in society:

One of the characteristics of fascism is: it tries to obtain the sympathy and consent from the masses in both cities and rural areas through its dissemination of anti-capitalism emotion. To put it another way, the danger of fascism lies in the fact that it can rely on its propaganda to distribute the patriotism and anti-capitalism while virtually to protect the capitalism that has already fell into the global depression *per se*.<sup>102</sup>

This excerpt shows that Nosaka had realized the difficulty of wiping out fascism in wartime Japan since both its ultimate goal and its strategy were similar to the tactics and the objectives of two-stage revolution. Since the advent of the Great Depression, Japanese fascism had been proclaiming emphatically the inherent flaws capitalism had in filling the social cleavage that emerged due to the primitive accumulation of capital.

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<sup>101</sup> Quoted from Ibid, p.44

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, p.45

Fascism's charm was shining in the remote distance like a mirage for the masses in society who were in desperate desire of improvement in their lives.

Here the second element of wartime fascism appears: the shaping of the masses' subjectivities through such rhetoric as patriotism. Nosaka recognized "patriotic behaviour" as a state-controlled ideology accompanying an identity that was dispensed from the empire to function as the mediation of "the masses' national participation into the deeds of protection and defence of the emperor system".<sup>103</sup> Nosaka trenchantly indicated that Japanese fascism was attempting to cover the blemish of the military policies employed by the Gunbu under the name of patriotic deeds by replacing the inherent flaws of capitalism with a totalistic and national culture. He recorded what the state-control media had stated as follows:

The current measure our government is employing now is to draw on progressive people to change the current bourgeois government. The transformation that will take place in the society is designed to abide by the requirement of socialism in the future through the war in which our country is involved; and it is not to prosper capitalism but to bring a mode for development that is beneficial for our ethnos.<sup>104</sup>

The slogans such as "development for Japanese ethnos", "anticipation for the future" glorified the significance of the overseas expansion of Japanese capitalism as "it has integrated the Japanese nation". Nosaka criticized that exclusive patriotism believing it would only embolden the empire to expand the war in China:

In the handbook, *the essence of national defense*, the Gunbu is now singing a paean of the war that is waged in East Asia as "the father of production, and the mother of

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid, p.18-21

<sup>104</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 7 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.249-250

culture”. The invasion of North China and Mongolia and the provocation they attempted to make against the Soviet Union have brought the utmost profits for financial capitalists, landlords and the royal members who could get a slice of benefits from these actions. For them, they could take advantage of the benefits from their investments in the military supplies; while for laborers, they could only get death, famine and fatigue.<sup>105</sup>

Nosaka demonstrated the disparity between the Gunbu’s explanation and its virtual effect. On the one hand, it was “origin of culture”, “justice”; on the other hand, however, it was plunder, disaster that the military actions brought to people residing in the empire and its colonies.

In short, although Nosaka acknowledged that the state was in the predominant position to impose this fascist system on social life, this system had already been “transmuted into an instance of control by the state, which equipped itself with new coercive mechanisms that produced new forms of subjectivity”<sup>106</sup>. This subjectivity was embedded in fascism’s promulgation of patriotism by cajoling the laborers into joining the wartime political and economic system and working for the development of all the ethnic groups that were residing in Japanese empire.

### **Strategy for Revolution: A Popular Front**

The complicated situation that Nosaka encountered in the early years of the War made him realize that Japan’s two-stage revolution needed to be prepared from winning the support of the masses. He had to accept the truth that since the fascist mobilization relied on the power of the state, it was capable of being carried out through the state mechanism such as the Gunbu. Under such circumstances, laborers could be managed by

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<sup>105</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Ye Ban Can San Xuanji Voll* (Beijing : Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1963), p.46

<sup>106</sup> Hyun Ok Park, *Two Dreams in One Bed: Empire, Social Life, and the Origin of the North Korean Revolution in Manchuria* (Durham : Duke University Press, 2005), p.196

the state-controlled mechanism to serve the empire. As a communist who abided by the Comintern's stipulation of Japan's revolution, Nosaka concluded, that in the beginning years of the imperial war that Japan waged on China, Japan's revolution should bear the historical task of debilitating the social influence of imperialism on a grass-root level. It was for this reason that Nosaka had to combine revolutionary goals with this wartime mechanism of mobilization. "The domestic struggle should both include the revelation of Japanese fascism and embody the goals of our revolution, which means, the solution to the current situation lies in our program for a revolution in the future that has a bearing on both establishing a regime for Japanese proletariat and liberating all the discriminated and suppressed peoples from the Japanese empire."<sup>107</sup>

Particularly, Nosaka stressed the necessity of two-stage revolution against a background that the Japanese empire managed to sustain its lifeline in Manchuria through all kinds of investments that were subsidized by the state. As the historian Mark Driscoll recorded, war was a way of directing investment away from finance and toward fixed and commodity capital, making war indistinguishable from capitalist business.<sup>108</sup> This implies that in order to maintain a relationship with the wartime government, Japan's financial capitalism tended to support the Gunbu's expansive policies in order to open their markets overseas in pursuit of cheap laborers and abundant resources.

Nosaka pointed out that as financial capitalism became motivated in grabbing the resources from China to sustain the war, thus causing the deterioration of the economy in Japan, the only measure by which it could employ to achieve this goal was to ally with

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<sup>107</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Ye Ban Can San Xuanji Voll* (Beijing : Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1963), p.21

<sup>108</sup> Mark Driscoll, *Absolute erotic, absolute grotesque: the living, dead, and undead in Japan's imperialism, 1895-1945* (Durham, NC : Duke University Press, 2010), p.300

the Gunbu and esteem the latter's wielding of power.<sup>109</sup> As a result, in order to mobilize the masses to participate in all kinds of social protests, Nosaka specified the requirement for two-stage revolution as a variety of anti-war movements that could stall the progress the empire would make in launching the war. All those movements were sublimed by him as aspects of a revolution that could niche a "civil war" in Japan.

Having realized that Japan's revolution was a measure to safeguard the Soviet Union, Nosaka began to develop a strategy for the revolution. This strategy was known as establishing 'a united front' or its variant form 'the popular front' in the following years. The front was aimed at organizing laborers in imperial Japan through a variety of policies to transform them into reliable forces in Japan's two-stage revolution. Nosaka's development of this thought hinged upon Japan's domestic economic and political situations.

On acknowledging the necessity of building the united front, Nosaka pointed out that in the first stage, this united front should exclude those social democrats who had already recanted their beliefs and chosen to cooperate with the state in pressing for continuing the war. In 1933, in spite of the fact that the Comintern had already issued the important 1932 thesis, the complicated and awkward situation in Japan made the establishment of a united front a difficult task:

In the 1920s, the socialist movements culminated in March 1926, when the Labor-Farmer Party (*Rodonominto*) was established. However, Sodomei, which used to participate in this party as an entire group, finally retreated from it entirely and formed a new party. After the occurrence of the Manchuria Incident, many leaders brazenly supported the military actions in China, and found excuses for Japan's

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<sup>109</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Ye Ban Can San Xuanji Voll* (Beijing : Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1963), p.18

invasion. They openly glorified the war as the measure “in pursuit of socialism”.

On the other hand, the neutral group in the Labor-Farmer Party opposed against the war. Under this circumstance, in May 1932, they merged with some members from Sodomei and founded a new party, the Social Masses Party (*Shakai Taishu To*). Under the banner of “anti-fascism, anti-capitalism and anti-communism”, they regarded the momentum of Japan’s fascist movement as the power inherent in Japan’s middle class who always desired for a better life, and thus exonerated the responsibility of the Ministry of the Army in Japan’s emperor system. In fact, the banner of “anti-capitalism” did nothing but opened the avenue for the Ministry of the Army to expand the scale of the war, masquerading itself as a sacred movement that could overcome western capitalism.<sup>110</sup>

As Nosaka observed, the imperial system under the leadership of the Ministry of the Army had already assimilated those parties. In fact, not merely those mass parties, but many communist members also started to commit recantation toward the Japanese empire in this period. This severe reality forced Nosaka to base the popular front on the Japanese masses, rather than those parties. As a result, he embedded his hope into an important thesis that he published in 1936.

Before I move on to discuss that thesis, I introduce the international background and the imperial exploitation that Nosaka had noticed. In 1935, as the world was enveloped in the fear of another global war with an unguaranteed future, the Comintern felt it necessary to mobilize each communist party to take measures to stall the contagion of fascist ideology around the world. The social milieu induced Nosaka to combine the goals of two-stage revolution with goals of the anti-fascist movement in Japan. This inclination became clear in 1935 when Nosaka attended the Seventh Congress of the

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<sup>110</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 7 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.116-122

Comintern. It was in this congress that the Comintern approved an important resolution addressing the relationship between the popular front and the global anti-fascist movement. Nosaka discerned that the innovative idea in that thesis was that the social classes that constituted this popular front should not be limited only to proletariat but should also incorporate the masses in Japan. As a result, in the following years from 1935, Nosaka began to enlarge the boundary of the classes that could be united in Japan.

Nosaka's thought hinged upon his analysis of the imperial economy in the war. In order to satisfy the demand for resources in the war, the state had to manage the economy by setting up a ration system to distribute resources. This management of economy, which Nosaka called the "controlled economy", had worsened laborers' condition in the industries. In terms of this wartime economic system, Nosaka figured that "this controlled economy itself is fascism."<sup>111</sup>

In order to enforce its wartime industrial policies, the government is now keeping a watchful eye on those petit bourgeoisies and tradesmen who might make investment in the industries that are prohibited by the government. By the first half of August 1938, they have already arrested 10181 owners of small industries, and now a larger round of arrest will still continue on.<sup>112</sup>

What lay underneath the controlled economy, as far as Nosaka was concerned, was the differentiation of industries by the empire, and hence the emergence of differentiated attitudes the empire held toward workers. The empire spared no effort to foster war industries in the middle of the fifteen-year war. Amid these industries, heavy industries that mainly benefited from this tendency, accounted for a larger proportion. According to

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid, p.154

<sup>112</sup> [Guo min ge ming jun di] shi ba ji tuan jun zong zheng zhi bu di gong bu, ed, Riben ge ming yu Riben gong chan zhu yi yun dong ([China : s.n., 1942), p.74

Nosaka's investigation, the proportion of laborers in heavy industries arose from 23% in 1931 to 42% in 1937. For Nosaka, what the controlled economy in Japan had impinged on the employment was the stratification of labor in industries. Laborers were treated in differentiated ways with regard to two aspects.

The first aspect pertained to different levels of working proficiencies. According to Nosaka's records, industrial laborers were divided into two groups, skilled laborers and unskilled laborers. Skilled laborers who could get higher wages tended to support the war; while those unskilled laborers were always discriminated against and their positions were not secured. This reshaped the subjectivities of Japan's proletariat, and "it was this differentiation of laborers that caused the emergence of parochial patriotism"<sup>113</sup>.

The second aspect was concerned with laborers' working conditions. He noticed that even laborers who had been hired also had to bear the exploitation through a specific mechanism that the state employed:

Japanese employers began to adopt widely a harsh system in the past three years, namely, the system of casual labor. This system works in this way: Employers treat skill workers unequally as casual workers, and pay them the wage that only the casual workers deserve owning; however, most casual workers are hired not by those employers but by the contractor who mediates as an intermediary. Under such circumstance, contractors could exploit their casual workers as well, and dock a large amount of the incomes off their meager wages...The laborers work for a long time, and they even don't know when they will be fired.

The amount of workers has not increased in parallel with the increase of production. This means that as the intensity of labor grows, the labor time is extremely extended. For example, in the textile industry, the number of spinning

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid, p.75

machines that a labor is responsible for has increased by 48% ever since 1929.<sup>114</sup>

Aside from that, laborers had to bear very heavy-load assignments in production.

In a note that Nosaka made in 1939, he described a typical day of laborers through an individual labor's mouth:

We need to start to work on 7:20 in the morning. If we just work during the scheduled working hours, then we can get everything done before 5pm. However, since we have to work on the extra workload, we have to work until the next morning. Then after having breakfast that is brought here by families, we continue working until 5pm in the next day. To put it in another way, we work consecutively for 36 hours in a single shift. However, we have no choice but to take on the extra workload, since if not, we can not make enough money to live at a subsistence level. We know that the heavy-load work will damage our health, but we can't give up a slight chance to earn an extra of wage. I know that among us some workers would take three shifts in one week to work in this way, and their stamina has been totally weakened. The weakened physical body means a lot to them as long as their stamina and vigor are the crucial elements which determine whether they could sell their labor power or not.<sup>115</sup>

Nosaka showed how laborers were treated like mere commodities if they could sell their labor power during the years of the imperial overseas expansion. All those differentiated policies dealt with a problem of stratification within the labor class insofar as the state needed to concentrate all the resources in the country to get the whole apparatus operating against the backdrop of the war. As Nosaka's narrative shows, the commitments of the laborers' devotion were masqueraded as the "patriotic deeds". Epitomizing the workers' motivation of creating a "new life" that was claimed by the empire to represent the workers' desire for a bright future, as I have already shown in the

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid, p.91-92

<sup>115</sup> Ibid, p.75-76

previous section, this parochial patriotism acted as the outlet for laborers to unleash their complaint about the current situation through channelling their indignation to their dedication to the war. However, this process had to bear some sacrifices, including the state's discrimination against unskilled or marginalized laborers, and health damage. Centering on the discrimination against laborers from the empire, Nosaka realized that those discriminated could be incorporated into this popular front through what he called "a concerted action" in order to change this situation.

The notion of the "concerted action" came from a thesis that was published by Nosaka in 1936, one year after the Seventh Congress of the Comintern. The thesis, *A Letter to Japanese Communists*, was considered a landmark document in the war indicating the relationship between revolution and the anti-fascism movement. It began with Nosaka's appealing for launching a two-stage revolution in Japan:

Our party needs to establish a new regime whose power is held by the proletariat, and in order to complete this task, we need to complete a bourgeois revolution first. In the modernized Japan there still exist many feudal remnants: the military police emperor system is still alive, and a parasitic and feudal landownership has not been abolished. The remaining feudal elements are so deeply rooted that we need to pave the way for launching a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Concretely speaking, the task includes overthrowing the emperor system and establishing a revolutionary democratic regime that is held by the proletariat and peasant, unconditionally confiscating the landlords' land and distributing them to peasants, and improving the lives of laborers. Carrying on a bourgeois-democratic revolution is the only applicable measure in Japan to wipe out the exploiting system before a socialist revolution can take place.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Ye Ban Can San Xuanji Volf* (Beijing : Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1963), p.132-133

Nosaka's attitude was clear: Japan's two-stage revolution was crucial in wartime Japan as it aimed at building a regime that could replace the current imperial one which should be imputed for the disparity in society. Moreover, this thesis also marked the shift in his mind to base the goal of two-stage revolution on the reality in imperial Japan characterized by fascist mobilization, rather than on the call from the Comintern to protect the Soviet Union, as he did three years ago. The trigger for Nosaka to make such argument was the increasing influence of the fascist mobilization in society. "In Japan, the biggest reality was the status of fascism in social life. Fascism is now elevated to an influential position where the Gunbu could dominate to implement its military policies out of its own accord."<sup>117</sup> He further stated, "It [the Gunbu] has successfully expanded its influence in the petit bourgeoisie in cities and rural areas. It has even infiltrated into the working class, and has drawn some labor unions over to its side."<sup>118</sup>

This shift made him reconsider the current situation and combine the revolutionary goals with the reality. Under such circumstances, Nosaka attempted to show the goals to the masses at a corporeal level encapsulated by the reference to a popular front, which the Seventh Congress of the Comintern had already specified in 1935. "The most important task for us now is **not to apply radical methods, but to mobilize the masses and lead them to involve in a concerted actions.**"<sup>119</sup>

The notion of the "concerted actions" epitomized Nosaka's intention to organize the masses to participate in the popular front and prepare for Japan's two-stage revolution. Particularly, Nosaka would like to incorporate all the reliable social classes,

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid, p134

<sup>118</sup> ibid

<sup>119</sup> Ibid, p.140, the bold phrases are emphasized by Nosaka himself.

rather than to rest his hope on Japan's proletariat. Based on the current situation, Nosaka considered that even peasant and petit bourgeoisie should be mobilized to resist to the empire's fascist policy. In his analysis, Nosaka focused on the situation of the peasant and the petit bourgeois, especially the latter who were considered a constituent class of middle-class.

Nosaka considered the peasant an indispensable social class in revolution, because social change in rural areas was also a part of the bourgeois revolution. He disagreed with the argument that the feudal elements in Japan's villages would disappear after capitalism triumphed over traditional economy in Japan's rural areas.

Two-thirds of Japanese peasants don't have their own lands (or 27% of all the households in rural areas), or have only a minimal of lands (42% of all the households), and hence they fell into poverty. Half of all the arable lands in Japan (55% of wet lands, 48% of dry lands, and barely all the other forms of lands and forest) are properties of landlords and royal households. Although lands have almost been rented to peasants, landlords have only yielded the right to cultivate to these tenant peasants. Every year they would have retrieved 50% to 60% of all the harvest from the peasants. This is why Japan has been encountering an agrarian crisis ever since the 1930s.

Japan's peasants have to proffer all the proceeds obtained from cultivation, and all the income from the manual chores they devote to agrarian management in order to raise the lives of exploiters. Even an official statistics indicated that Japan's peasants are working in a very unpleasant condition.

In fact, tenant peasants have to submit 50% or more of the harvest to landlords. Apart from that, 20% of the production expenses have to be used to purchase fertilizer.

The debts of peasants are also increasing:

Year	Debts (Billion Japanese Yen)
1905	7.46
1929	45.9
1934	70

Source: *Chuyo Koron*, March 1935

To compensate for the debts, peasants have to get loans from usurers. However, peasants who have obtained unsecured loans from the usurers have to pay 15%-20%, or even higher interests. It appears that Japan's peasants are not working for themselves, but for parasitic landlords, fertilizer producers, usurers, polices, and in a word, for the war.<sup>120</sup>

From this quotation, it is apparent that Nosaka would not admit that the current wartime capitalism which had brought opportunities for investments in cities had brought equivalent social prosperity in agriculture. He even refused to acknowledge that capitalism had developed to a full extent in villages.<sup>121</sup> In Japan's villages feudal exploitation still existed, manifesting itself as that "peasants are exploited by landlords in the same way as they are in the colonized areas".<sup>122</sup>

However, when it was appropriate to reiterate the necessity of the two-stage revolution by addressing the significance of a popular front by the time when he published this thesis, Nosaka had to circumvent the problem in Japanese villages and emphasize unity.

Our forces in rural areas consist of mainly agrarian proletariats and impoverished peasants. In spite of that, it is still possible to organize all the peasants—not only tenants, but also rich peasants and a small portion of peasants who

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid, p.92-93

<sup>121</sup> See Ibid, footnote in p.145. The main argument that Nosaka criticized was that, since capitalism developed to a certain level in Japanese villages, the emergence of tenant as a special class made it impossible for the JCP to lead concerted anti-capitalism actions in rural areas in wartime Japan. Nosaka's criticism demonstrated his intention to unify all peasants to participate in anti-fascism movements, even though the existence of tenant peasants in rural areas was debatable.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid, p.92

have lands—for the establishment of a popular front. Indeed, it is not only necessary but also extremely important to organize all the peasants and form a united front in rural areas to oppose against the imposition of debts and heavy taxes, and the charging of monopolized prices for fertilizers and electricity... The goal of our mission is to attract most peasants into our popular front and fight against imperial fascism, and for land, peace and freedom!<sup>123</sup>

As we can see in this quotation, although agrarian problem still remained due to the exploitation from former landlords and financial capitalists in rural areas, Nosaka did not mention the necessity of wiping out the lagging elements in the countryside. Rather than repeat the argument in the former Comintern's theses that Japan's capitalist economy was not fully developed because of the existence of "feudal remnants", he advocated making some concession in formulating revolutionary strategies. As the excerpt shows, he had to admit the rationality of maintaining the existence of rich and tenant peasants in rural areas in order to exchange for their support in the establishment of a popular front.

The second type of social class that might be considered as the revolutionary force was petit bourgeoisie. Unlike financial capitalists who were ambitious for grabbing resources overseas through the war, "the petit bourgeoisies utterly opposed those major large conglomerates."<sup>124</sup> In the past they had higher social status and enjoyed a higher pay than the industrial laborers. Due to the wartime control-economy, their social statuses had been gradually relegated. To a certain degree, the war played havoc with the everyday lives of the petit bourgeois, relegating their living standard to the level of proletariat's. Their yearning for a better life provided opportunity for fascism to base its root within them through instigating them to support the war. Unlike the social

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid, p.141

<sup>124</sup> Ibid, p.136

democratic party and former communist party members who had already subscribed themselves to the wartime imperial ideology, Nosaka still kept a sober mind and struggled to appeal to the petit bourgeoisies not to be absorbed into the wartime fascist system of mobilization. His attempt to incorporate them into the revolutionary popular front represented his best effort to compete with the fascism of the Japanese empire to get the petit bourgeois involved in the wartime resistance movement to the war. Unfortunately, it seemed that he had achieved little accomplishment in mobilizing them, which should be ascribed to his absence from Japan. As a result, in order to carry out his revolutionary strategy, it was necessary to get involved in the war and deliver his ideas to his compatriots.

## **Chapter Four: An interlude or a Dramatic Turn: Nosaka's Direct Involvement in the War in China and Its Influence on Revolution in Japan**

Given Nosaka's aspiration of the establishment of a unity between those different classes, he had to accept the fact that Japan's fascism had successfully mobilized the masses to support the war, as the government had expanded the scale of war by sending more and more soldiers to the front. In other words, in order to solve the social crisis in Japan caused by the global depression, the Japanese empire had no choice but to resort to war as a feasible measure of its pursuit for overseas sources. As Nosaka saw it, under the banner of "ethnic integration" or "to create a new culture", the empire had successfully shifted the attention of those disgruntled laborers from domestic depression to new opportunities in colonized China. However, it was also this motive that had created social discrimination between laborers and capitalists. And it was those classes that Nosaka had put his reliance on in order to establish a popular front.

In the late 1930s, he met a good opportunity to put all his thoughts into practice, and his efforts from 1940 to 1945 constituted the third stage of the development of the notion of two-stage revolution by Nosaka. In the late 1930s the Comintern was experiencing a fierce assault from the Soviet Union. Stalin initiated a purging movement in 1937 to wipe out his dissidents in his country. This movement also spread to the Comintern. As a result, Nosaka realized that it was impossible to work in this turbulent organization. Indeed, he thought of the possibility of infiltrating back to Japan and establishing a popular front in his homeland. However, at that moment he did not have any specific plan. It was in Moscow that he met some members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). When they brought him back to China the direction of his life changed.

This chapter discusses his experience in China and tries to situate his revolutionary activities within the politics of the CCP-led regime in North China. I explore Nosaka's commitment to the CCP-led resistance movement to the Japanese army with an implication of his choice of the revolutionary strategies between the ones that were delineated by the Comintern and the one that was developed by Mao Zedong, leader of the CCP. I explore Nosaka's indirect and direct interaction with Mao to show how the development of two-stage revolution in Japan by Nosaka reflected his influence from Mao.

As the title of this chapter implies, Nosaka's acceptance of Mao's thought on revolution vis-à-vis his compliance with the Comintern's official instruction constituted a tension that reveals the ambiguity of the influence that revolution imposed on postwar Japan. Nosaka's experience in China is considered by previous studies to be an important turn in his life, because after he returned from China, he shifted from dogmatically following orders from the Comintern to launching a revolution, to tactfully approaching democratic policies and accepting cooperation with the US in postwar Japan. On the contrary, I argue that rather than change his career thoroughly, his experience in China meshes with his previous criticism of the Japanese empire in a broader sense that it provides an opportunity for him to oppose corporeally to the Japanese empire regarding its management of laborers. It constitutes an important interlude in his life instead of a significant turn in his mind.

### **General Background to the CCP and its Regime**

In November 1939, Zhou Enlai, the first prime minister of the People's Republic of China in 1949, who was then sent by Mao Zedong to conduct some diplomatic activities

in the Comintern, was ready to return to China. Nosaka managed to get in contact with Zhou and consulted the possibility of infiltrating back to Japan via China. Nosaka's inspiration pleased Zhou. Being a major cadre in the CCP who was responsible for developing networks with outside-party figures in the war, Zhou deemed it a good opportunity to cooperate with a JCP member in the anti-Japanese war. As a result, Nosaka accompanied Zhou and successfully arrived in Yan'an, China, in 1940.

In fact, Zhou was not the first CCP member whom Nosaka managed to build a personal relationship with. He had already gotten acquainted with Wang Ming in 1933, and knew Wang's strategy with regard to China's revolution. Wang was the CCP's representative in the Comintern, but what made him well-known inside the party was his being the biggest political rival to Mao Zedong. His loyalty to the Comintern won him a label as an "orthodoxy communist" inside the CCP, and this dogmatism was severely criticized by Mao in 1937, accusing him as the culprit responsible for the great loss of the Chinese revolution from 1931 to 1934.

As early as 1933 Wang used to exchange ideas with Nosaka in Moscow about revolution in China. Wang suggested that revolution mimic the one in Russia, and that proletariats be mobilized to engage in a rapid socialist revolution to build a proletarian regime. Although Nosaka did not specify his attitude toward Wang, I speculate that Nosaka wouldn't agree with Wang's attitude toward the Chinese revolutionary experience, considering that he was a proponent of the notion of two-stage revolution in Japan. However, both Wang and Nosaka agreed with the idea of establishing a popular front. While Nosaka dedicated himself to introducing such a front to the anti-war movements in Japan in the 1930s, his Chinese counterpart in the Comintern was also

making an effort to facilitate the liaison between the CCP and China's ruling party. The National Party (KMT) wanted to form an alliance to resist against the military invasion of the Japanese empire. Nosaka agreed with Wang's general strategy insofar as they had a similar attitude toward building a popular front in each country, although the political and social environments in each country differed. In terms of China's case, although an alliance was established between the two parties in China in 1937, it did not mean that Mao had reached a compromise with Wang; and their divergence of opinions on two-stage revolution in China also entailed a clear choice between the two different lines for Nosaka to make after he arrived in China. I return to this point later in this chapter.

Nosaka arrived in Yan'an, a small town in the northern Shaanxi Province where the CCP made it the capital of the Chinese Soviet regime during the war. This regime was established in the early 1930s in South China and was defended by the CCP's armies, whose soldiers were recruited by the party itself from China's rural areas. Thanks to Mao's guerrilla strategy, the armies protected the regime and enabled it to survive several rounds of suppression by the KMT. When the Japanese empire began to encroach upon mainland China in 1931, the CCP started to negotiate with the KMT and reached a truce with the latter in 1937. At the time when Nosaka arrived in Yan'an, the CCP had already formed a temporary alliance with the KMT. This political alliance provided Nosaka with a new source for his development of the notion of two-stage revolution.

Soon after Nosaka settled in Yan'an, he was notified that it was impossible to return to Japan due to the current severe situation. The CCP asked him to stay in Yan'an for assistance. So he stayed there and began to learn the CCP's history. One thing that Nosaka had to pay special attention to was that his infiltration into China was highly

confidential. The Comintern and the CCP both helped to cover the fact that Nosaka was now in China for unknown reasons. It was only after the Comintern dissolved itself there, years after Nosaka arrived in China, that he dared to make his identity open to the public. In his first three years in China, he assisted the CCP's underground work using a covered identity. Even few cadres inside the party knew him. It is for this reason that his connection between Mao was intentionally not mentioned in the historical records. However, he did receive a job under Mao's authorization and headed as President of the Japan's Worker and Peasant School, an institute that was managed by the CCP in Yan'an to recruit Japanese prisoners of war for anti-war purposes:

(At the time when Nosaka was leaving for China,) I accepted Zhou Enlai's suggestion on my assignment in China. Zhou's instruction was itself a part of a resolution that was made as the conclusion for a conference of the CCP's political bureau, of which Mao Zedong was heading as the chief leader. Zhou Enlai's proposal can be summarized as three points:

The first assignment was that I was invited to investigate and analyze Japanese military, politics, economy and society, and then report directly to the central committee of the Chinese Communist Party.

The second task I undertook was to supervise and assist a series of propagandizing activities to the soldiers who were fighting for the Japanese empire in the front. The central committee had already carried out such special activities in several sites of the front; however, since the measure was inexperienced and naïve, they would like to make a thorough melioration.

The third assignment I was dispatched was to educate the prisoners of the war who were captured and sent to Yan'an. At the same time, there were quite a few prisoners who stayed in Yan'an and served the Eighth Army (the unit for the CCP's guerrilla army in North China). I was

responsible for providing supervision for all those activities.<sup>125</sup>

In fact, Nosaka had never expected that he would stay in China for around six years. The members in the Central Committee of the CCP (CCC) were not sure how long he could work as a special assistant either. But they really esteemed Nosaka and his dedication to China's antiwar movements. Under the permission of Mao, Nosaka was placed in a position in a secret agent that was responsible for contacting with and doing research on the captured Japanese soldiers. This job provided convenience for him to compose theses on the Japanese empire in the following years.

Particularly, many of those captured soldiers were former laborers in the empire, and the rectification of these former laborers cast light on the subjectivity of those imperial laborers that were shaped by the Japanese empire. At the same time, Nosaka learned how Mao manipulated Chinese laborers in the CCP-ruled areas, and tried to design a similar program for those former Japanese laborers who had been incorporated into the popular front by Nosaka after they agreed to forgo the former imperial principles. The progress he made through learning from Mao enabled him to design a concrete plan for the two-stage revolution, aside from the strategy that he had developed in the 1930s.

Students of this school were soldiers of the Japanese army who were captured by the CCP's army, and the CCP treated those prisoners kindly, aiming at influencing these Japanese with its own party strategy. Since the CCP proceeded steadily to build a popular front, its attempt intersected with Nosaka's development of the notion of two-stage

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<sup>125</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Fusetsu no ayumi* Vol 8 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1989), p.288-289

revolution. It was against such a background that Nosaka continued his career to devote to revolution in China.

At the same time, the CCP appointed a Chinese cadre who had studying experience in Japan as his assistant. This person had the opportunity to take courses from Kawakami Hajime, the outstanding Marxist economist in imperial Japan, when he was studying in Kyoto University. Thanks to his help, Nosaka managed to collect information on Japan's political economy vis-à-vis a complex global situation through news, magazines and other publications. Most important theses on the Japanese empire were written before 1943 against such a special backdrop.

According to the then acting vice-president of Japan's Worker and Peasant School, the rectification of Japanese soldiers were targeted at fully understanding and realizing their desires and helping them transmute their compliance with the imperial ideology into revolution.<sup>126</sup> In order to achieve this goal, Nosaka and his colleagues also sent them to become involved in the agrarian movements that were led by the CCP under the leadership of Mao in the CCP-controlled areas. He tried to make these former Japanese laborers be aware of the fact that the assimilation of laborers into the wartime system was none other but a sophisticated project designed by the Japanese empire. The condition of the soldiers' outlook was meticulously evaluated by the state in order to ensure that soldiers sent from Japan had healthy body and firm mind to safeguard the interests of the empire in the war. The subsuming of Japanese laborers by the Japanese empire formed a confinement on their desires by unilaterally shaping their consciousness into defending the empire and serving the Emperor. In order to let them realize this

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<sup>126</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Nosaka sanzo no ayunda michi*, ed by Nosaka Sanzo Shiryo Hensan Iinkai (Tokyo: Shinnihon Shuppansha, 1964), p.85

problem, Nosaka arranged these laborers from Japan's Worker and Peasant School to work and engage in the production movement in the CCP-controlled rural areas. This measure was employed based on Mao's economic policy in wartime China.

“The stated purposes of the Peasants and Workers School were to educate the students politically, to develop strength, ability and unity to stop the war, and to participate in postwar reform in Japan.”<sup>127</sup> This comment was added by the American observers who came to China with the goal of bargaining with Chinese political parties on the postwar regional arrangement in East Asia in 1944. From this comment we can see that Nosaka managed to disseminate the notion of two-stage revolution that was embedded in the postwar reform in this school. His obligations included teaching his compatriots about the situation of the world, hoping to facilitate a conversion of those soldiers from the yoke of the Japanese empire to participation in the popular front that he advocated establishing. It goes without saying that in the very beginning it was impossible for Nosaka to introduce the notion of two-stage revolution to those Japanese, as they refused to abjure their faith and their commitments to the Emperor<sup>128</sup>. As a result, according to those American observers' records, one of the texts that those soldiers were required to learn was Mao's *On Protracted War*. Mao indicated in this writing that due to the protracted nature of the war, Chinese laborers in the CCP-controlled areas should be organized properly to conduct the production movement while at the same time carried on the obligation in the anti-Japanese guerrilla war. It was the idea of organizing Chinese laborers from Mao's writings that had inspired Nosaka on how to organize those captured

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<sup>127</sup> John K Emmerson, *The Japanese Thread, A life in the US Foreign Service* (New York : Holt, Rinehart and Winston, ©1978), p.194,

<sup>128</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Bomei jurokunnen*(Tokyo, Jiji Tsushinsha, Showa 21 [1946]), p.52

soldiers and remould their consciousness abiding by Mao's economic policies in the armed independent regime of the CCP.

Mao's *On protracted War* was published in 1938, when the CCP decided to mobilize Chinese masses to engage in the war to protect the homeland. In this article, Mao criticized Japan as its economy had already developed to a level that it was highly reliant on China's resources in order to sustain the survival of the empire. Draconian as the condition was, Chinese masses could hold on until the last day of this war as long as they were well-organized under right strategies. As a result, if the anti-war movement could protract the war, the Japanese army would soon be exhausted and other anti-fascism groups in the world could assist China. In the subsequent detailed analysis, Mao suggested that in order to successfully protract the war, the local management of laborers should be paid special attention to. Local laborers in each village needed to be well-organized to carry on daily production movement and to arm themselves to fight in battles under the guerrilla strategy.

In 1940, Mao further published another thesis, indicating the proper form for the local laborers to be organized. Lurking behind the publication of that thesis was the "three-all" movements that were launched by the Japanese army in North China, which was also referred to in Japanese documents as "the burn to ash strategy". The wiping-out military movements in North China was a reflection of what Mark Driscoll described as "necropolitics" of the Japanese empire, a deviation from the former reproduction of the capitalist system in the colonized areas to a full, systemic annihilation.<sup>129</sup> In such a severe situation, Mao appealed to the masses, including peasants and petit bourgeois, to self-

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<sup>129</sup> Mark Driscoll, *Absolute Erotic, Absolute Grotesque: the Living, Dead, and Undead in Japan's Imperialism, 1895-1945* (Durham, NC : Duke University Press, 2010), p.230

organize and join all kinds of mutual production groups based on cooperativism. In this process, laborers in the border areas were organized by the government of Shaan-Gan-Ning border region to engage in a mass campaign that aimed at supplying the survival of the regime with enough products and resources. As peasants were the main force to safeguard the regime, the CCP's agrarian policy was interpreted by Mao to benefit their interests:

The co-operatives are now the most important form of mass organization in the economic field. Although it is unnecessary to insist on attaching the label co-operative to the productive activities of the masses in our army, our government and other organizations and our schools, these activities are of a co-operative nature, being carried on under centralized leadership to meet the material needs of various departments, units and individuals through mutual help and joint labour.

Among Chinese peasants a small-peasant economy has prevailed for thousands of years, with each family or household forming a productive unit. This scattered, individual form of production is the economic foundation of feudal rule and keeps the peasants in perpetual poverty. The only way to change it is through gradual collectivization, and the only way to bring about collectivization, according to Lenin, is through co-operatives.<sup>130</sup>

Nosaka accepted Mao's thoughts on cooperatism insofar as the cooperativism in Mao's philosophy was the best strategy for him to promulgate the notion of two-stage revolution to those soldiers by revealing the empire's necropolitics that was both criticized by Nosaka and Mao. His achievements from learning Mao's thought on cooperativism consist of three aspects: the revelation of the social program that was currently employed by the Japanese empire to manage the organization of laborers, the

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<sup>130</sup> Mao Zedong, *Selected works of Mao Zedong*, Vol 2(Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), p.155-156

demystification of the reified desires of the Japanese soldiers who were formerly incorporated into this social program, and the formulation of a policy based on cooperativism with the purpose of serving two-stage revolution.

### **The “Imperial Rule Assistance Association” Movement**

In terms of the first aspect, Mao’s thought on cooperativism had provided a lens for Nosaka to analyze the nature of a social movement that was launched in the beginning of the 1940s in Japan. In 1940 Konoe Fumimaro assumed the position of Japan’s Prime Minister and formed a new cabinet. As Japan was not willing to maintain the current balance between different international powers, the Japanese empire further expanded its influence to the Pacific area and got involved there in the competition between the US and other European Powers. Under such circumstances, as Konoe had already ascended to the summit of the political power, he insisted on applying a “policy of pushing southward”, which was aimed at occupying the South Pacific for the import of needed resources. Japan’s major financial gurus would not risk waging a war on the US and suggested maintaining the status quo and restricting the influence of the empire within East Asia. However, since they couldn’t rival the state bureaucrats in mobilizing the masses, they had to compromise and made a temporal alliance with Konoe’s cabinet and agreed with the idea of establishing a new order in East Asian and Pacific regions.

Under such conditions, Konoe established an organization called “Imperial Rule Assistance Association” (*Taisei Yokusankai*) to promote the acceptance of new goals for the masses in Japan. This organization was formed in order to meet the new demands in the course of Japan’s imperial expansion, and was summarized by Nosaka as follows:

The current situation inside and outside the  
Japanese empire is now undergoing a dramatic change. In

the new condition, the empire encounters a series of problems:

1, The war waged on China has to be protracted, and there is no hope of ending it as soon as possible;

2, The development of Japan's economy which is now facing a serious trouble is connected to the entanglement of the Japanese army with the unpredictable war in China. The inner conflicts amid the decision-makers of the empire are now becoming fierce. The masses' anti-war movements have risen to a high level and furthermore prompt the masses to launch new movements calling for improving their lives;

3, The Japanese empire is now plotting a new strategy on expanding toward the South Pacific while at the same time reinforcing its political and military capacity in China.<sup>131</sup>

According to Nosaka's interpretation, this proposal signified a shift in the measure that the empire employed for the purpose of coping with the current situation. Compared with the fascist mechanism that Nosaka encountered in the 1930s, this social mechanism embodied some new characteristics, as were stated by Nosaka as follows:

1, To disband or debilitate democratic organizations in Japan;

2, To centralize all the power in the hands of the Gunbu;

3, To restore the political status of the Emperor;

4, To remove the inner conflicts within the empire<sup>132</sup>

These new characteristics helped to bring about the formation of an ethnic unity centering on the Emperor. The establishment of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (IRAA), according to Nosaka, was to end political conflicts within cliques of different

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<sup>131</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Ye Ban Can San Xuanji Voll* (Beijing : Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1963), p.223

<sup>132</sup> Ibid, p.224

administrations of the Japanese empire with the purpose of promoting unity and consonance among the masses:

Konoe's cabinet initiated an "Imperial Rule Assistance" movement amid the Japanese masses in order to win the support from the masses. Speaking of the necessity of this movement, the well-known scholar Miki Kiyoshi gave an explanation in a forum:

Miki: I think that we are facing various domestic economic and social problems. As a result, for our nation, it is necessary to consider the consequence if our government wouldn't manage to take measures to solve them and let the social tension proceeds as far as to a critical state that a revolution might occur, in which case it is difficult to solve these problems thoroughly if our government attempts to suppress the revolution, because our people could not develop their full potential to help promote the growth of our country. Therefore, I believe it is required to adopt this plan (the Imperial Rule Assistance).<sup>133</sup>

Nosaka pointed out the gist that could be inferred from Miki's speech: on the one hand, the application of the IRAA program should be adopted with the purpose of strengthening the political control over the masses; however, on the other hand, the IRAA program was at best conditional, as it would add political instability to the ground of the empire since no one could imagine what it would happen if the masses' emotion was agitated<sup>134</sup>:

The movements that were conducted in Japan's society following the principle of the Imperial Rule Assistance entailed the employment of promulgating measures to strengthen patriotism to the Emperor in order to suppress the occurrence of any form of social agitation, including revolution. Therefore, although this movement that was conducted under the imperial bureaucrats under the name

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid, p.232

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, p.233

of “the willing of people”, it had nothing to do with the willing of the masses.<sup>135</sup>

Nosaka reiterated the gimmick lurking behind this social program that was endorsed by the new cabinet as that it tried to avoid criticism by shifting the public’s attention to patriotism and people’s fealty to the Emperor.<sup>136</sup> Nosaka further indicated that this fealty blurred the boundary between the masses and the Emperor, describing the expansion of the Japanese empire as a sacred career that was carried on by each individual to assist the Emperor.<sup>137</sup> He criticized the wartime propaganda saying it put a varnish on the Emperor as a person that entailed a collective defence from every individual, as if he were the head of the household of each family.

### **Demystification of the Reified Desires**

In this process, Nosaka noted that the true desire of the laborers was marginalized and overcome due to the implementation of such cultural policies that placed the Emperor and the sacred war in the center of the masses’ daily lives. Paying attention to everyday social lives, Nosaka attempted to demystify this empire by replenishing the masses’ mind with a new social consciousness that could enable them to unite under the anticipation of building a new democratic Japan after the war. This strategy, combined with his efforts of appealing to peace and democracy as the representation of laborers’ desires, was embedded in his attempt to build an anti-war popular front in China, expecting that it could be adopted in the future to support two-stage revolution in Japan.

In order to achieve this goal, Nosaka attempted to utilize the weakness of those people. “They knew nothing about our views and held a prejudiced animosity against our

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid, p.233

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, p.234

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, p.227

party, while on the other hand they were uncertain and nervous about their future”.<sup>138</sup> The fear for future made it possible to approach their lives and help them shift their attention from safeguarding the empire and the Emperor to emancipating themselves from the empire’s necropolitics. To sustain the necropolitics that had concealed the subjectivities of these combating soldiers, the Japanese empire relied on traditional customs in order to instil a sense of loyalty into the soldiers. Due to the influence of these modes, the soldiers had become reified and highly dependent on the sacred myth of the empire. They were assimilated into this emperor system insofar as their imperial consciousness had elevated their positions to a glorified level on which they could protect the emperor and serve directly the interests of the Japanese empire, as the IRAA announced. This imperial power functioned as a useful tool, creating an equivalent structure of colonial ideology which emphasized to parallel the status of those individual soldiers with the revered Japanese Emperor. This power was effective in mobilizing the Japanese masses to join the army that was fighting in China from Japan, as this measure of mobilization had obscured the class distinctions within the masses, creating a parallel structure of colonial power which was more effectively “assimilationist” than the differently gendered top-down structure of subordination.<sup>139</sup> To put it another way, their shared duty which was called from the Emperor facilitated the unity of their collective mission in China with the empire in a broader sense that this mechanism imposed a political project of assimilation on them rather than distinguish them based on their social relations and classes.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid, p.208

<sup>139</sup> Mark Driscoll, *Absolute Erotic, Absolute Grotesque: the Living, Dead, and Undead in Japan's Imperialism, 1895-1945*(Durham, NC : Duke University Press, 2010), p.92

<sup>140</sup> Hyun Ok Park, *Two Dreams in One Bed: Empire, Social Life, and the Origin of the North Korean Revolution in Manchuria* (Durham : Duke University Press, 2005), P221

Hence, as Nosaka recognized, two-stage revolution in Japan was unified with the goal of anti-imperialism as long as the subjectivity of colonialism needed to be crushed from the grass-root level. To speak of it in detail, it was through the symbols for the colonial cultural reproduction in China that Nosaka started to make a breakthrough in transforming those soldiers. One such symbol was the comforting bag (*imon bukuro*).

Comforting bags were mailed by soldiers' relatives or other people in order to enhance the morale of the soldiers. Usually an individual bag contained things that the soldier liked most or items that could remind him of the everyday life he spent with his relatives or friends. However, the idea of sending those items in bags was not on a voluntary basis; rather, the Gunbu compelled each individual family to mail the bags to the soldiers. This coercion suggested that even the basic desires of those soldiers could not be released based on their own feelings but be enmeshed in the omnipresent empire. The designs of the bags always bore the emblems of Japanese traditional culture, which featured the "Japaneseness" that could combine soldiers' individual actions in China with the grandeur of the empire. As a result, soldiers who had received the bags would tend to derive a sense of dignity that would cover their true desires.

Nosaka led his group and took this opportunity to contact Japanese soldiers who were still fighting in the front and those who had already been captured. He noticed that ever since the war had been expanded, the Japanese empire had loosed its control over individual families to send such bags, which left a loophole for him to intervene. In view of this situation, Nosaka organized his colleagues in the school to resume the mission of mailing comforting bags to those soldiers. His effort had two objectives: in the first place, to fill up the vacant mind of those soldiers with the purpose of restoring their confidence

in future; while in the second place, to add anti-war and anti-fascist elements into the bags through various forms, though in an indirect way.<sup>141</sup>

What Nosaka aimed at was to channel the soldiers' desire for the conciliation of their fear for the future that was conducted through those customs into a new dream that signified a sense of vocation in the future. He tried to make those soldiers believe that the war they had been dedicating their lives to fighting for was on behalf of "Japanese politicians and large financial groups", as he had been criticizing in prewar time. This war brought only tragedy to their daily lives. His strategy lied in his intention to direct the attention of those soldiers on the "sacred war" to the havoc this war had brought about in their daily lives.<sup>142</sup>

Accompanying with the exposure of the masses' poignant everyday lives Japan, Nosaka revealed to his readers in both Japan and China that the state was also attempting to "improve their life conditions" in society. However, this measure was nothing other than another attempt made by the empire to facilitate the wartime exploitation and mobilization based on a conflation of the masses' desires with the empire's objectives.

The demystification of the Japanese empire, which was initiated and led by Nosaka in Japan's Peasants and Workers School, was gradually extended to the Japanese masses who were residing in China during the war. As I have talked about the basic situation in that school, here I emphasize one more element: that school, which was very effective in helping those prisoners of war to rectify their thoughts, also received help from the CCP, and especially benefited from Mao's wartime writings.

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<sup>141</sup> Di shi ba ji tuan jun zong zheng di gong bu, ed, Riben zhan you zai zhe yang dou zheng zhe (Washington, D.C. : Center for Chinese Research Materials, Association of Research Libraries, [1945]), p.6-7

<sup>142</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Ye Ban Can San Xuanji Voll* (Beijing : Ren Min Chu Ban She, 1963), p321

Under the influence of Mao's philosophy, the captured Japanese soldiers had become a group of people "who came to assist China" following the war-protracting tactic. Mimicking the daily organization of Chinese laborers by the CCP, the captured Japanese soldiers were arranged to form units and were sent to CCP-controlled areas known as base areas (*gen ju di*). Those base areas always chose the countryside as the appropriate locale for their development, as the peasants were easy to be mobilized by the CCP, and as that the influence of the Japanese army on those rural areas were not as strong as it was in cities. The captured soldiers, once their thoughts had been rectified, dedicated themselves to the development of base areas. They worked with Chinese peasants and laborers, and participated in wartime everyday politics.

In Mao's wartime thoughts, politics was an indispensable element that should not be separated from wartime strategy. Politics entails the self-mobilization of the masses through the activation of a consciousness and determination to transform the quotidian conditions of their lives.<sup>143</sup> Nosaka followed this strategy and arranged for Japanese soldiers to correct themselves through quotidian political life. In Yan'an, Nosaka taught them how to understand world history and the current world situation through Mao's texts. Particularly, he facilitated captured soldiers' participation in a political movement in Yan'an called "rectification movement". I talk about this movement in detail later, as it was nothing but a political campaign launched by Mao to expand his influence in the CCP. Every former soldier who had participated in this movement had been utterly transformed in their social consciousness level. After their "regeneration", Nosaka arranged to send them to other base areas that were controlled by the CCP to establish

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<sup>143</sup> Rebecca E Karl, *Mao Zedong and China in the Twentieth-century World : A Concise History*(Durham [NC] : Duke University Press, 2010), p.58

Japanese branches. These soldiers were arranged to participate in local cooperative working organizations in rural areas. To comply with the call from Mao, the soldiers were engaged mainly in local agricultural production to meet military needs and with other Chinese peasants and militia.

In fact, Nosaka spoke highly of this mode of organization in the CCP-controlled areas, especially for former Japanese soldiers. As agrarian production and the protection of base areas from the overwhelmingly Japanese imperial annexation of North China were intertwined, the management of laborers in base areas also fulfilled the requirement for political mobilization which Nosaka had advocated in the past. Nosaka considered it an efficient measure to form a popular front that could be relied upon for revolution. He acknowledged that “the morale regained from the participation of the daily production” had replaced the original imperial belief that those former Japanese soldiers held as their “power of spirit”.<sup>144</sup>

### **Wartime Cooperativism: Representing the Future**

As argued, in the first three years after he arrived in Yan’an, Nosaka attempted to correct the consciousness of those former laborers who had been sent by the empire, considering that those laborers accepted the rhetoric for the Japanese empire’s overseas expansion. The empire had infused a sense of loyalty and commitment to family into those laborers, and characterized the fighting as an allegiance to the emperor. As a result, the empire’s wartime ideology neglected the basic desires of those laborers. What Nosaka focused on was helping those people realize their desires through arranging for them to

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<sup>144</sup> Hansen Domei Kiroku Henshu linkai, ed, *Hansen heishi monogatari: zaika Nihonjin hansen domeiin no kiroku* ([Tokyo]: Nihon Kyosanto Chuo linkai Shuppanbu, 1963), p.345

work in the unit of communitarian groups under the leadership of the CCP in the rural areas of North China.

Nosaka's agreement with the idea of rural communitarian organization, in terms of laborer arrangement and production, further shaped his mind on how a two-stage revolution could be led to solve Japan's agrarian problem in the future. In fact, after Nosaka returned to Japan in 1946, one of his proposals for dealing with this issue was the "establishment of cooperatives which will utilize farm machinery supplied by the government."<sup>145</sup> It must be kept in mind that Nosaka's six years in Yan'an had provided him with full opportunities, through contact with captured soldiers, to understand the spiritual state of erstwhile laborers whose minds had been occupied by the overlapping social influences of both the empire's reification and the laborers' true desire for peace. This was why he mentioned cooperatives in the postwar situation. This idea originated directly from Mao's influence, in which Mao suggested "Chinese peasants should cooperate based on principles of affection and their own willing", and was proposed to fit in the rural areas of Japan. This agrarian policy reflected Nosaka's ideal to foster the revolutionary consciousness through laborers' anti-war commitments, and it was in China's arduous environment that Nosaka developed this thought by associating the stimulation of the anti-war sentiment with Mao's wartime agrarian policies.

### **Direct Influence from Mao: On Building a Popular Front**

After confirming the nature of the organization of Japanese laborers in China under the influence of Mao, Nosaka began to oversee their anti-fascism activities in China by assimilating them into the popular front. Based on the integration of the former

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<sup>145</sup> Rodger Swearingen and Paul Langer, *Red Flag in Japan-- International Communism in Action, 1919-1951* (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard U.P., 1952), p.131

Japanese laborers, Nosaka further endowed this popular front with democracy that could be seen as the epitome of the postwar government. Neither of the two ingredients that Nosaka added to the developing idea of two-stage revolution could be severed from Mao's philosophy, whose mass-line policies and views on the role of the CCP in China's popular front enabled Nosaka to develop his thoughts on a two-stage revolution in association with the reality of Japan. It was with this purpose that Nosaka accepted the entirety of Mao's wartime philosophy and further developed the notion of two-stage revolution under the influence of Mao.

Although Nosaka had arrived in Yan'an in 1940, the CCP had to shield the news from the outside world and could not leak any information to the public about Nosaka. The news blackout was cancelled in May 1943, when Mao and other members of the central committee of the CCP notified him that the Comintern was collecting opinions from its affiliated parties on whether this organization should cease to exist in order to give more freedom for each party to function in the wartime environment. Nosaka immediately agreed with this resolution and expressed his political inclination toward the CCP's basic policies.

Nosaka's shift towards congruity with the CCP suggested that he was willing to coordinate with Mao in formulating and propagandizing Mao's policies in China. Mao's influence over Nosaka was more than a simply exemplary party line that Nosaka would mimic and inherit. Furthermore, his thoughts, and specially his wartime strategy of resistance, had imposed a direct impression on Nosaka's development of the notion of two-stage revolution in Japan. As Rebecca Karl argues, Mao's thoughts should be defined from a perspective that sees it "as the product of Mao's simultaneous

interpretation of Chinese history and China's present through Marxist categories and the interpretation of Marxist categories through the specific historical situation of China".<sup>146</sup>

The war of resistance entailed the adoption of a tactical and flexible strategy to respond to the vicissitudes of international politics; and that was why under the leadership of Mao, the CCP would always make the decisions that might not satisfy the Comintern and the Soviet Union's interests but rather protect the party's interests in the complicated environment in China. This realistic method was exactly what Nosaka felt the JCP was lacking, and in the following years he attempted to develop the notion of two-stage revolution through expanding the popular front under Mao's realism-based philosophy. I will show how Nosaka's interpretation of Japan's historical situation under the influence of Mao could be revealed through a comparison of his and Mao's texts, and how it could affect his understanding of Japan's two-stage revolution. Since Nosaka had many opportunities to learn from Mao, his views toward building the popular front had also been largely revised with regard to the related strategies. Before I return to Nosaka's acceptance of Mao's thoughts, I briefly introduce the background that led Mao to develop his strategy on the popular front through the conflict between Mao and the Comintern.

Before 1943 when the Comintern was still operating, Mao and the Comintern's representative in China, Wang Ming, had enormous divergence in dealing with the relationship between the Comintern and the CCP. One of the divergent viewpoints was what role the CCP should play in China's popular front. In 1935 Mao and the CCP accepted the idea of establishing a popular front in China for the purpose of the anti-Japanese war. However, unlike Wang's pedantic observance of the Comintern's decrees,

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<sup>146</sup> Rebecca E Karl, *Mao Zedong and China in the Twentieth-century World : A Concise History*(Durham [NC] : Duke University Press, 2010), p.53

Mao placed more emphasis on the “independent role” the CCP should play in the popular front. This posture differed from Wang over whether the CCP should collaborate with the current ruling party in China, namely the KMT, in a subservient manner. Wang suggested that since the anti-Japanese war should be considered a priority, both the cadres and rank and file in the CCP should wipe out the prejudiced opinion against the ruling KMT. Mao considered this attitude dangerous, since the CCP might run the risk of being annexed by its political opponent in China had Wang’s strategy been adopted by the whole party.

In order to eliminate Wang Ming’s influence in the party, in 1942, Mao launched a social campaign known as the “rectification movement” that helped him to ascend to the summit of influence inside the party. In this movement, Mao mobilized every senior cadre in the party to make a clear stand between Mao and Wang Ming’s lines. This political movement was launched at a good time, since in 1941 when the Soviet-Germany war broke out, the Comintern was preoccupied with dealing with the related issues, and thus it had to take an indifferent attitude toward China. According to Gao Hua:

As the leader of the international communism movement, Stalin was optimistic about the structural change inside the CCP, especially over Mao’s ascendancy toward power in the party and his gradual control of the party. Ever since 1938, Moscow had been supporting for the CCP’s general line and policies. With regard to Wang Ming, Stalin knew clearly about Wang’s stance; however, he was also aware that Wang Ming’s mentor Miff, the erstwhile Minister of the Oriental Department of the Comintern, had been purged by him in 1938. Thus, he would not lend a helping hand to Wang. Stalin would not interfere in China’s affairs insofar as Mao was consistent with Moscow on the issues that were related to the Soviet Union.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Gao Hua, *Hong tai yang shi zen yang sheng qi de : Yan'an zheng feng yun dong de lai long qu mai*(Xianggang : Zhong wen da xue chu ban she, c2000), chapter 6

In this popular front, Mao especially emphasized the role Chinese peasants should play, and furthermore, a corresponding agrarian policy that the CCP should employ. In fact, as early as the 1930s, the CCP-led regime in South China relied largely if not wholly on peasants to survive, and it was from that time that Mao started to develop his agrarian policy. However, Mao was not as influential as he was in that time in Yan'an, and incurred criticism from the Comintern frequently. Inside the CCP, the cadres who supported Comintern's resolution on China, and thus criticized Mao at that time were referred to as "the intellectuals from the Soviet Union" (*Liusupai*), and Wang Ming was their leader. Mao accused Wang and other cadres of their stubbornness for sticking to the Comintern's lines and strategies. Subsequently, after Mao took the chief leadership of both the party and its guerilla troops in 1935, Mao executed a policy beneficial to China's rural areas and conducted the armies to follow a flexible guerrilla strategy to protect its independent, though illegal, regime in North China. From then on under Mao's leadership, the CCP adapted its policies with the changing situation in China and hence had successfully won the support of the peasants.

Up until this point I have to emphasize that Mao's major strategy for leading the revolution was utterly different with from that which the Comintern and its agent in China had been insisting on. As a result, Mao had to make the greatest effort through political movements to win the support from not only the cadres but also other social groups, such as peasants and the petit bourgeoisies in the CCP-controlled areas. This was why Nosaka and his Japanese colleagues in China were shown great respect at that time; their commitments to the movement that was launched by Mao constituted the major international acknowledgement for his line. At the same time, Nosaka's involvement with

the movement in the CCP-controlled areas also helped him reshape his idea of Japan's revolution. The mutual support between Mao and Nosaka could be best exemplified in the case of Japanese soldiers' participation in a mass political movement in Yan'an.

In 1941, after Mao published a landmark paper titled "*To rectify our studies*", that called for all the members inside the party to make a clear-cut stand against Wang Ming's erroneous line, the CCP mobilized its army and civilians living in the Yan'an area to participate in a mass movement to cement the Soviet regime led by the CCP in the regions of North Shannxi, Gansu and Ningxia. This was an implementation of Mao's mass line that was aimed at consolidating the regime's base in China's countryside in those northern provinces of China.

Japanese people who were staying in Yan'an were also involved in this movement. Japanese soldiers that were studying in Nosaka's school, and had passed the assessment, could participate in the border area's congress and devote their abilities to both anti-war activities and daily politics. According to interviews with some Japanese soldiers, the daily commitment in the border area government epitomized the CCP's intention to "spread an authentic love that suffuses every corner of the CCP-dominated area on the base of the masses' interaction with both the army and the government".<sup>148</sup> The interaction between the captured Japanese and the CCP enabled those former laborers of the Japanese empire to feel the difference between the abstract codes of militarist spirit represented by bushido, and the CCP-led movements that aimed at replenishing their mind with desire for peace and democracy. Both Nosaka's writings that were composed in Yan'an and the feedback that was given by those spiritually

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<sup>148</sup> Hansen Domei Kiroku Henshu linkai, ed, *Hansen heishi monogatari: zaika Nihonjin hansen domeiin no kiroku* ([Tokyo]: Nihon Kyosanto Chuo linkai Shuppanbu, 1963), p.121

rejuvenated soldiers, avoided adopting the empire's cultural explanation of such spirit; on the contrary, they emphasized how the subjectivity as an individual with desires was established. For example, according to one of the Japanese students who studied in this Labor and Peasant School, he began to realize that his mind that used to be filled up with imperial doctrines had been replaced by the desire and anticipation for leading a new life in the future as a laborer full of aspiration.<sup>149</sup> It was the rectification movement of those captured soldiers that rendered Nosaka an opportunity to assimilate those people into the popular front that Nosaka had been proposing for a long time.

### **Preparing for Postwar Reform: Attempted Contact with the US**

The basic difference between Mao and the Comintern's views lay in the nature of the Chinese revolution which was under debate for a long time. Mao claimed that the Chinese revolution in wartime should be led in the way that "the people of all countries should organize an international united front to struggle against fascism".<sup>150</sup> However, the Comintern had a different outlook on China's revolution. In 1930 Wang Ming proclaimed that "The Chinese revolution is the most important and unquestionably most significant part of the world revolution".<sup>151</sup> In the same period the Comintern issued the 1931 thesis, which Nosaka did not agree with, and called for drawing up a new thesis in 1932. At that time the Comintern mistakenly judged the nature of Japan's capital economy and defined it as a declining type. It was for this reason that Wang Ming, who spoke as the representative of the Comintern in the CCP, urged the CCP forces to

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid, p.120

<sup>150</sup> Mao Zedong, *Selected works of Mao Zedong*, Vol 3(Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), p.806

<sup>151</sup> Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the world : the origin and development of Chinese Communist foreign policy* (Norwalk, CT : EastBridge, ©2005), trans Steven I. Levine, p.7

“accelerate the advent of a high world revolutionary tide”.<sup>152</sup> Although the Comintern promptly corrected its policy after Nosaka became involved in its daily work in 1932, its attitude toward Chinese revolution did not change. It kept on insisting on the concept that Chinese revolution should protect the Soviet Union; however, after Mao had ascended to the summit of power in the party after his “rectification movement” in 1942, the CCP-led revolutionary base devoted its resources to protecting its own security and wouldn’t honor the commitment to the Soviet Union through deploying its army to attack the Japanese army in North China. This gave an excuse for the Comintern to criticize Mao and the party with the charge that the revolution they were leading in China “was not really a social revolution but only an anti-imperialist one”.<sup>153</sup>

Critical as the Comintern was, Mao continued to carry on his independent policies, and Mao’s strategy in coping with the relationship between a socialist revolution and the CCP’s practical and diplomatic policies in the war of resistance also inspired Nosaka at this time to set up practical goals for a Japanese revolution. It was for this reason that both Mao and Nosaka welcomed the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943. Mao emphasized in the report that “the dissolution of the Comintern would facilitate the further nationalization of communist parties and suited the needs of the antifascist war.”<sup>154</sup> This posture suggested that Chinese two-stage revolution should give up the dogmatic goal of launching a revolution with the final purpose of protecting the Soviet Union. As Niu Jun commented, “What the party emphasized was not to repudiate its special relationship with the Soviet Union, but rather safeguard its independence within

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid, p.8

<sup>153</sup> Ibid, p.124

<sup>154</sup> Quoted from Ibid, p.125

the international communist movement and place its own interests first when formulating policy”.<sup>155</sup>

Nosaka was informed of this message from Mao, and he also expressed his view on the Comintern’s dissolution. He not only agreed with Mao, but also criticized the Comintern’s line in the past. Nosaka’s criticism of the Comintern lay in the fact that the doctrines to which the Comintern adhered in the past years impeded Japanese masses to make progress in building a popular front in order to promote the development of Japanese two-stage revolution.

The dissolution of the Comintern has liberated the JCP from the forced obedience to those old and outdated rules and articles. As a result, our party at present has an unprecedented opportunity to develop our initiatives to the fullest extent. 156

This was the first time that Nosaka criticized the Comintern’s doctrines in public. The reason seemed to be apparent at that time, as the Comintern had already dissolved, leaving every affiliated party in an independent state where those party members could think about the issue of the anti-war movement amidst the Second World War from their own social realities. Mao called it “a sinification” of the basic principles that were imported from the erstwhile Comintern and the Soviet Union in order to apply them based on a consideration of China’s reality.

After the Comintern’s dissolution, the CCP made a statement openly to the public about the arrival of Nosaka, although he had already been there for three years. Nosaka did not need to hide his identity anymore, and this provided expedience for him to collaborate with Mao. In fact, just one year after this event Nosaka participated in a

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid, p.125-126

<sup>156</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Ye Ban Can San Xuanji Vol1*(Beijing : Ren Min Chu Ban She,1963), p.319

diplomatic activity of the CCP and completed his obligations effectively in concert with Mao. This diplomatic activity demonstrated how Nosaka had adjusted his revolutionary goals to the current situation under the influence of Mao.

After the outbreak of the Japan-US war, the US government reinforced its liaison in China. Because it wanted to intensify its political influence in Far East Asia and pave the way for its interference in this area after the war, the government began to expedite its political interaction with both the CCP and the national government. Particularly, it frequently delivered its intention to develop its diplomatic activity with the CCP after 1942. As the CCP and its regime suffered a hardship due to both the attack from Japanese armies and the conflicts with the national government, although the two political groups officially formed an alliance in 1937, Mao also sought to develop relationship with other outside-party forces. It was for this reason that Mao treated the signals from the US side seriously.

In the summer of 1944, The United States Army Observation Group, also known as the Dixie Mission, sent the first batch of visitors to Yan'an to negotiate with the CCP about the issue of concerted military actions against the Japanese army. They met Mao and consulted with him over the basic policy orientation of the CCP after the war. In fact, in the mid-1940s, when Mao made the prediction that the war should end in less than one year in 1944, he considered the possibility of conducting diplomatic activities with the US without the interference of the KMT. This tendency became even more apparent after the American Dixie Mission (DM) paid a visit to Yan'an in 1944.

Mao showed unexpected passion toward the American Dixie Mission. He asked tentatively about the possibility of cooperating with the US in the postwar period. "He

sent his best personal wishes...and he looked forward to the cooperation in the future”.<sup>157</sup>

The US took it as a positive signal from the CCP to engage in the postwar political reshuffle in East Asia led by the Allies. “Yan’an was a glamorous word in the Washington of 1945. ...For the first time, Americans were discovering who Mao Zedong was and how he and his group could threaten the continued domination over China of the ‘great leader’, Chiang, Kai shek.”<sup>158</sup>

It seemed bizarre that Mao, a leader of a communist party, would devote all his energies to developing and building connections with the US: the competitor of the Soviet Union that all the communist parties were due to protect in the past. The realism-based diplomatic policies Mao implemented suggested that two-stage revolution should be placed in the background taking consideration of all the concrete historical conditions.

Due to Mao’s mediation, the DM also met Nosaka, opening a new channel for interaction in the postwar Japan between the US forces and the JCP. Through the first contact between the two sides, Nosaka interpreted his program that he designed on the disposal of the postwar situation. He arranged to meet the DM members in a theatre where they were invited to watch a drama. Nosaka saluted to them in English and showed the JCP’s willingness to cooperate with the US after the war. In Nosaka’s conversation with one of the members Guenther Stein, he emphasized his attitude toward the US’s interference in postwar Japan, which should be considered as the revision of the original goals for two-stage revolution. “In order to win the battle completely and perpetually against Japanese militarism and wartime fascism, the support from the allied forces is

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<sup>157</sup> John K Emmerson, *The Japanese Thread, A life in the US Foreign Service* (New York : Holt, Rinehart and Winston, ©1978), p.207

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid*, p.217

really a crucial and decisive element.”<sup>159</sup> This expression could be seen as Nosaka’s strong and positive wish to facilitate cooperation with the US in the postwar political reshuffle. For this purpose, in this conversation Nosaka clarified that the future cooperation he could facilitate was not based on “communism” but a common goal of building a democratic Japan. He introduced basic knowledge about the Japanese People’s Emancipation League (JPEL) to Stein. JPEL was established based on the function of Japan’s Laborers and Peasants School, where Nosaka was the president. This league, consisted of peasants, petit bourgeois and other social classes, who were all considered the main force that fought against the Japanese empire in the war under the leadership of the CCP and Nosaka. Furthermore, as those former Japanese soldiers had been converted to the defenders for peace and democracy in the anti-imperialism aura, Nosaka was assured that the Japanese people who used to be entangled with the Japanese emperor system could be indoctrinated to get rid of the ideology and demagogue that the empire had relied on in the war. He recommended to Stein that if allied forces could also treat the prisoners of war in the same way as the CCP and Nosaka did, it was possible that those prisoners would devote themselves to the democratic movement after they had been released in the postwar reforms.

Nosaka must have been aware of how those Americans would respond if he mentioned such words as revolution. Thus Nosaka tactically reiterated the necessity of a two-stage revolution in Japan to DM members without referring to its title:

“After the war, the United Nations should confirm to the world that Japan’s new government must be headed by anti-war political groups. The JCP must be assimilated

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<sup>159</sup> Guenther Stein, *Enan : senkyuhyaku shijuyonen*(Tokyo: Misuzushobo □, 1962), trans Nohara Shiro , p.286

into the political structure of postwar Japan as a guard for democracy.”<sup>160</sup> By acknowledging the establishment of a democratic regime in postwar Japan, Nosaka showed a welcome attitude toward the allied forces’ presence in Japan, and that he would like to accept a transitional government that consisted of bourgeois liberal parties, the US forces and proletarian parties.<sup>161</sup> In fact, as Nosaka conceptualized, the bourgeois revolution, whose significance Nosaka used to recognize in two-stage revolution, had similar objectives to those that the allied reformers were also pursuing: both the JCP and the US needed to reform the wartime political system in order to ensure that a new round of democratization could take root. Particularly, in order to let laborers get involved in a democratic politics, Nosaka expressed his wish to Stein for the employment of a massive suffrage, and Americans were happy to see that even a communist member would propose a plan that endorsed the US to carry on democratic reforms. Hence DM acknowledged Nosaka’s role and his plan temporarily.

In the conversation, nothing could prove better how Nosaka’s thoughts had been influenced by Mao in defining two-stage revolution in the postwar time, than his explanation of the popular front he built in China. “Our minimum program is to build a liberal government after the defeat of Japanese militarism...while our maximum program is to realize the ‘true democracy’, the counterpart to China’s ‘new democracy’ ”.<sup>162</sup>

In fact the usage of this “new democracy” that Nosaka claimed, was directly borrowed from Mao’s works. After the outbreak of the anti-Japanese war, Mao showed

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid, p.294

<sup>161</sup> Ibid, p.294

<sup>162</sup> Ibid, p.295

his pragmatic attitude toward two-stage revolution in China, and would make full use of every advantageous situation in the world. In his *New Democracy*, he stated:

Being a bourgeoisie in a colonial and semi-colonial country and oppressed by imperialism, the Chinese national bourgeoisie retains a certain revolutionary quality at certain periods and to a certain degree—even in the era of imperialism—in its opposition to the foreign imperialists and the domestic governments of bureaucrats and warlords, and it may ally itself with the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie against such enemies as it is ready to oppose...it is a transitional form of state to be adopted in the revolutions of the colonial and semi-colonial countries...So long as they are revolutions in colonial or semi-colonial countries, their state and governmental structure will of necessity be basically the same, for example, a new-democratic state under the joint dictatorship of several anti-imperialist classes.<sup>163</sup>

Mao acknowledged that the current stage for Chinese revolution should embody the characteristics of anti-imperialism in the face of the Japanese empire's aggression. It was for this reason that China's bourgeoisies could be unified to achieve this goal, although they were not steady in sticking to the idea of revolution and were easy to retreat. In order to build a strong country, after the war China should embrace a democratic revolution that could spur the development of the modern economy:

The substitution of a certain degree of capitalist development for the oppression of foreign imperialism and domestic feudalism is not only an advance but an unavoidable process...we communists clearly understand that under the state system of New Democracy in China it will be necessary in the interests of social progress to facilitate the development of the private capitalist sector of the economy besides the development of the state sector and of the individual and co-operative sectors run by the labouring people.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Mao Zedong, *Selected works of Mao Zedong*, Vol 2, (Peking, Foreign Languages Press, 1967), p.348-351

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid*, p.233

Mao admitted that it was irreversible for China to develop capitalism in order to experience the transformation to the socialist stage. Unlike China, before the war Japan had already experienced years of modernization in which a modern economy thrived and prospered. However, the assumption of a two-stage revolution was still applicable in Japan, as Nosaka saw it, because he did not think that Japan's modernization had wiped out all the feudal elements in the society, which caused the emergence of the agrarian problem.<sup>165</sup> This was why Nosaka would think that Mao's proposal was very useful and he mimicked it to argue that in Japan a bourgeois revolution was necessary before the advent of a socialist revolution.

In this upcoming revolution, the overthrow of the emperor system was the ultimate goal, as Nosaka indicated in his conversation with the DM. However, he made a clear distinction between the emperor system and the Japanese Emperor. Rather than throw the Emperor off the throne, Nosaka suggested that the position of emperor be retained, while the political system by which he ruled be abolished.

To summarize, under Mao's influence, Nosaka and his group in China still saw the two-stage revolution as the ultimate target in postwar Japan; furthermore he began to connect the goals of the revolution with the postwar arrangement. He was aware that the political arrangement in Japan's postwar situation could not be completed without the interference of the US, and that was why he would follow Mao's strategy and contact with the members of the American Dixie Mission when the war was close to the end.

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<sup>165</sup> Guenther Stein, *Enan : senkyuhyaku shijuyonen*(Tokyo: Misuzushobo □, 1962), trans Nohara Shiro, p.295

## Conclusion

In the beginning of 1945, the Japanese empire was about to lose the Second World War. At the same time Nosaka's postwar plan was also being formulated and improved. Nosaka's efforts dropped a significant hint on the JCP's postwar policies in Japan, which the party would follow the strategy of two-stage revolution to urge an implementation of the postwar democratic reform in Japan, rather than carry out a socialist revolution that was similar to the one that occurred in Russia.

In 1945, the CCP convened a significant congress, the Seventh Congress of the CCP, and presented its postwar policies and strategies to the public. Aside from Mao's report, Nosaka also made an important speech to the attendants of this meeting. Invited as a special representative, Nosaka reported to the congress about the JCP's proposal on how to build a democratic new country should Japan have to surrender in the future (four months after Nosaka made this speech, Japan declared its unconditional surrender to the allied forces). Nosaka's plan was sanctioned by the CCP at the Seventh Congress of the CCP. In this report, Nosaka addressed the basic problems that might arise after the war based on an overall appraisal of the political and economical arrangement. In this proposal, we can see how Nosaka managed to embody the goals of two-stage revolution.

I conclude this thesis by focusing on this proposal, not only because of the general policies with regard to the goal of two-stage revolution, but also because he attempted to establish a connection between revolution and the management of laborers in postwar Japan. Furthermore, the implication of this proposal, with a concern with social reality, lay in how Nosaka remapped his prewar and wartime thoughts on the Japanese empire and its manipulation of laborers into this proposal and formalized it as a postwar policy under the name of two-stage revolution.

First and Foremost, Nosaka explicitly pointed out that the postwar democratization in Japan should be part and parcel of Japan's two-stage revolution, or precisely, the first stage of this revolution, namely, a bourgeois democratic revolution. I believe that Nosaka would emphasize this point for good reason; several months later after the issue of this proposal Tokuda Kyuichi, another Japanese communist member who had just been released from prison, formulated basic lines for the party, indicating that revolution should be directly launched in Japan as a socialist one.<sup>166</sup> Apparently Nosaka was more familiar with the global situation than Tokuda, as the latter had been confined for more than a decade during the war. But what was even more important was that Nosaka's perspective on seeing the world was based on his observation of the Japanese empire in terms of the empire's necropolitics that would demolish both colonies and homeland itself. "The priority of the dying empire currently is to maintain the autocratic regime intact, including some crucial organs such as the Gunbu, and to preserve its colonies."<sup>167</sup> The preservation of both the wartime political regime and its control on colonies suggested that Japan would still continue to resort to the war as an efficient measure to obtain resources overseas. Hence the postwar reform in Japan should begin with the restoration of democracy.

Nosaka denied the judgment that impugned the existence of democratic groups in Japan. He was confident that under the leadership of the JCP, a defeated and autocracy-ridden country would be doomed to embrace democracy, and this was why two-stage revolution was indispensable in postwar Japan. Furthermore, the political democratization would extend to the economic reform in both industries and agriculture.

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<sup>166</sup> Hasegawa Hiroshi, *Ni-ichi suto zengo to Nihon Kyosanto* (Tokyo: Sanichi Shobo, Showa 51 [1976]), p.46

<sup>167</sup> Nosaka Sanzo, *Ye Ban Can San Xuan ji Voll*(Beijing : Ren Min Chu Ban She,1963), p.351

What had betrayed the similarity between Nosaka's policies and Mao's program was that they all emphasized the significance of the state in controlled economy in those reforms.

The democratic state should take the responsibility for its control over the whole national economy. The wartime economic policies have already laid a sound foundation for carrying out such task in a new period. The Gunbu has facilitated concentration of conglomerates, and implemented similar controlling policies in agriculture. Those measures would be helpful for democratic government to manage monopolized enterprises and to plan the economy.

Based on this condition, we propose the basic principle as follows:

The state would implement a strong control over monopolized enterprises, particularly; it should nationalize capital out of major financial groups. This nationalization would yield living space for those petit capitalists and industrial laborers who have been suppressed and exploited by those former financial capitalists.<sup>168</sup>

In fact, the nationalization that Nosaka was referring to mainly took place in *zaibatsu*, Japan's financial groups to whom Nosaka imputed the origin of the war. For the petit bourgeoisies and small business traders in Japan, Nosaka encouraged them to develop independently. Since the empire had stripped the properties of most petit bourgeoisies during the war, ensnaring them into poverty and bankruptcy, Nosaka placed them into the same category that proletariats belonged to. This meant that in postwar Japan, Nosaka expected that industrial laborers, regardless of proletariats and impoverished petit bourgeois, could participate in the national economy, in a broader sense that they could not only sell their labor power but also engage in the democratic management of factories. The organization of laborers was through labor unions. Nosaka anticipated that

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid, p.384

laborers could organize themselves through labor unions and participate in political movements, such as striking and peaceful protests, in order to urge capitalist employers to realize their basic demands. Furthermore, Nosaka would not agree that the labor union movement in postwar Japan could exceed the legal boundary and end up as an anarchical social riot.

A similar policy should also be applied in agriculture. In terms of agrarian policies, Nosaka stated that in order to facilitate a bourgeois revolution, the JCP's policy should include "redistribution of lands and establishment of collective farms". Nosaka believed that revolution should achieve such a goal that agriculture could develop following the principle of bourgeois democracy. Definitively, Nosaka proposed that the landlord as a social class needed to be wiped out in Japan's society, and all the production should be controlled by the state following the principle of market.<sup>169</sup>

The basic policy corresponded to Nosaka's concern with the agrarian crisis in imperial Japan. As I have discussed in the previous chapter, the financial capitalists' counterpart in Japan's rural areas, namely landlords, colluded with the recruitment of laborers by stripping them of the opportunity for those peasants to cultivate the land, hence driving them to work for industries in cities. To provide a solution, Nosaka strongly supported the idea that the state could organize peasants to work "cooperatively" in order to revive Japan's agriculture.

Since both the postwar democratization and his definition of the Japanese emperor as "the representative of Japan's landlords" in the past couldn't circumvent the problem of Japan's emperor system, Nosaka paid special attention to this problem in the two-stage

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid, p.386-387

revolution. Although he admitted that this emperor system was the main objective for such a revolution, he had to acknowledge the place that the Japanese emperor had occupied in the masses' mind. The Japanese emperor has two aspects that we need to be concerned with: in the first place, he represented the wartime authoritarian regime that ruled its people for him; while in the second place, he was worshiped as the phantom of god. Those two aspects intermingled with each other. The temporary preservation of emperor in Japan's postwar democracy marked Nosaka's pragmatic tactic in managing the progress of revolution; namely, rather than push for a rapid transformation toward the socialist stage, Nosaka would choose a gradual and moderate form of change.

As we can see, the program that Nosaka designed for the restoration of postwar Japan embodied his aspiration for the JCP to organize laborers to pursue for democracy and peace in the postwar recovery. Under the name of two-stage revolution, this proposal was a program *per se* that carried on the task of shaping the subjectivity of laborers out of the imperial mind set by which they had been engulfed for years. This program was also a summary of what Nosaka had been contemplating for a few decades of the relationship between the commodification of labor power and a dominating social apparatus known as the empire. To him, cooperativism in rural areas which he learnt from Mao in China provided him with an appropriate prescription for solving the inequality, which originated from the accumulation of capital that was imposed by the imperial state in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This cooperativism, as he proposed, could enable laborers to form labor unions and participate in the postwar reform as a collective body. Abiding by the principle of democracy, Nosaka had recognized the labor unions in postwar Japan in

terms of their democratic management. This principle corresponded with the Sanro's design on the labor union movements under his supervision in prewar Japan.

Another aspect of this proposal dealt with the establishment of the Japanese nation against a new background. As we can see, Nosaka wanted to popularize the cooperative spirit among the different classes, such as peasants, in order to break up the wartime fictional ideology that propagandized the dedication to the empire under the name of the "integration of people". Nosaka had witnessed how Japanese masses in the war were mobilized by the fascist's demagogue such as "desire for a better life" and "for the sake of the great nation". At the same time his working experience in Yan'an with Mao taught him the CCP's experience in consolidating the masses to resist against Japanese fascist's version of the cooperative, known as the IRAA movement. It has to be noted that since Mao's experience was mainly applicable to the peasants in China, it left an indelible mark on Nosaka's proposal with regard to his agrarian policy.

In this thesis I have tried to narrate a theoretical search committed by Nosaka Sanzo to seek for the origin and development of a notion known as "two-stage revolution" based on his understanding of the social and economic mechanism that the Japanese empire relied on to manage and mobilize laborers in support of its imperial economy. This research is enlightened by the previous studies on the JCP under Nosaka's leadership and his contribution in Japan's occupation period to democratization and postwar reform. But I wanted to further reveal the historical emergence of postwar democracy in the framework of two-stage revolution. I wanted to bring to light that the advent of democracy represented a new postwar structural arrangement underpinning the

transformation of postwar social-economic milieu in Japan through a process known as two-stage revolution. I analyzed how Nosaka became aware of the necessity of launching a two-stage revolution by focusing on his disavowal of the imperial capitalist accumulation. I also showed that on accepting the notion of two-stage revolution, how Nosaka deemed it necessary for industrial laborer, peasant and petit bourgeoisie to be united to resist the empire under wartime circumstances.

Perhaps the important discovery that I made in the research is Nosaka's working experience in Yan'an with Mao Zedong. Under Mao's leadership, the CCP successfully organized a popular resistance movement in face of the invasion of Japanese imperialism. I further discovered that Nosaka was also involved in this movement through his commitment to the establishment of a "popular front" in China. Particularly, envisioning this popular front as a practical mechanism, Nosaka attempted to incorporate former Japanese soldiers into it under the banner of two-stage revolution in the anti-imperialism movement.

At the same time, rather than repeat with the ideological parlances reflecting the inner debate between different revolutionary strategies that were held by the so-called orthodoxy Marxism and local vulgar Marxism, I shifted my attention toward the sources that reflected Nosaka's perception of the imperial economy. As my narrative showed, his criticism of the imperial economy could not be separated from his acceptance of the notion of two-stage revolution, as it was only through his exploration into the flaws of the imperial economic system that made his pro-revolution stance reasonable. To put it in another way, rather than just plainly give a historical narrative on how Nosaka developed the notion of two-stage revolution, I placed his development of this idea in combination

with his analysis on the Japanese imperial economy, and paid attention to the criticism he led on the empire. As a result, the development of his revolutionary thought was demonstrated in a way that had a bearing on the task of revealing the social economy. This is why I avoided merely mentioning such terms as “revolutionary consciousness” “class struggle”, which can be frequently found in historical books on revolutionary theory or behaviour, without defining the social milieu.

By the same token, I continued to discuss how Nosaka revealed the wartime system of mobilization from an aspect of its manipulation of laborers for its military expansion in Asia, which lay the foundation for him to develop the notion of two-stage revolution in the fifteen-year war. By combining the goals of revolution with the anti-fascist movement, I argued that Nosaka attempted to replace the current fascist regime with a new one that could only be achieved through this revolution.

The significance of my research lies in showing how an ambiguous notion known as “socialist revolution” was interpreted not as a social ideal but considered as an ideological tool for the criticism of the situation in the imperial Japan, which was characterized as the Japanese empire’s primitive accumulation of capital and its expansion in the war. Although the research is historically oriented, even in the current globalized world, capital’s influence has never ceased to tighten its grip over the world, and its everlasting process of expansion would never stop deriving local conflicts. “Socialist revolution” is still a fashionable vocabulary, regardless of different times. The thesis teaches us how to view the relationship between capitalism and its opposing aspects through an historical inquiry.

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