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JAPANESE PERCEPTION OF THE 1989 EASTERN EUROPEAN REVOLUTION*

TETSURO KATO

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Abstract

Owing to the development of a world communication network, Japanese people today are aware of exciting events from all over the world soon after they happen. Nonetheless,

* This paper was written for my presentations to the 7th National Conference of the Japanese Studies Association of Australia, 11-13 July, 1991, The Australian National University, Canberra, and to the 6th Triennial International Conference of the European Association for Japanese Studies (EAJS), 16-19 September, 1991, Berlin.

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they sometimes perceive them as a "fire across the sea."

The 1989 Eastern European Revolution was an epoch-making event in world history, but the Japanese perception of the Revolution was more than a little curious. In response to a question of US-Japan public opinion poll in December 1989 that asked "What do you think is the most fundamental desire of Eastern European people?," a majority of Americans answered that East Europeans wanted their political liberty. By contrast, half of the Japanese people answered that East Europeans wanted to improve their living standard. This reply reflects the contemporary power of the Japanese economy within the capitalist world system and the still materialistic orientation of the Japanese people in the 1990s.

Of course, many political and theoretical arguments have taken place in Japan concerning the Eastern European changes and their implications for our future. I will discuss the diverse perceptions and reactions of Japanese at the levels of mass media, political parties, intellectuals, socialist or marxist scholars, business circles, and public opinion polls.

I. *The East European Revolution in the World History*

The great political change in the Eastern European countries in 1989 shook contemporary international relations. This change has a global historical significance. It started in Poland, spread to Hungary, Bulgaria, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Romania, overthrew communist one-party dictatorships, and achieved democratization. It demonstrated the vitality of liberty and democracy, destroyed the Berlin Wall, led to the end of the Cold War, and created a new European order. It came in reaction to Gorbachev's "Perestroika," one of the preconditions for the change, and brought about a plural-party system and a presidential system in the Soviet Union. It shocked the actually existing socialist countries and international communist movement, led to changes of government in Yugoslavia, Albania and Mongolia as well as the democratization of African socialism, and effected the conversion of the Italian Communist Party into the Left Democratic Party.

We cannot yet foresee the final results of these political changes. But East Germany has already been absorbed into West Germany. Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Romania have introduced market economies and the stock-company system. Even the Soviet Union, suffering from economic crisis and ethnic conflict, depends on foreign aid. The former socialist bloc is being reabsorbed into the capitalist world system. The Warsaw Military Pact has already been dissolved.

Thus, the socialist system actually existing since 1917 has surely entered a declining period. International communist movements that originated with the Comintern (1919-43) in Lenin's time are facing a crisis of dissolution and collapse. Communist and socialist ideology are losing their attraction. Not only liberalism, democracy and the market mechanism but also even capitalism has gained a better image.

In my Japanese book, "*The Eastern European Revolution and Socialism*" (Kadensha, Tokyo, March 1990), I summarized the meaning of these political changes as follows:

"The linked political revolutions of 1989 through 'forum and round-table' in Eastern European countries were democratic revolutions which recovered the basic ideas of the 1789 French Revolution. They were civil revolutions in which ordinary people played

the decisive role. The scale and impact can be compared with the 1848 Western European Revolution.

The revolutions overthrew the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat and the political rule by a monolithic vanguard party which has been carried on by the communist parties created by Lenin and developed by the Comintern. They signalled the beginning of the historical collapse of the state socialism that originated in Lenin's *'The State and Revolution'* and in the 1917 Russian Revolution itself.

These revolutions marked a new stage in 'the reabsorption of state power by society,' an ideal that grew up from early socialist thought and that Marx found in the 1871 Paris Commune (*'The Civil War in France'*). They constitute a part of a worldwide 'permanent democratic revolution' that is taking place in the shadow of the nuclear threat and ecological crisis within the capitalist world system dominated by transnational corporations."

When I published my recent book, *"The Crisis of Socialism and the Rebirth of Democracy"* (Kyoiku-Shiryō-Shuppankai, Tokyo, July 1990), I raised for theoretical debates the following three questions concerning the 1989 revolutions:

- (1) Should they be called revolution?, reform?, or, counter-revolution?
- (2) What was the main cause of the collapse of Soviet-type socialism? Did the roots lie in the failure of Stalin?, did they originate from Lenin?, or, should we trace them back to Marx's theory?
- (3) Where are these revolutions headed?, back to capitalism?, toward a rebirth of socialism and communism?, or, some third way?

This paper will examine Japanese reactions to the Eastern European Revolution, including my own. I will discuss these reactions first in relation to the image of revolution in Japan, second in terms of the party politics, and third in relation to the discussion in academic and business circles and mass perception.

II. *Revolution? Reform? or Counter-revolution?*

—From *"Asahi-shinbun"* News Reports

At the beginning of December 1989, a major international symposium was held under the sponsorship of the West German newspaper, *"Die Zeit."* The subject was "Causes and Results of the 1989 Eastern European Revolution." At the opening session, Professor Ralf Dahrendorf of Oxford spoke about three main issues of the revolution, namely, democracy, the market, and pluralism. He asked as the chair whether we could draw the conclusion that an era of post-communism had arrived.

Twenty-five well-known intellectuals and politicians from Europe and the USA were present. These included Daniel Bell, Henry Kissinger, Willy Brandt, Helmut Schmidt, Richard von Weizsäcker, Iring Fetscher, Oleg Rogomolow, André Fontaine, Sergio Segre, Kjell-Olof Feldt, Jürgen Kuczynski, etc.

Of these 25, only Professor Kuczynski, a representative historian of East Germany, confessed a belief that his country was facing a "conservative revolution" in a negative sense, if not a "counter-revolution." But even though the Ceausescu dictatorship in Romania

was still in power at the time, he could not deny the reality of a "revolution in socialism" (*Die Zeit*, Nr. 1, Dezember 29, 1989).

In January 1990, in his first State of the Union address, President Bush in the USA proclaimed the beginning of the new period of world history as a consequence of "the 1989 revolution in Eastern Europe," and he proposed a new initiative of disarmament in Europe.

For people in Europe or the USA, it might be natural that this series of political changes was seen as "a series of revolutions," variously called a "self-controlled revolution" in Poland, a "peaceful revolution" in Hungary, a "peoples' revolution" in East Germany, a "velvet revolution" in Czechoslovakia and an "anti-communist revolution" in Romania.

In the East Asian economic giant, Japan, however, it remained a controversial question whether these historical changes should be characterized as "revolution." To understand this point, it is interesting how the "*Asahi-shinbun*," a representative and high quality Japanese newspaper, described the process of change in Eastern Europe in 1989.

During the months of roundtable talks between the Polish Workers Party and Solidarnosc from February through April in Poland, the first free election in June, and the birth of a non-communist cabinet led by Tadeusz Mazowiecki in August, the *Asahi-shinbun* described these events as "reform" or "democratization." The Japanese word "reform (KAI-KAKU)" had already been used as a translation of the Russian word "Perestroika." "Democratization (MINSHUKA)" was a popular expression for the Chinese student movement from April to June 4, and the Invasion of Tiananmen Square by troops was described as "the breakdown of democratization."

The rise of reformist groups within the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, the opening of the border with Austria, the renaming of the "Socialist Workers' Party" to "Socialist Party" and of the "Peoples' Republic" to the "Republic of Hungary," were also labeled "reforms." The dismissal of political leaders in Bulgaria and East Germany were said to be "changes of government (SEIHEN)." Further, the *Asahi* described the rapid process from the fall of Berlin Wall and peoples' mass movements against the Socialist Unity Party in East Germany to the birth of President Havel in Czechoslovakia, as a "transformation (HENKAKU)," "upheaval (GEKIHEN)," and "convulsion (GEKIDOU)," as well as a "reform" and "democratization."

Only after the collapse of the Romanian Ceausescu dictatorship, did the *Asahi-shinbun* finally use the word "revolution (KAKUMEI)" in a headline.

In December 23, Yoshio Murakami, the chief foreign news editor of the *Asahi-shinbun*, wrote a column titled, "The Achievement of the Eastern European Revolution." In December 27, the *Asahi* ran an article on "The Public TV Station that supported the Romanian Revolution." The first headline of a 1990 New Years series of articles on "The Changing World" was "A New Stage of the Eastern European Revolution." A headline of January 5 was "Two Weeks after the Romanian Revolution."

But the expression "revolution" did not become established on the pages of *Asahi-shinbun*. In subsequent months, the *Asahi* again described the 1990 process of free elections, the setting up of non-communist governments, the introduction of the market economy and foreign investment, or the unification of Germany, as "reform," "democratization," or "liberalization."

The headline of "The Second Revolution in the Soviet Union" in February referring to the introduction of a plural-party and president system, was an exception. Also excep-

tional were two books from the Asahi-shinbun publishing house. The one was "*History speed up: from the sites of the Eastern European Revolution*" written by correspondent, Chihiro Itoh in June. The other was a collection of newspaper articles, entitled "*Revolution: A Scenario for the Rebirth of the Soviet Union and East Europe*" in October 1990. More typical was the symposium of Eastern European journalists and Japanese scholars organized by the *Asahi-shinbun* in April 1990, named "The Destination of Eastern European Reforms." Another representative Japanese newspaper, the *Yomiuri-shinbun*, also arranged an international symposium in April, entitled "The Search for a New World Order: Ramifications of the Soviet & Eastern European Transformation."

III. *The Popular Image of "Revolution" in Japan* —*Violent and Bloody Mass Revolt*

Why did the expression "revolution" appear on the pages of the *Asahi-shinbun* only after Romania's Ceausescu government collapsed? The answer probably is related to the image of the word "revolution" in Japan, the presence of violence and blood in Romania's transformation, and the concern for the "safety of Japanese abroad."

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Malta meeting, the Ceausescu government was seen to be the last dictatorship in Eastern Europe, and for this reason, Japanese people beforehand strongly expected it would collapse. After the renaming of the Hungarian Republic in October, Japanese TV news and newspapers often showed maps of "a wave of democratization in Eastern Europe." This became a reality, as expected, just at Christmas-time. There were reports of the "Massacre in Timisoara," "Gun-shooting against street demonstration," "Bloody disaster," and then, the "Execution of Ceausescu."

Additionally, there were also reports of "The emergency measures committee in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the safety of Japanese in Romania," bulletins that "A Japanese correspondent was injured," or that "68 Japanese safely fled from Romania to Bulgaria" (all above from the headlines of the *Asahi-Shinbun* in December 1989). It is well known that the Japanese mass-media tend to focus only on the safety of Japanese when hijackings, airplane accidents or international terrorism occur. Japanese media reacted to the Romanian revolution as it does in these cases. The Romanian TV scenes looked thrilling for many Japanese, just like the Tiananmen Square Incidents in June.

But why did the expression "revolution" fail to become established thereafter on the pages of Japanese newspaper?

In the literature of the UK, USA or France, "revolution" has a close connection with a historical tradition of peoples' self-emancipation. There are many studies on these revolutions written in a positive tone. An academic field of "comparative revolutions" even exists in the West. In Japan, there is no such tradition of "revolution." Japanese people have no firm experience of self-emancipation achieved by themselves.

The well-known political change in 1868 in Japan resulted in an great transformation of society similar to the "revolutions" in Western countries, but this was named the "Meiji Restoration (ISHIN)." Both of the Japanese words "ISHIN (restoration)" and "KAKU-MEI (revolution)" originate from Chinese. "ISHIN" means "all things are changed and

renewed." The original meaning of "KAKUMEI" was "the change of Chinese dynasty by fate" or "great changes" (EKISEI KAKUMEI), and the meaning shifted to the equivalent of the Western word "revolution" only after the Meiji period, and now becomes established as a translation of "revolution." Both words originally had no meaning of self-emancipation or a subjective, active transformation of society by the people (my interpretation of "KAKUMEI" is in *Encyclopedia Nipponica 2001*, Vol. 5, Shogakukan, Tokyo, 1985).

The Meiji upheaval was explained rather as a restoration of the Imperial (TENNOU) family than as a great social change, and the peoples' activity under the leadership by lower SAMURAI class was rendered as minimum. By calling it the "Meiji Restoration," the greatest social change in Japanese history was connected with the myth of the long tradition of the Tennou regime, and was ideologically separated from such concurrent transformations in the mid-19th century world as the 1848 Western European Revolution, the 1853 Taiping revolt in China, the 1861 Civil War in the US, the 1867 second reform of election system in Britain, the 1871 Paris Commune in France, and the 1870 Italian and the 1871 German State-building.

The transformation from the Imperial system to the contemporary system in 1945 was not a "revolution from below" but a "reform from above," forced by the defeat of the Second World War and the US occupation, although one constitutional scholar once called it "the August Revolution" at the time. Thus, Japanese people have experienced great social transformation and moved from the periphery to the core within the capitalist world system without a political "revolution" in which they took part. They have no positive or subjective image of "revolution."

Rather, the image of "revolution" in modern Japan was strongly determined by the 1789 French Revolution and the 1917 Russian Revolution. The common characteristics as perceived by the Japanese were the great transformation of the social system in a violent and bloody conflict, and the mass revolt with rapid collapse of the existing order.

The fact that the *Asahi-shinbun* perceived a "revolution" only in Romania might come from this traditional image in Japan.

IV. *The Dominant Image of "Revolution" in Japanese Academic Circles—From "Bourgeois Democratic" to "Proletarian Socialist" Revolution*

Although a tradition of popular political movement is weak, the intellectual influence of marxism in academic circles has been strong.

Many Japanese marxists are supportive of socialism due to the long-standing importation of a soviet-type marxism-leninism rooted in the Comintern. They wish to build a socialist state and a communist society. They tend to idealize "revolution" as an only way to reach Japanese Utopia.

The dominant image of "revolution" among Japanese intellectuals was either the "bourgeois democratic revolution" as in 1789 France or the "proletarian socialist revolution"

as in 1917 Russia. These were defined as, first, "a political revolution as a change in the class character of state power," and secondly, "a social revolution as a transformation of the economic social formation from feudalism to capitalism or from capitalism to socialism" in an orthodox marxist sense.

From these dominant, orthodox marxist viewpoints, Japanese academics believed, on the one hand, in the existence of pre-modern or feudal remnants even in post-war advanced capitalist Japan because of the lack of a "bourgeois democratic revolution" in history, and on the other, they held sacred the actually existing socialism such as that of the Soviet Union or the People's Republic of China for the reason that these countries had already achieved that holy "proletarian socialist revolution" which they earnestly desire to realize in "under-developed" Japan. In their view, this ideal (but illusional) "revolution" had to be a result of class struggle under the revolutionary leadership of the vanguard party. From this perspective for the scholars who adhered to a dogmatic orthodox marxism, the 1989 Eastern European change was "a revolution which must not happen" or "a revolution which cannot be interpreted by a class perspective."

One of the most critical issue in the "program debates" among the Socialist Party, the Communist Party and marxist scholars, as well as between both political parties in the 1950s and early 60s, was whether a Japan's "coming revolution" should be prescribed as "one-stage socialist revolution" (the SP Program in 1955) or as "two stages from democratic revolution to socialist one" (the CP Program in 1961). But both sides expected a linear, step-by-step advance from a bourgeois revolution to a proletarian one, from a democratic revolution to a socialist one, from a socialist revolution to a dictatorship of the proletariat, from a working class state to a stateless communist society. They could not imagine that revolution could once more take place within socialist countries where the stage of socialist revolution had already successfully passed and the working class had seized the state power.

Of course, concepts such as Antonio Gramsci's "revolution against *Das Kapital*" as he characterized the Russian October Revolution, or "the second supplementary revolution against Soviet bureaucracy in the distorted workers' state" put forward by Leon Trotsky, had been introduced to Japan in the postwar period. Under the overwhelming influences of soviet-style marxism-leninism in Japan, however, Gramscian marxism or Western-style neo-marxism (or post-marxism) which succeeded Gramscian thought remained a minority view in Japanese marxism. Trotsky was labelled "the enemy of Leninism" at the time of the Comintern, and could not be rehabilitated in Japan. Further, non-marxist academic studies on revolution in American and European sociology or political science such as those of Barrington Moore Jr., Samuel Huntington, Charles Tilly, Peter Calvert or Theda Skocpol, were long ignored by reason of their lack of clear socialist sympathy to the Russian or Chinese Revolution.

V. *The "Civil Revolution" School and Its Reaction*

I myself described the 1989 Eastern European changes as a chain of revolutions, because they had such qualities as, first, the rapid condensed transformation of political power relations, and secondly, the qualitative changes of the principle of general social arrangements "from monolithism to pluralism" in realms of politics, economy, culture and ideology.

I identified the content of these events as “democratic revolutions,” and I called them “civil revolutions” due to the role of non-class agents, “a chain of peaceful revolutions in the age of TV and rapid information spread” due to their form, and “revolutions through civic forums and roundtables” in their organization.

Some other intellectuals also treated the Eastern European transformation as a “civil revolution.” A popular progressive magazine, “*Sekai (World)*” (Iwanami-shoten) entitled the April 1990 special issue, “The Eastern European Revolution: What happened?,” almost at the same time that my book, “*The Eastern European Revolution and Socialism*,” appeared. This was mainly a collection of contemporary Western arguments, including a “*Die Zeit*” symposium and comments on the events by Japanese intellectuals. The editors who arranged and commented on this special issue were two Japanese non-marxist political scientists, Nobuo Shimotomai and Susumu Takahashi, who belong to the postwar born generation and have no particular connection with the 1950s “program debates” in marxist circles.

They wrote, “All the Eastern European societies have achieved complete ‘civil’ revolutions for the first time 200 years after the French Revolution.” Further, “There is no other case in modern history that such a great political change was brought about by such orderly mass movements of the citizens, and was mainly achieved without blood except in Romania,” “It was the political and social maturity of citizens that made it possible to blame the over-rigid system and to overthrow it.” The “*Sekai*” also arranged a special issue of “Post-revolutionary Europe” (October 1990), and argued the positive sides of the “1989 Revolutions.”

At this point, I should explain to non-Japanese readers that the French word “*révolution bourgeoise*” was originally translated into Japanese in two ways. One was “BURUJOA KAKUMEI (bourgeois revolution),” and the other, “SIMIN KAKUMEI (civil revolution).” The former translation (BURUJOA KAKUMEI) accented the transformation of the relations of production or ownership which opened the door to political domination by bourgeoisie and capitalist development. The latter (SIMIN KAKUMEI, civil revolution) focused on the mass agents of the revolution who were emancipated from the hierarchic order of the feudal social status.

When I and some other Japanese scholars named the Eastern European changes “civil revolutions,” we imply that these countries witnessed the “formation of civil society” according to the latter meaning of the Japanese translation of “*révolution bourgeoise*.” It has a slightly different nuance for example from Professor Rejoy’s usage of “civil revolution” in western social sciences (Mostafa Rejoi with Kay Phillips, *Leaders of Revolution*, Sage, 1979, p. 83).

From a standpoint similar to our interpretation of “civil revolution,” Akira Kurihara, another political scientist, paid attention to “the eager demand for confirmation of their identity when East German people cried ‘*Wir sind das Volk*’ in the 1989 East German Revolution,” and to the “organisational form of the civic forum, one which was not a tree-type political party but a rhizome-type network” (his article in the special issue of “*Asahi Journal Weekly*,” June 20, 1990).

However, a book entitled “*The Eastern European Reform* (TOUOU KAIKAKU)” edited by Shingo Minamizuka and Naoki Miyajima, published in March 1990 (Kodansha), the same month when my book “*The East European Revolution and Socialism*” and the

special issue of "*Sekai*" were published, took a different view. This book was a collection of articles on the political process of each Eastern European country: "Reform in Hungary," "Reform in Poland," "Reform in Bulgaria," etc. But there was only one chapter which had the title of "revolution": "'Revolution' in Romania."

Neither the author of that chapter, nor the editors of the book, explained why they called only the Romanian case a "revolution," and all others "reform." But we might suppose that they found the Romanian case to be a "revolution" by virtue of its bloody process, as in the case of the "*Asahi-shinbun*."

Further possible interpretation as to why the authors of this book did not call the other cases "revolution" but "reform," might be their academic background as Japanese historians. In Japanese historical studies, very different from those in political science, a strong influence of orthodox marxism, characterized by economic determinism and class reductionism, remains dominant (Cf. Fukuji Taguchi & Tetsuro Kato, *Marxists Debates on the State in Post-war Japan, Hosei Ronshu*, Nagoya University, No. 105, August 1985 [Paper presented to the 13th World Conference of the International Political Science Association]).

At the 1990 annual conference of the Historical Science Society of Japan in May, a session was held on "Democracy in Contemporary Socialism." All three presentations there treated the events in 1989 Eastern Europe, but none characterized them as a "revolution." Some famous historians personally commented to me that my work was useful, except for my questionable characterization of the events as a "civil revolution."

In a monthly journal of the Historical Science Society of Japan, an article even appeared that claimed, "The year 1989 in East Germany was neither revolution nor democratization, but it was caused by romanticist enthusiasm for national unity" (Haruhiko Hoshino, *The fall of 'Revolution' and the Future of United Germany, Rekishigaku-Kenkyu*, October 1990).

According to the traditional marxist view of "revolution," the 1989 Eastern European Revolution seemed to represent a reverse course against so-called historical materialism. The dominant view should rather call it a "counter-revolution," because "the state power of the working class" was dramatically overthrown by the people, and the historical degeneration of economic social formations began "from socialism to capitalism," a reverse course against the hypothesis of historical materialism. But no one frankly expressed the feeling that they had witnessed a "counter-revolutions in Eastern Europe." Some marxists might whisper this at informal meetings, but no one published.

In such an atmosphere, it was probably intellectually honest that Professor Wataru Hiromatsu, a well-known anti-stalinist, marxist philisopher of the University of Tokyo, bravely proclaimed "the bankruptcy of the Stalinist system, a bureaucratic state socialism, which was essentially unreasonable under the imperialist surrounding," and claimed that "The day of a new, genuine marxist world revolution will surely come" (*Shisou*, February 1990).

VI. *Impacts on Party Politics—From the “SP-CGP-DSP” Bloc to the “LDP-CGP-DSP”*

At the level of party politics in Japan, the political parties reacted sensitively and quickly to the Eastern European Revolution because there was the 39th Lower House (General) Election in February 1990.

The Eastern European change did not become the main issue in the campaign, but it indirectly effected to the results of the Election: the victory of the Socialist Party (SP) from 85 seats in the previous election to 136, the decrease but unexpected maintenance of a stable majority by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) from 300 to 275, and the defeat of small parties, that is, the Komeito Party (Claen Government Party=CGP) from 56 to 45, the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) from 27 to 16, and the Democratic Socialist Party (SDP) from 26 to 14.

The governing LDP, of course, proclaimed as part of its campaign “the collapse of socialism and communism” and “the triumph of free society,” aiming to reverse its disadvantageous position caused by the Recruit Company’s money scandal, the introduction of a general excise tax, and the defeat in the 1989 summer Upper House Election.

The presidential address by the Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu at the 52nd party convention of the LDP on January 20, 1990, just before the Lower House Election, proclaimed, “The fearful politics of communism and the inefficient socialist controlled economy were dramatically destroyed. Peoples in Eastern Europe set new goals of freedom, democracy and a market economy. ‘Socialism’ is removed even from the names of these countries,” “The new streams of today’s world proved us that our choice of values and system such as freedom, democracy and the market economy was surely right” (*Jiyu Minshu* [LDP Monthly], March 1990).

Although the proclamation of “the triumph of free society” did not become the critical issue of the Election, the LDP gained an unexpected majority which enabled it to continue its stable domination. In a summer seminar of the LDP, Mr. Kaifu introduced an episode from his visit to Poland in which Lech Walesa, the chair of Solidarnosc, said him directly, “We would like to become the second Japan,” and Kaifu relaxed his position on giving economic aid to yesterday’s main enemy, the Soviet Union (*Jiyu Minshu*, September 1990).

The Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) was a right-wing social democratic party, founded by the separation from the SP in 1960, and a member of the Socialist International. The year 1990 was thus the thirtieth anniversary of its founding. After the party’s defeat in the General Election, the 35th party convention in April 1990 welcomed “the collapse of communism” against which the DSP had struggled for a long time. But the DSP itself had “democratic socialism” as the final goal in its party program. In the convention, people raised the arguments that words like “democratic socialism” or “socialization of industry” should be cut from the program, and even that the party itself had to be renamed.

These arguments related to a policy choice, whether the DSP should continue to work toward an opposition government with the SP and the CGP against the LDP (SHAKOMIN-

bloc), or whether it should change its line toward building a coalition government with the LDP and the CGP (JIKOMIN-bloc). The convention chose Keigo Ohuchi as the new chairman, and he insisted on moving toward a coalition with the LDP and CGP (JIKOMIN-bloc). Under his leadership, the DSP proceeded to bid "farewell to socialism" and to work for a coalition with the LDP. The 36th party convention in February 1991 proposed a draft of new party program that substituted "liberty, equity, fraternity and international cooperation" for "democratic socialism."

In its party program (1964), the Komeito (CGP) had also as a final goal the achievement of the "humanity socialism" as well as "buddhist democracy." After the shock of the election defeat, it also began to reexamine the party program. The 28th party convention in April 1990 shifted political line more clearly from "socialist" to "centrist." At the 29th convention in November 1990, the party admitted the future possibility of a coalition government with the LDP.

The 1989 Eastern European Revolution forced the Japanese centrist parties, namely, the DSP and the CGP, to erase the "socialist" colours from the party programs, and changed their orientation from an opposition bloc allied with the SP to a governmental bloc allied with the LDP. This change of course worked to the relative advantage of the LDP, which had already lost the majority in the Upper House voting. In fact, the LDP could barely pass a bill for 9 billion dollars in financial aid to the Coalition Force for the Gulf War in 1991, and did so only with support of the DSP and the CGP in the national Diet.

The breakdown of the "too hard dictatorship" of the communist party in the single party systems under state socialism in Eastern Europe has ironically brought the survival of a "softer single party dictatorship" of the Liberal Democratic Party within the multi-party and free election system under advanced capitalism in Japan.

VII. *The Transformation of the SPJ to a Social Democratic Party*

The Socialist Party of Japan (NIHON-SHAKAITO, SP) is also a member of the Socialist International, but it included many non-communist marxists. In contrast with the European circumstances, where communist parties were once founded by separating from socialist parties in the late 1910s or early '20s, and once more reverted to social democratic parties as a result of the Eastern European Revolution, prewar socialist parties in Japan started only after the foundation of Communist Party (1922), and they were mainly led by the members who once belonged to the Communist Party and later left it. The postwar foundation of Socialist Party of Japan was also based on marxist strategy, and the party sometimes competed with the CP in maintaining close connections with the Soviet Union, China or North Korea.

The founding resolution of SP (1955) vowed to destroy capitalism, to put socialism in practice, and to stabilize and raise the peoples' living standard. The formal party program (1955) prescribed "a socialist revolution through democratic and peaceful ways by overcoming communism." "The Road toward Socialism in Japan," a program-like resolution in 1964, even criticised "the tendency of revisionist capitalism and reformism within the

Socialist International" to which the SPJ itself belonged as a member.

In reality however, the SP strongly depended on the left-wing trade unions, the General Council of Trade Unions of Japan (Sohyo), and ideologically consisted of an amalgam of marxists, trade unionists, union bureaucrats and local activists.

Thus, leftist groups within party held strong antipathy toward social democracy. The party statute sought not only "to realize socialist revolution," but it also called for "democratic centralism" in party discipline, just the same as the CP organization, although there were in fact continual factional struggles for the leading posts or policy lines. Some marxist party members even called their own party "SHAMIN," a Japanese jargon of "social democracy." In fact, the formal English party name of NIHON-SHAKAITO had previously been translated as "the Social Democratic Party of Japan" from 1955 to 1964. But it was changed to "the Socialist Party of Japan" in 1964, when "the Road toward Socialism in Japan" was adopted.

Considering all these points, the fall of Eastern European socialism and "Perestroika" in the Soviet Union should have damaged the SP. However, the SP had already partly begun to break from soviet-type socialism and to transform itself to a Western-type social democratic party in the early 1980s, and it made an effort to build an opposition bloc with the CGP, without the CP. It also adopted a resolution for "Creation of a New Society—A Design of our Socialism" (1982) which clearly denied the soviet-type socialism.

The 1986 platform of "The New Manifest of the SP—Creation by the power of love and knowledge" was a turning point from a revolutionary socialist party to a reformist social democratic party, although even this platform did not use the word "social democracy," due to the resistance of leftist opposition groups within the party. Japanese media called this change, "The Birth of a New SP."

It should be noted, however, that this new course of the SP Japan in 1986 did not mean that the SP had become close to the new Western social democratic programs like the Stockholm Manifest of the Socialist International or the Berlin Program of German Social Democratic Party (SPD), both of which were adopted in 1989 and absorbed such new social values as ecology, feminism or the reexamination of economic growth, influenced by new social movements. Rather, the 1986 "New Manifest of the SP" was a 30-years-late catch-up to the level of the 1951 Frankfurt Manifest of Socialist International or the 1959 Bad-Godesberg Program of SPD, which had declared goals of becoming "national governable party" and "welfare state with mixed economy."

Based on this "New Manifest," the SP elected Ms. Takako Doi as the chair in 1987, and won the 1989 Upper House Election. There was a "New SP boom" when the SP opposed the general excise tax with many women candidates, supported by grass-roots movements of citizens in summer 1989. This was the background that allowed the SP to escape from the negative "collapse of socialism" campaign of the LDP and make gains in the 1990 General Election.

The 1989 Eastern European Revolution forced the complete transformation of the SP from a revolutionary socialist party to a reformist social democratic party. The 55th party convention in April 1990 was the occasion for this reconstruction. The resolution analysed the Eastern European Revolution as follows:

"The energy for reform by the citizens in Eastern Europe led to 'the Post-Cold War,' ended the long single-party dictatorship by communist-parties, and is transforming Eastern

Europe to social democracy which posits liberty, equity, cohabitation, solidarity, human rights and democracy as basic values." Also, "social democracy today forms a large belt-zone in the whole of Europe and is becoming the leading power of international society in the coming 21st century" (*Gekkan Shakaito* [SP Monthly], June 1990).

Ms. Takako Doi, the chairperson, called for the "creation of a Japanese road of social democracy" at the convention. Such words as "socialist revolution" or "democratic centralism" were cut from the new party statute. The formal English translation of party name went back again to "the Social Democratic Party of Japan."

But this reformist transformation on the surface does not mean a change in the weak party structure in which a mere 128,000 party members is able with 17 million votes and over 200 seats in the Diet. The future of European social democracy also has many problems.

It seems uncertain whether the SP can keep up the so-called "New SP boom." In fact, the victory of SPJ in the 1989/1990 national elections was made possible only by the scandalous errors of the LDP. This victory postponed the more serious policy choice needed by the SP to become a governable party in the face of the great transformation of world order.

VIII. *The Fall of the Comintern's Tradition and the Isolation of the JCP*

The East European Revolution of course exerted the most negative impact on the Japanese Communist Party, because it was founded in 1922 as a Japanese section of the Communist International (Comintern, 1919-1943) as were the Eastern European communist parties overthrown by the 1989 Revolution. The JCP had already been defeated in the 1989 summer Upper House Election, influenced by the Chinese Tiananmen Square Incident, and it once more lost in the 1990 Lower House Election.

In fact, the JCP had debated with the Soviet and the Chinese communist parties for 30 years, seeking the "self-independence" within the international communist movement against Soviet or Chinese hegemonic attitudes and interference in other communist parties. But it was natural for Japanese voters that people overlapped the images of Chinese, Soviet or Eastern European communists with the JCP, because they were all named "communists" as the indispensable condition for the historical foundation of the parties within the Comintern.

The overlap of the image of the JCP with the reality of communist dictatorship in other countries also derived from the JCP's rigid propaganda that it was always "right" because its theory of "scientific socialism" was a priori "truth," and that others were always "wrong," from its closed monolithic secret-style organization caused by the "democratic centralist" tradition of the Comintern, or from the more than 30 years of personal leadership by Kenji Miyamoto, the 81 years old chairman.

The JCP had a long history of recognizing the Soviet Union or East Europe "the socialist states," or "communist comrade parties," even though after the 1970s the JCP added the reservation that they were not "an ideal socialism" but "a socialism in growing process."

The JCP had close connections especially with the Romanian Ceausescu government, because both parties had a common inter-communist diplomatic policy of "self-independence" against the CPSU. The Ceausescu-Miyamoto statements in 1971, 1978 and 1987 were recent important achievement of the JCP's international activity.

Of course, the JCP did not conceive the Eastern European changes as "revolutions." According to the definition of *"The Dictionary of Social Science"* which the JCP mainly edited (second version, Shinnihon-shuppansha, Tokyo, February 1989), "revolution" means, "substitution of an old economic social formation for a new one (social revolution), especially, a transformation of agents of state power from one class or some classes to another class or classes (political revolution)." If the 1989 Eastern European changes could be recognized as a "revolution," it would suggest a bankruptcy of the theoretical consistency of so-called "scientific socialism" for the JCP.

The resolution of the 19th party congress of the JCP (July 1990) explained that "The Eastern European upheaval (GEKIHEN) revealed the bankruptcy of the Stalin-Brezhnev-type political-economic system and its great power coercion of Eastern Europe," "It did not mean the break down of socialism itself but the failure of governments or parties which were misnamed socialism until today."

The JCP was proud that it had criticized the political lines of the SU, China and Eastern European communists long before they were destroyed, relying upon "the principle of scientific socialism and self-independence," and that it had affirmed free elections with a plural-party system as the basic policy for Japanese socialism since 1976, when it adopted "The Manifest for Freedom and Democracy" at the 13th party congress.

For the JCP, the 1917 Russian socialist revolution and the policies thereafter under the leadership by Lenin were undoubtedly "right" and valuable. The "failure" began only after Stalin distorted the Leninist lines, and Brezhnev continued this "failure" (*Zenei JCP Monthly*), September 1990).

These interpretations, of course, could not enable many intellectuals to understand the situation. I and other 14 intellectuals, including supporters of the JCP who expected its role to check LDP-domination or to democratize Japan's business-oriented society, contributed to a book, "Letters to the JCP" (Kyoiku-Shiryo-Shuppankai, Tokyo, June 1990), and proposed some survival policies and advice for the JCP. But the JCP leaders not only denied our proposals concerning the "civil revolution" line or the "democratization of party organization" by learning from the Eastern European lessons, but also attacked us for our "anti-communist propaganda."

This showed the extremely different position of today's JCP from the Italian Communist Party which previously had the similar policies of "Euro-Japan-Communism." For the JCP, the renaming of ICP as the Italian Left Democratic Party was "a corruption into social democracy." Even Gorbachev's "New Thinking" in his world policy was refused by the JCP, by the reason of his priority on human being and ecological issues over class struggles.

As for the party organization, the JCP maintained the traditional line of "democratic centralism." Kenji Miyamoto, 81 years old, was reelected as the chair. Members disobedient to the central committee were blamed as "opportunists," and their voices were not heard at the party congress.

But even within the JCP, the 1989 Eastern European Revolution surely left a shock. There were many critical opinions voiced against the JCP leaders and their policies at the

discussions of the draft of resolution before the 19th congress. One observer commented that the inner-party opposition to the draft resolution during the discussion in the organ reached about one third of the total. After the congress, some CP members of local assembly left the party.

The JCP seems to have run into a dead-end, losing the best chance to transform itself that will not recur.

IX. *Crisis? Possibility for Rebirth? or the End of Socialism?* —*Arguments among Left Intellectuals*

The strong influence of marxism in Japanese universities and academic circles is well known. For example, many national universities traditionally have two educational courses in economic theory. The one is marxist, and the other, modern neo-classical or Keynesian economics. In such circumstances, there were also various arguments on the Eastern European changes among marxist intellectuals.

As I have already noted, many scholars who believed in the orthodox soviet-type marxism and placed hopes for the future in "actually existed socialism," could not understand the situation. They mainly kept silent. Intellectuals who supported the SP or the JCP avoided interpreting it as a "revolution," and mentioned it only as "reform" or "democratization." Almost all Japanese marxists experienced ambivalent feelings, akin to those of East German Intellectuals, who were once the driving force of a revolution for "democratic socialism," but who became a minority soon after the fall of Berlin Wall by the pressure of the peoples' desire for national unity of "*Wir sind ein Volk.*"

Opinions by seven marxist economists who were interviewed in the February 1990 issue of "*Bungei Shunju*" represented this ambivalence. The question was, "Did marxism die?" The answers by the seven differed in the nuances, but the following views were held in common:

- (1) The soviet-type or stalinist socialism under one-party distatorship and centralist economic system had collapsed.
- (2) But this had never been realization of Karl Marx's original image of socialism, because Russia before the 1917 revolution was not an advanced capitalist country.
- (3) This soviet-type socialism was not the typical socialism in Marx's sense. Thus, its breakdown did not mean the collapse of "socialism in general."
- (4) Marxism did not confront its death, but a crisis. This crisis was also a necessary precondition of its rebirth.
- (5) For this rebirth, Japanese marxists should take more seriously, on the one hand, the post-war European experiences of social democratic welfare states like West Germany or Sweden.
- (6) On the other hand, advanced capitalism also faces many unresolvable problems. Therefore, the East European changes meant neither the death of Marxism nor the triumph of capitalism.

There were, of course, some sincere scholars who seriously recognized that a revolutionary transformation had taken place against socialism, and they made efforts to under-

stand it through their own self-criticism.

Takeshi Kamijima, an economist for example, analyzed it as a "revolution with neither revolutionary theory nor revolutionary party," and characterized it as "not a workers' revolution, but a civil revolution" (*Mado*, No. 4, Summer 1990).

In his article entitled "Epistemology of the Eastern European Civil Revolution," Kiyooki Hirata, a well-known economist, described it as "a social political change promoted by electronification and globalization with the same causes as that of the completing of the enlarged EC market." He also noted, "The party-state system which named itself 'socialism' was defeated by the dynamism of capitalism, characterized not only by its parasitism but also by its creative destruction" (*Keizai Hyoron*, October 1990).

The February 1991 special issue of "*Jokyo*," a so-called new-left journal in Japanese style, involved such articles as that of Hisashi Nagao, who argued that "the 1989 National-Democratic Revolution in Eastern Europe saw the revival of national history in each country," and Shoji Ishizuka who stressed the character of a "revolution toward capitalism brought by intellectuals."

About the historical meaning of these events for socialism, I and some others argued for considering them "the general crisis of socialism" (Kato in *The Eastern European Revolution and Socialism*, Masayuki Iwata in *Keizai-Seminar*, October 1989, Yoshiaki Nishimura in *Mado*, No. 2, Winter 1989). In contrast of the title of my book "*The Crisis of Socialism and the Rebirth of Democracy*" (July 1990), a book by Momo Iida, a famous new left leader, was titled "*The End of Socialism and the Catastrophe of Capitalism*" (Shakaihyoronsha, Tokyo, December 1990).

The arguments at the founding conference of "the Forum '90s" in December 1990 encapsulated the perception of the Eastern European Revolution by Japanese left intellectuals. This "Forum '90s" was a networking organization of about 800 left intellectuals and activists. It was a new attempt to overcome the deeply rooted political or sectarian conflicts endemic to Japanese left groups.

The most controversial argument involved, (1) the "civil revolution" group which found positive sides in democratic socialist ideal in 1989 Eastern Europe (I and Kiyooki Hirata), (2) "the fall of socialism" group which stressed the critical sides of the "ethical defeat of socialism" (Satoshi Horikawa), the "historical downfall of marxism" (Shukuhei Doi), or the "revolution toward capitalism" (Shoji Ishizuka), (3) the "toward a genuine socialist revolution" group who still believed in "a coming mass-revolt-type revolution at the third stage of marxism" (Wataru Hiromatu), and also (4) the "new social movement" groups in Japanese style like ecology, feminism, peace and anti-nuclear movements, cooperate networking and local grassroots movements.

But all these groups required in common "a new framework of knowledge for subjective emancipation" (the appeal at the foundation of "Forum '90s"), for they recognized the crisis not only of the socialist orientation but also of grassroots democracy in Japanese capitalism. The common goal was "to solve subjectively the crisis we face, and to design a new society without exploitation, for the survival of human beings and the maintenance of the earth, through solidarity with multiple movements growing in Japan and other regions of the world" (founding manifest).

The foundation of "the Forum '90s" implied an experiment of intellectual networking

by the Japanese left, learning from the East European Revolution "through civic forums and roundtables."

X. "The Triumph of Capitalism"?—Lessons for Japanese Business Leaders

In more popular perceptions of the Eastern European events in Japan, mass media and mass magazines played a critical role.

The *Asahi Shinbun* interviewed 15 Japanese politicians, scholars, and business leaders in April and May 1990, asking "Where does socialism go?" The issues below were not very different from the European or American discussion: (1) the lack of democracy under the dictatorship by communist parties in actually existed socialism, (2) the failure of planned economy using nationalization and central control without the market, (3) the delay of technical innovation which prevented adaptation to the soft and service-oriented economy of an information society, (4) the theoretical origin of the failure of socialism in Stalin, Lenin or Marx, (5) the end of the historical separation between socialism (social democracy) and communism, (6) the implication of the fall of socialism for the capitalist world, (7) the role of nationalism and religion in the transformation.

Bungei Shunju and the *Chuo Koron*, very popular monthly magazines among not only intellectuals but also business leaders and white collar workers, wrote in sensational fashion concerning the "collapse of socialism" with articles as "The World changed!—How should the Western Bloc treat the End of Socialism," "A Long Path to the Breakdown of Soviet Dictatorship" and so forth. The dominant issues there were not the future of the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe or socialism, but its meaning for international relations, especially, its effects to the Japanese economy, with articles like "the Post-Malta World," "Eastern European Aid—What is the Lesson from the Marshall Plan," "The Cold War is not finished," "The Collapse of the Communist Bloc and US-Japan Relations," "Japanese Economy will not sink," and so forth.

However, talk of "the collapse of socialism" or "the triumph of capitalism" reflected only a superficial mood. There were not many arguments which praised "the triumph of capitalism." For example, Noboru Makino, the president of the Mitsubishi Research Institute, answered to the *Asahi Shinbun* interview, "We should seriously analyse the events and ask whether they were essentially caused by socialism or by the wear-out of the system of one-party dictatorship." Ryouichi Kawai, the president of the Komatsu Corporation and a vice-president of the KEIDANREN (Federation of Economic Organizations of Japan), also responded, "The social democratic system which introduced some elements of a capitalist market system will remain, instead of the former very rigid socialism." These statements implied that Japanese business leaders should draw lessons from the Eastern European or Soviet experience.

What kind of lessons did Japanese business leaders draw? The article "Capitalism will also fall down, if it remains as it is today—What Japanese should learn from the Fall of Communism" by Kazuo Inamori, the president of the Kyocera Corporation, was typical (*The Voice*, May 1990).

Inamori wrote, "The fall of communist systems in Eastern Europe should not be seen only as the triumph of liberalism or capitalism against communism, or the victory of a market economy against the breakdown of planned economy. We need two more perspectives. One stresses the under-estimation of the spirituality of human beings. The other reconfirms the peoples' power."

This "underestimation of spirituality" meant for him that "Man shall not live by bread alone." He pointed out that the Soviet economy lost the holy mission which surely existed at the first stage of the October Revolution, and was harmed by flaws of economy-centralism such as the decrease of morality, the passive completion of assigned jobs, or authoritarian labor control. He also added, "Such an atmosphere also grows in capitalism, due to the vulgar incentive for sales only, the materialistic advertisements which stimulate consumers' desire, and the mammonism which worships money only."

He in turn mentioned, "Recent students in Japan who learned engineering at university do not choose jobs in manufacturing but in banks or securities companies. Younger generations avoid making effort to enter the manufacturing world." He gave a warning, "If we proceed in this way, our capitalist world may also become bankruptcy just the same as the communist world."

His second point, "the reconfirmation of peoples' power" implied that we are now in "the age of revival of peoples' power under the decreased authority of state power, where recent people's revolts showed the system can not continue if it loses legitimacy."

In the case of Japan, there remained (1) "the bureaucratic organizations which controlled very expensive air fares or taxi fees," and (2) "the existence of giant corporations which monopolized the market and concealed information." He found it possible that peoples' revolt would occur against these two authorities in the name of "peoples' power" in Japan also. In addition, he warned, (3) "Japanese people might confront worldwide peoples' power directed against them, if they could not contribute to the global ecological problems taking serious responsibility as an advanced country."

Although this argument was not raised by the ZAIBATSU-type business group like the Mitsui or the Mitsubishi, but by the leader of a typical venture business in Japan, it showed one essential lesson of the 1989 Revolutions in Eastern Europe for Japanese business world.

XI. *The Minimum Socialist Orientation in Japan and the Maximum "Learning from Japan" boom in the SU and Eastern Europe*

Indeed, the objects of Mr. Inamori's concern, the economy-centred feelings and mammonism, dominated the popular Japanese perception of Eastern European changes. In politics, "the one-party dictatorship with a plural-party system and free election" continued. In culture, the dominant arguments about the Eastern European events focused not on democracy or freedom, but on the economic aspects like "the failure of the planned economy" or "the delay in innovation and the shortage of goods in socialism."

There were numerous reasons why such feelings dominated.

The popular consciousness of "the defeat of socialism and communism" or "the triumph of liberalism and capitalism" had already been established during the rapid economic growth of the 1960s and '70s.

A general public opinion poll, "A Study of Japanese National Character," by the Institute of Statistical Mathematics (ISM) provides us interesting data relevant to the immediate question of "What do you think about socialism?" The answer "socialism is good" (the other two choices were "depends on circumstances" and "bad") declined from 34 percent in 1958 to 15 percent in 1963, then to 14 percent in 1973. Regretfully, there is no data to this question thereafter. But my own research asking the same question to students of political science course at Hitotsubashi University showed a continual decline in responses of "socialism is good," even among students who were thought relatively more radical than the average. The students who answered "socialism is good" at Hitotsubashi University numbered 11 percent in 1985, and this decreased to only 4 percent in April 1989, just before the Tiananmen Square Incidents in China.

In contrast with "socialism is good," the answer "capitalism is good" in the ISM poll was given by only 12 percent in 1958 (under half the number who said "socialism is good"). This increased to 19 percent in 1963 (surpassing "socialism is good") but slightly decreased to 17 percent in 1973 due to the high inflation and the price rise just before the first oil crisis. The ratio of students responding "capitalism is good" was already 20 percent in 1985, and this reached 30 percent in 1989.

The answers "liberalism is good" and "democracy is good" were of course always more numerous than "capitalism is good," and the veto answer of "communism is bad" was always much more common than "socialism is bad" (*A Study of the Japanese National Character*, part 3, Idemitsu-shoten, Tokyo, 1975).

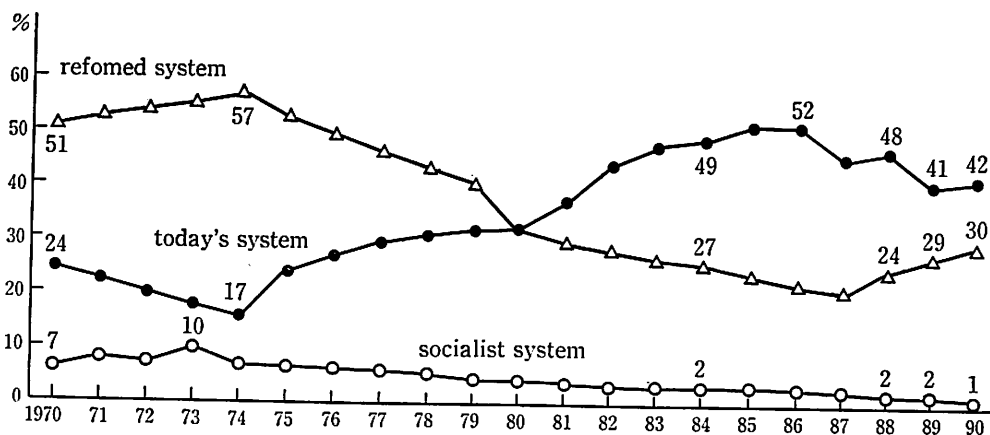
Another poll on "Consciousness of Working," in which freshly recruited workers have been asked by the Japan Productivity Centre about their attitude to work each year since 1970 shows this historical tendency much more clearly. The question was, "What kind of society do you wish, while Japanese society is called a capitalist society." The answer had to be chosen from among "preservation of today's system," "a more reformed system," "a socialist system," and "no concern."

The graphic figure of the answers for these 20 years from 1970 through 1990 (see next page) shows that the socialist orientation of fresh workers stood at 10 percent at the time of the first oil crisis, but decreased to 2 percent even before the 1989 Revolution, and fell to the extreme minority of 1 percent after the Revolution by reason of the spread of conservatism among the younger generation.

An interesting result of this research emerges by joining these answers about social systems with data on party support. The data in 1990 showed that the SP was supported by 10.5 percent of the whole. Yet, over 40 percent of SP supporters called for "preservation of today's system" and only 3.6 percent chose "socialism." The JCP was chosen in only 1.2 percent of all the answers. Twenty percent of these wished for "preservation of today's system," and only 7.2 percent among "communist" supporters wanted a "socialist system."

I call this historical decline of the socialist orientation in Japanese popular consciousness "the birth of the socialist ghetto society (GHETTOKA)."

One more important point here is the attitude toward Japan of the people in the Soviet Union or Eastern European countries. When Lech Walesa, the chair of Solidarnosc at



the time and now the President of Poland, once confessed his dream that Poland might become "the second Japan," it stimulated the pride of Japanese. Many Soviet and Eastern European leaders in economics and politics recently visited Japan to learn the so-called "Japanese Model" or "Japanese Management." They admired the success story of Japanese economy so enthusiastically that this hot air caused an infection of Japanese nationalistic feelings.

Some visitors from actually existed socialist countries even found evidence of "a genuine socialist achievement in Japan." They noted such elements of proof for "socialism in Japan" as the relative equality in income distribution, the success of long-term economic planning through the famous (or notorious in Western countries!) administrative guidance of the market economy of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MITI) without nationalization of means of production, the high productivity and the high quality goods based on the cooperation between labour and capital, or Japanese-style collectivism. If these provide evidence of "a genuine socialism," perhaps I would add "the soft and flexible single-party dictatorship of the LDP through free election with a multi-party system" as one more proof!

Although such an extreme admiration (or insult?) was exceptional, visitors from former socialist countries tended to look for only the productive and bright sides of Japanese society, without looking at the seamy sides. They passionately desired to learn from Japanese experiences, because they found a superior model for their problems of economic reconstruction in Japanese history. For example, the Japanese lessons from the sell-off of national industries in the Meiji period, the rapid economic recovery controlled by the strong central government after the defeat of the second world war, the privatization of the National Railways or the Telegraph & Telephone Public Corporation by the Nakasone government in the 1980s, all meant Japan offered a more realistic and more introductory case studies than those in Western Europe or the USA, where there was a too open free market system, for their learning process of capitalist economy. For advice, they looked not to left scholars who had long-standing connections with these countries, but to high governmental officials, practical business leaders, or non-marxist, right-wing economists (cf. *Anatoly Illarionovich Milykov's Report on Japanese Economy*, Moscow, 1991). In fact, Hiroshi Kato, a well-

known LDP brain-truster at Keio University, became one of the important advisers for the so-called "Shatalin Plan" in the Soviet Union.

XII. "A Big Business Chance for Japanese" —Economy-centred Perception

It was inevitable in these circumstances that there would appear such a confident perspective on the future of Japanese economy as that in the new year address below by Yoshihisa Tabuchi, the president of the Nomura Securities Company. It symbolized the greedy entrepreneurial spirit of capital accumulation of Japanese transnational corporations that grasped even the Eastern European Democratic Revolution as a "big business chance":

"The basic background of the great transformation of the world is the change from cannon to butter, namely, from ideology to economy, which is now the driving force of the world order. We are now facing a tremendous business chance all over the world!" (*Asahi-shinbun*, January 4, 1990).

In fact, conditions in Japan did enable the Japanese people to regard such an economy-centred and arrogant statement as natural in 1989–90. The Japanese economy recorded its best performances at the time. The most popular TV commercial song in 1989 had such a text as "Can you fight 24 hours a day for your business? Can you fight all over the world as a Japanese businessman?"

A public opinion poll by the *Asahi-shinbun* together with the US Harris Company in December 1989 showed a very characteristically divergent perception of the 1989 Revolution by Japanese and Americans.

The question to Japanese and American citizens was, "What do you think is the most fundamental desire of Eastern European people?"

The answers are summarized in the table (*Asahi-shinbun*, December 27, 1989):

	US (average)	US (18–24 yrs old)	JAPAN (average)	JAPAN (20–24 yrs old)
Political Liberty to make their Own Government	48%	58%	40%	38%
Improvement of their Living Standards	30%	25%	41%	53%
Abandonment of the Failure by Communism	17%	17%	8%	7%
Others, NA	5%	—	11%	—

In contrast to the majority of Americans who saw a desire for "Political Liberty" in Eastern Europe, near a half of the Japanese believed the Eastern Europeans were struggling for "better living standards." Especially interesting for me were the answers of the younger generation. The American youth sympathized with the Eastern European people from the standpoints of their own political belief in American values. The Japanese youth thought,

in contrast, that the Eastern European event was caused by the economic reason of a desire for Western goods, which Japanese could easily gain and enjoy in their so-called "affluent society."

This clearly showed, in my view, the presence of what Mr. Inamori worried about in his article as economy-centralism or mammonism. It suggested that Japanese people had surely lost the spirit of "Man shall not live by bread alone."

XIII. "A Fire Across the Sea"

—Passive and Dreamless Perception

This economy-centred reaction to global events by Japanese has continued to appear as they faced the end of Cold War, the German Unification and the formation of new European order, and the recent Gulf Crisis and War. The Japanese foreign investment became to the top in the world, but Japanese diplomatic and military policies still strongly depend on the USA. The relatively smaller scale of Japanese investment in the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe, compared to US or Western European capitalism, implies that Japanese capital is anxious about the economic cost, doubting the stability of Eastern European economies or Gorbachev's leadership. If the introduction of a market economy and foreign capital in the SU or Eastern Europe runs smoothly, a great amount of Japanese money will flow there. This also reveals a passive and economy-centred attitude.

The "workaholic in a rabbit hutches" situation of Japanese workers seems to continue. They work over 2,100 hours a year, about 500 hours (4 months!) more than French or Germans on average, which even results in so-called "Japanese KAROSHI," the notorious "death by overworking" (see, National Defense Counsel for Victims of Karoshi, *KAROSHI* [English version], Mado-sha, Tokyo, 1990). Even trade unions are also proud of "the performance of Japanese economy," although the ordinary worker cannot buy his own house with his lifelong salary, if he will live in Tokyo. More than 10 million "rich Japanese" visited foreign countries in 1990 for business or for sightseeing. Many Japanese traveled to Germany and toured the former Berlin Wall. But they were enthusiastic rather for buying a piece of the Wall as a gift than for the communicating with German people.

These common patterns of thinking and acting among the government, corporations and the ordinary people, I believe, must confront many obstacles at the new stage of world history which began with the 1989 Eastern European Revolution. Japanese people, however, had not sufficiently discussed the meaning of the world-wide transformation before they faced the Gulf Crisis soon after the Revolution, and were forced to pay \$9 billion (¥10,000 per Japanese!) for the Coalition Force by the US pressure. We can find here, too, the passive and non-subjective Japanese perception of global events as "a fire across the sea."

The dominant mentality in Japan's "affluent society," one which has supported the success of "Japanese management," is this passive and selfish concern for their daily life, which I call "conservatism in private life."

But one may raise the question whether such conservatism was not maintained also by the Eastern European people for a long time, until 1989, under the communist regimes. In Eastern Europe, the peoples' mentality changed rapidly from passive to active, from

superficial agreement to great discontent. What Eastern European people perceived as a common sense in 1988 was turned upside down in 1989. What Eastern European people felt a "permanent dream" until the spring of 1989 became reality in 1990.

I believe that the most important lesson from Eastern Europe for Japanese must be to realize that "History can be moved by the peoples' dream and power."

In the early postwar period, Japanese people had their own dreams. The dreams were for "permanent peace," "democracy and human rights," "catching up with Western industrial society," or "the American way of life." These dreams urged Japanese to work hard and to innovate in technology, and they surely became the driving force for rapid economic growth. "An affluent society" in the materialistic sense appeared. The GNP per capita exceeded \$24,000 more than that of the US or Sweden. Japan's ODA also became the top in the world.

During the dream in economic terms was almost completely realized, the dream of political idealism was also lost. After economic growth was achieved, the dreams should have shifted to the political dreams of "permanent peace" or "democracy," instead of "catching up to Western industry" or "the American way of life." However, these could not be realized as dreamed soon after the war. This led to the curious coexistence of the Japanese Peace Constitution with the US-Japan Security Treaty and the Self-Defence Force, or of the free elections, female suffrage, and a multi-party system with over thirty years of one-party rule by the LDP.

In postwar Japan, political democratization remained minimal, but the economic desire grew up to the maximum. This "maximum capitalism with minimum democracy," or "condensed capitalism," has now created a "dreamless society." Neither politicians nor bureaucrats clearly display a national vision to the new world. Ordinary people have lost the feelings of historical dynamism. This "dreamless society" causes the strange juxtaposition of "third class politics with a first class economy" within the world system, the decline of internal vitality within Japanese corporations, or the momentary consumption boom in youth in the so-called "new species" generation.

From the 1950s to early '70s, "socialism" was one of these beautiful dreams for Japanese. It especially attracted the younger generation. But the success of Japanese capitalism on the one hand, and the failure of "actually existed socialism" on the other destroyed this dreamy fascination.

However, "permanent peace," "democratic politics," "human rights," and "civil society" remain alive as alternative Japanese visions. Such nonmaterialistic values as "ecology," "anti-nuclearism," "feminism," or "solidarity with the third world" have recently been added to the list of dreams.

Will the time come when Japanese people view the 1989 Eastern European Revolution as stimulating them to one more dream in the 21st century? The answer is uncertain. It should be determined by the Japanese themselves and the future of peoples' power around the world.