

## Chapter Thirty-Four

# Hayashi Fusao: "Affirmation of the Greater East Asian War," 1963

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The following excerpts are from Hayashi Fusao's (1903–1975) controversial text, *Dai Tōa Sensō Kōteiron* (Affirmation of the Greater East Asian War), first published as a series of articles in *Chūō Kōron* (The Central Review) in 1963. Hayashi was born Gotō Toshio in Oita Prefecture in 1903. Growing up in poverty, he showed academic promise and proceeded to attend the Fifth Higher School in Kumamoto, where he came under the influence of Marxism and socialism. As a student at the Faculty of Law, Tokyo Imperial University, in the early 1920s, he was an active member of the Shinjinkai (New Men's Association). In 1930 he was imprisoned for his association with communism. He is known as a member of the Proletarian Literature Movement, but later he renounced his communist ideals (*tenkō*; see Steinhoff 1991) and in the postwar period went on to become a seminal figure among nationalists with a revisionist historical agenda (Gluck 1993: 84). Hayashi's ideas continue to resonate with Japanese nationalists, particularly in their calls to "correct" the view of history that portrays Japanese modernization and expansionism in a critical light (McCormack 2000: 57).

Hayashi's central argument in this text is that the 100-year period from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century (approximately 1845–1945) was one long, continuous war, characterized by Asians led by the Japanese trying to defend themselves from the aggressive actions and strategies of Western imperialist powers like the United States and Britain. He contrasts Western aggression with the fundamentally defensive posture of Japanese leaders who, he argues, had no other choice but to pursue an equally aggressive course of action so as not to fall prey to Western domination and to protect and liberate other Asians from the yoke of Western imperialist powers. Hayashi explains that the initial inspiration for this argument came from the independence movements that were spreading throughout Asia and Africa

in the late 1950s and early 1960s. He wanted to situate those movements in a historical trajectory that had begun in the mid-nineteenth century, with the imperialist expansion of Western countries into areas such as Indochina. In this sense, he implies that there was a kind of solidarity between the Japanese and the people of other Asian and African countries based on the shared historical experience of victimization at the hands of Western imperialists. Throughout, he emphasizes the suffering on the part of all Asians, including the Japanese.

However, unlike other Asian and African countries, Hayashi argues that Japan is unique in having lost a sense of national consciousness as a result of being defeated in 1945. He attributes this loss to the historical perspective that came to dominate postwar Japan during the American-led occupation and the subsequent years of influence by progressive intellectuals such as Tsurumi Shunsuke (b. 1922), lead editor of the three-volume study of the *tenkō* phenomenon in wartime Japan (*Shisō no Kagaku Kenkyūkai* 1959: 117–22). Hayashi claims that when the Japanese empire collapsed in 1945, everything associated with it was denounced. Not only were wartime figures such as military men and politicians denounced and banished, but all the ideas and thoughts associated with wartime came to be denounced in the two decades following Japan's defeat. Thus, the modern Japanese nation-state itself came to be characterized as somehow inherently defective and harmful.

Hayashi is particularly scornful of postwar historians and educators like Ienaga Saburō (1913–2002), who portrayed modern Japanese leaders as having waged a “war of aggression” in line with the judgment of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (Tokyo Trials) in the late 1940s. He rejects the labels “fascist” and “ultranationalist” for modern Japan and singles out prominent postwar intellectuals like Maruyama Masao (1914–1996) for having been infected by the “dementia virus of defeat,” which “paralyzed their discerning minds” as they became “easily trapped by the magic and hypnosis of the prosecutors” of the Tokyo Trials (Hayashi 1974: 290). He argues that the Japanese people were *still* in a “dark valley” because of this version of history that had been forced on them during the occupation years. In his “affirmation,” one of his main goals is to help his readers extricate themselves from what he calls the distorted historical perspective promoted during the early postwar years by the American General Headquarters (GHQ) and taken up by postwar progressives.

He blames these critics of Japanese modernization and nationalism for having fostered a general acceptance of the notion that the Japanese people should be ashamed of their modern history. This, he says, has created a populace that lacks the backbone and self-confidence to take pride in their own national traditions. For Hayashi, it was not enough that the Japanese people had made a full economic recovery from World War II by the early 1960s. In the wake of that success, he was now calling for a *spiritual* recovery of na-

tional self-confidence. In this regard, he notes the humiliation Japan endured when French President Charles de Gaulle referred to Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato (1899–1965) as a “transistor radio salesman” in 1960. Through this “theory of affirmation” Hayashi posits a corrective to the version of history that characterizes Japanese nationalism as something inherently and uniquely evil. Instead of highlighting Japanese aggression, Hayashi focuses on what he sees as the cooperative and helpful attitude and actions of Japanese Pan-Asianists like Uchida Ryōhei (see I:10), for example, in his discussion of Sun Yat-sen's political exile in Japan in the early twentieth century (see II:5 on Sun). In this way, he wants to stress the common agenda that Asians had at this time in support of revolutionary activities and movements for liberation and independence in the face of Western military might. In the process, one of Hayashi's strategies is to cite contemporary authors like Ashizu Uzuhiko (1909–1992), who shared his concern with Pan-Asianism in Japan's recent past, while also invoking the opinions of other Asians such as Sun Yat-sen, who saw the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), for example, as a “war of liberation.” In this way, Hayashi shifts the characterization of Japanese military power as something inherently dangerous and threatening to its Asian neighbors into a force that instead has contributed to the liberation of Asia, as noted by one of the most highly regarded reformists in Asia in the face of Western expansionism, Sun Yat-sen. Such a scenario is meant to restore and instill a renewed sense of national pride and self-confidence among Hayashi's contemporaries, and it is this renewal of pride that remains at the center of contemporary historical revisionism in Japan in the twenty-first century.

In reaction to the critical view of Japanese imperialism that dominated the postwar Japanese academy and the public in general (Gluck 1993: 69–70), Hayashi also strove to complicate what he saw as an overly simplistic, formulaic narrative of modern Japanese militaristic aggression. He did this by trying to show the diversity of opinions that existed in Japan in the modern era, regarding the direction and nature of Japanese expansionism in other parts of Asia. For example, as included in the excerpt here, he notes how Uchida Ryōhei confronted Japanese government officials and military men over the level of Japanese interference with the activities of Chinese revolutionaries. Thus, he brings attention to such disputes among Japanese leaders as a way to counter the one-dimensional characterization of all Japanese aggressively plotting to eliminate the vibrant force of Chinese nationalism. Rather than necessarily seeing the Japanese and Chinese as adversaries in the modern age, Hayashi wants to restore to the historical record examples of mutual support and encouragement among the Japanese and their fellow Asians, tied as they were in their defensive posture against Western expansionism. In addition, Hayashi was eager to restore the historical reputation of certain Japanese

ideologues, such as Kita Ikki, Ōkawa Shūmei, and Ishiwara Kanji (see I:27, II:4, and II:22), who were the focus of much scholarly attention after 1945. Whereas progressive scholars examined the lives and ideas of men like Kita Ikki in search of the roots of Japanese fascism and ultranationalism, Hayashi instead saw them as prophetic, tragic figures who should be revered for their commitment to charting the difficult course of Japanese modernization.

In this way, Hayashi's approach to modern Japanese history is fundamentally polemical and is part of a series of debates and disputes over the nature of modern Japanese relations with other Asian countries that continue unabated. Many of these debates focus on minute critiques of the empirical foundation of the other side's argument since Hayashi left himself open to accusations of blatantly distorting historical facts, such as his implication that Ōkawa Shūmei went mad during the Tokyo War Crimes Trials as a result of his treatment by the Americans instead of the actual cause, syphilitic dementia. Soon after Hayashi's perspective on the "100-year war" appeared in *Chūō Kōron*, Marxist scholars like Inoue Kiyoshi (1913–2001) mobilized to respond to what they saw as the glorification of Japanese militarism and the danger of the revival of Japanese militarism that was bound to follow in its wake. In the introduction to Inoue's 1966 *Nihon no "kindaika" to gunkokushugi* (Japan's 'Modernization' and Militarism), he contrasts previous works of his on Japanese modernization and militarism that were based on his own original research to this study, which is an explicit critique of writers like Hayashi who have "distorted true historical facts" in order to glorify Japan's militaristic past (Inoue 1966: 4). In the accompanying commentary to the 2001 reprint of *Affirmation of the Greater East Asia War*, Tomioka Kōichirō notes the contemporary significance of Hayashi's writing, given the popularity of authors like Nishio Kanji who have taken up many of the same historically controversial themes and issues as raised by Hayashi, such as the importance of Yasukuni Shrine in instilling patriotism and the problems associated with textbooks that they claim promote a "self-flagellating" historical perspective (Tomioka 2006). Such issues reflect the deep rifts that continue to divide academics and politicians in their commentaries on the nature of Japanese modernization and militarism. Not only do these issues divide the Japanese themselves, but they have also created divisions between the Japanese people and their Asian neighbors that have persisted to this day.

Source (translation from the Japanese original by Kristine Dennehy) Hayashi Fusao (1974), *Dai Tōa Sensō Kōteiron* (Affirmation of the Greater East Asian War). Roman.

### Genyōsha, Amur Society and Chinese Revolutionary Groups

It is a well-known fact that Sun Yat-sen, Huang Xing and other revolutionaries had strong connections to Japanese civilian patriotic associations. Sun Yat-sen's first political exile in Japan was in 1898. Through Miyazaki Tōten, Sun Yat-sen knew Inukai Tsuyoshi, Hiraoka Kōtarō and Tōyama Mitsuru, and with their cooperation and assistance, he planned to assist the independence movement of General Aguinaldo in the Philippines, etc., but all those plans failed. In 1904 he was in political exile in Japan again during the Russo-Japanese War. Ashizu Uzuhiro has written, "Sun Yat-sen saw the Russo-Japanese War as a war of liberation of Asia against Europe and thought it was a turning point in world history."

This was the time when the "Chinese Revolutionary League" was established at Uchida Ryōhei's home in Akasaka, Tokyo. It was the hotbed of 15,000 students studying abroad in Japan where they published the journal *Min pao* (People's News) and sent revolutionary ideas about overthrowing the Qing dynasty across the sea to the continent.

The Japanese government at the time (first Katsura Tarō Cabinet) saw the activities of the "Revolutionary League" as a threat. Tokutomi Sohō also attacked the "Republic ideology" but Tōyama Mitsuru declared, "Once China becomes a republic and is influenced by our national polity, they will look down on their own" and along with Inukai Tsuyoshi and others protected and encouraged the "Revolutionary League" as much as possible. Uchida strongly argued and persuaded the Japanese government and military leaders not to interfere with the Revolutionary Party. . . .

### Manchuria and Japan's "Degeneration"

I don't agree with the view of theorists who claim that after the "annexation of Korea" Japanese imperialism degenerated from being the "pioneer of Asian liberation" to being the "tyrant and pillager of Asia." In terms of imperialism, Japan was already sufficiently *imperialistic* before the Meiji Restoration, from the time they were conscious of "Western powers' gradual move East." However, what I am talking about is different from the Leninist meaning of "imperialism" and has nothing to do with imperialism as the "highest stage of capitalism." It is, as meant by Nehru, the revelation and maturity of nationalism, from the vigor of people who seek independence and liberation. Mature nationalism changed into an expansionist policy and developed fangs and claws, meaning that first Taiwan and Korea suffered its damage, and then it was aimed at Manchuria. . . .

## Japan Couldn't Stop

There is nothing as loathsome and foolish as someone pretending to be a sage in the aftermath of a fire. A sage is someone who can prevent a fire. A hero is someone who offers his own body to put out a fire that's started burning. However, over the last 100 years, Japanese people haven't been able to produce these sages or heroes. The reason for that is because the "East Asia 100-year war" is a big fire started from the outside, under the careful planning of Western countries, at various intervals, waiting for the right timing, it became an incendiary fire that spread from one to the next. Japanese people were not given the confidence to prevent this fire; in the midst of a constantly burning fire, they had to just fight against the fire itself. At times, it was like the mythical hero brandishing a sword, who had to cut down the dry brush burning around him. There were times when he wished that the wind would change direction so that the fire would move and burn in the direction of the neighboring village. There were also times when he himself would release the fire by using the reverse wind current. Because of that, he himself has even been criticized because he's been mistaken for an evil arsonist. I won't criticize the heroes who fought this incendiary fire. Many Japanese people burned to death. Even the heroes who survived after the fire was extinguished, almost all of them have extensive burns all over their body.

Let's leave it for another time to talk about the millions of soldiers who were wounded and died on the battlefield. In this essay, I have continued to talk primarily about ideology and ideologues. In this chapter, too, I have chosen three intellectuals [Ōkawa Shūmei, Kita Ikki, and Ishiwara Kanji] who appeared at the end of this era of 100 years of one continuous big fire. I would like to recollect the roles they played and their achievements which now seem to have withered away without bearing fruit. . . .

## The Fate of Patriots

The postwar critics of Japan's defeat freely call them "the source of imperialism," "Emperor system fascists," "Asian invaders," "ultranationalists" and crown them with bad names and other such imported nonsense, but nobody can deny that they were also just as much idealists who dreamed and conceived of ideas for Japanese domestic reform and the development of the fate of the nation on the scale of Asia and the world. Moreover, almost all of them were "private citizens" far from the seat of power or "wanderers" (*rōnin*) and many of them lived in misfortune as failures and died of unnatural causes. . . .

## The Misunderstanding of "Ultranationalism"

You can see the tragic nature of the "East Asia 100-year war" in the fate of the Japanese "ultranationalists" I've mentioned above. Their misfortune and burial is mainly due to *external* causes. That is the fate of the patriotic, revolutionary intellectuals of a small country who had to think and act while being surrounded on all sides by strong powers and were endlessly being threatened and attacked. Churchill, de Gaulle, and MacArthur, as well as Lenin and Stalin, all of them during the war, under the name of "wartime democracy" and "wartime communism" were "ultranationalists." But because they were victors in war they haven't been judged as villains but simply have been made into saints.

Nationalists in Japan from the Bakumatsu period [late Edo period, 1850s and 1860s] until the Shōwa period [1926–1989] have all been treated as accused defendants for the twenty years following defeat until today.

The lives of Ōkawa Shūmei, Kita Ikki and Ishiwara Kanji are tragic. Kita Ikki was sentenced to death. Ōkawa Shūmei went mad in the courtroom of the Tokyo Trials and after he left the psychiatric hospital he got sick and died in a secluded mountain village. Ishiwara Kanji witnessed the collapse of the ideal East Asian alliance and Manchukuo and squarely faced defeat. And from his sickbed he continued to denounce the farcical nature and illogic of the Tokyo Trials and died with a reputation as a crazy military man. . . .

## The Need for Primary Source Research

Ōkawa and Kita did move at least one sector of Japanese people at the end of the "East Asia 100-year war" and formed the ideological background for the "Shōwa Upheaval." They did not succeed in their "work in the face of the enemy" but that is the shared fate of all prophetic thinkers. Prophets are not accepted in their own land. Actual history, in the details, does not follow the exact words of the prophet. But in the long term, their prophesies live on. . . .

## CH. 18, "NATIONALISM HAS FANGS"

### Too Soon to Debate Nationalism

Scholars and editors are making a big fuss about "neonationalism." I think it is a bit too soon for that. In Asian and African countries and in central and south America, the burning flames of nationalism are raging. In Japan too, there are many movements that are similar to this, but they're slightly different. The kind of nationalism that flares up from inside the blood vessels of the

people, that moves people and makes them wildly enthusiastic to die for revolution and war, that doesn't actually exist in today's Japan. A long time ago in another age it existed but today that fire has been extinguished and quieted. Certainly there are trends and phenomena like the "Meiji Reverse Attack" (Kimura Tsuyoshi's term) and the "sudden increase in demand for Rising Sun flags" but these are the product of seven years of Occupation and GHQ's policies of weakening Japan and removing its backbone. More than ten years after this, it's a natural reaction to this truly vacuous situation.

There is also something called the A-A (Asia, Africa) Congress. Almost all revolutionary nationalism in India, Africa, South and North Vietnam, Indonesia, as well as Castro's Cuba which heads the central and South American countries, shows a clear slant toward communism and has stimulated the latecomer Japanese communists. . . .

### Nationalism is not new or old

I do not take issue at all with those who advise to proceed forth while calculating national interest, but when national interest faces that of other countries, it becomes nationalism with fangs. All I would like to point out is that as those fangs get bigger, it's a fact that they grow into monsters called expansionism, ultranationalism and imperialism. . . . Japan was not alone in pursuing adventurism and forgetting the cold calculation of "national interest." That's because nationalism has fangs and claws.

Of course, politicians and leaders try to hide the fangs of nationalism. They commonly use flowery words like "justice" "morals" "enlightenment" "democracy" "liberation" and "communism" etc. to hide these fangs. Japanese people since antiquity have liked using fancy terms such as "righteous governance." This was not always just the influence of Confucianism. Ōkawa Shūmei discovered righteousness in Plato's "Republic," melded this with Confucianism and Buddhism and formulated his "Shōwa Restoration Theory" and "Theory of an Asian War of Liberation." However, there is no righteousness in actual politics and in war. Politics is always the rule of might and in war as well, those who actually use the rule of might become the conquerors and victors. The destruction and collapse of Japan's righteous ideology during the Greater East Asia War is an actual recent example of this. . . .

## CH. 19, "JAPAN, ASIA AND THE WORLD"

### The Need for a Pro-Japan Faction

From now on, what kind of attitude should Japan take toward Asia and the world? That is a political question, not a historical question. The future is

made through the actions and struggles of human beings. Politicians organize and lead people and make the future by getting them to fight. For 100 years, Japan has waged a solitary struggle. When you look back on this as history, it is certainly not meaningless. You also can't call it reckless. Besieged by the colonization and aggression of the Western powers, no matter how great generals or politicians were, no other measures could have been taken. According to the government and military leaders at the time, there were also efforts to contain the Sino-Japanese War, and to avoid war with the United States and Britain, as many of the books being published these days prove. . . .

### Withdrawal from "great domains"

Nationalism is not new or old. Japan's recovery is not just a recovery of industry, trade, roads, and taxes. It's unbearable that the prime minister is called a transistor radio salesman and he just stays silent like a broken radio. The time has come when we should erect the pillar of a national spirit and wave the flag of this spirit. However, when you think about the recovery of Japanese nationalism, you also have to think about your own fangs and claws that will grow.

Japanese people are now qualified and have the right to retire for a while from the historical stage, retire to "a mountain retreat," call upon the heavens and have a conversation with themselves. This is nothing to be done hurriedly. I don't know but it may take ten or twenty years to come back down again from the mountain. Now is the time for deliberation. It is time for self-fulfillment. People who are wounded and internally void, no matter how much they fly around the world, won't be of any use. First, we should retire to "a mountain retreat" to deliberate, store up internal power and ideas, and then proclaim them to Asia and the world. That's more than enough. Ten or twenty years is not more than a moment in history. Being "in a mountain retreat" is not a minus for the people.