

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
COMMEMORATING THE CENTENNIAL OF  
THE 1911 REVOLUTION IN CHINA:  
Organization and Summary of the Tokyo Session's  
Proceedings

**INTRODUCTION**

On the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of China's 1911 (Xin-hai) Revolution, Japan saw many events held in its memory.<sup>1</sup> One of these, the International Conference Commemorating the Centennial of the 1911 Revolution in China "The 1911 Revolution in Global History" held in Tokyo and Kobe, Japan, December 2011, will be the subject of this short review essay, which will describe how the conference came to be, what was discussed during its sessions and its relationship to recent trends in the study of the revolution in Japan and overseas. Since the conference was divided into two separately planned, independent venues, here the focus will be placed on the Tokyo session, while details about the Kobe session organized by the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Foundation may be found in [Nihon Sonbun Kenkyūkai 2013].

**1. THE STUDY OF THE 1911 REVOLUTION IN POSTWAR JAPAN:  
A HISTORICAL REVIEW**

The serious, in earnest research on the revolution got underway in Japan

during the 1950s in the midst of the impact which the founding the People's Republic of China exerted on many China scholars in Japan, directing their attention to the events of 1911 as the starting point of the history of modern revolution in China. Sparked by the initial shock caused by the "Communist revolution," the research in Japan on 1911 was greatly influenced by the source materials and research being compiled and published in Taiwan and on the Mainland. For example, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the 1911 Revolution, a conference was held on the Mainland under the auspices of the PRC government, which stimulated a steady stream of related publications, two of the most important being three source material collections of historiography [Zhongguo Shixuehui 1957], public opinion [Zhang and Wang 1960], and memoirs [Zhongguo Renmin Zhengzhi Xieshang Huiyi... 1961–81]. In Taiwan, the Nationalist Government organized the Kuomintang Central Historiographical Committee, resulting in such publications as the complete works of Sun Yat-sen [Zhongguo Guomindang... 1957] and a series of books commemorating 1911 [Zhonghua Minguo Kaiguo Wushinian... 1961–74] aimed at legitimizing Taiwan as the true successor to the "father of the Republic."

In Japan, while there was a modicum of interest aroused in research on the revolution sponsored by the government of Taiwan, most historians of modern China chose to pursue the historical view established on the Mainland and discuss the events of 1911 as constituting a "bourgeois revolution." In particular, the focus was placed on evaluating the development of capitalism during the final decades of the Qing dynasty and understanding the process of China's modernization. The research at that time ranged from Nozawa Yutaka 野沢豊's understanding [1972] that while the 1911 Revolution was by no means complete, it was a democratic bourgeois revolution that pursued the issues of anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism, to Yokoyama Suguru 横山英's view [1977] of an absolutist revolution turning China into a "semi-colonial, semi-feudal" state, all the way across the spectrum to Ichiko Chuzō 市古宙三's relegation of 1911 to a mere dynastic upheaval led by a conservative, self-interested class of rural gentlemen. In contrast to the heated debates of the 60s and 70s, the decades following the 1980s were marked by cooler heads whose research on the character and historical significance of the 1911 Revolution have raised serious doubts about the "bourgeois revolution" thesis, even among scholars on the Mainland. There is no doubt that such a change in thinking corresponds closely to the development of a market economy in China and shifts in ideological position that such a course demands. For example, at the conferences convened on 9 October 2011 at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing to commemorate 1911, Communist Party General

Secretary Hu Jintao 胡錦濤 touted the revolution as the starting point of “the magnificent revival achieved by the Chinese people” through a spirit of “democratic republicanism” that overthrew dynastic despotism. There was no mention of “bourgeois revolution” throughout Secretary Hu’s address. Indeed, over the past half century (more precisely since the beginning of the post-revolutionary era in 1992), the underlying tone of public opinion regarding the 1911 Revolution has definitely shifted from the “class struggle” to “national revival.”

The abandonment of the term “revolution” has been especially marked in the world of academic research, as exemplified by the complete absence of any mention of the previously popular “revolutionary character of 1911” issue in the call for papers by the Association of Chinese Historians to be delivered at its October 2011 international conference on “The 1911 Revolution and China Over the Past 100 Years.” Although the “bourgeois revolution” theme has yet to disappear from public purview, an academic generation gap has developed between scholars today and those of the 1990s like Zhang Kaiyuan 章開沅 of the Central China Normal University Department of History and Chang Yufa 張玉法 at Academia Sinica’s Institution of Modern History who engaged in continual heated debate over the question of “bourgeois vs. people’s revolution.” In Japan, as well, the 1950s, 60s, and 70s marked an era of greatly diverging arguments in academia over the issue of a “bourgeois revolution” in combination with how to evaluate China’s anti-imperialism. However, today, since the appearance of new views about the French Revolution, the classic bourgeois revolution, as exhibiting non-bourgeois or more-complicated class characteristics (for example, G. Lefebvre’s idea in his *Quatre-Vingt-Neuf* [1939] of a combination of aristocratic, bourgeois, urban, and peasant revolutionary elements), reflection over one-dimensional views of revolutionary history, even in the field of Chinese history, has forced linear narratives of the past into the shadows. Furthermore, by adding into the mix the changes in ideology accompanying China’s era of reform and opening-up, the paradigm itself has greatly deviated from the “bourgeois revolution” theme [Kubota 2011]. There is no doubt that we have come a long way, but there is one stop on the road that is of extremely important significance for the study of Chinese modern and contemporary history in Japan, and that is the International Conference to Commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the 1911 Revolution held at Wuhan in 1981. In the first place, it was the first large-scale international academic conference to be held since the great transformation in Chinese policy from “continue the revolution” to “reform and opening-up” in 1978. Tens of scholars from all over the world (including Japan, but excepting Taiwan) were invited

to participate and encouraged to discuss their ideas with their Chinese counterparts in both public and private forums, marking a radical and important turnaround in the attitude towards international scholarship in the field of history after the Cultural Revolution. Secondly, the Wuhan conference revealed that the 1911 Revolution has become a paradigm of “commemorative historical science” which would be discussed in publicly sponsored academic gatherings every ten years. The paradigm of “commemorative history” is devoted to honoring every five or ten years various important events and figures in China’s past, like the Opium Wars, the Taiping Rebellion, Hundred Days Reform, Boxer Rebellion, May 4th Movement, Sun Yat-sen, and Mao Zedong, with gala events and scholarly conferences, a custom that continues today on the Mainland, but has ceased under Taiwan’s democratization movement. Although the term “commemorative history” had implied criticism of the kind of pseudo-science that is inevitably tied to political influence and ideology, the Wuhan conference was the first international venue for the genre. Japan, as well, in a gesture of unison with the Chinese custom held international conferences in memory of the 1911 Revolution, Sun Yat-sen, etc. in 1981, 1991, and 2001. And so, when the centennial of the revolution appeared in sight, the question arose of whether research gatherings and related activities in the “commemorative history” tradition would be organized in Japan.

## **2. THE ORGANIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOKYO SESSION**

It was at the end of January 2009 when three veteran historians of modern and contemporary China, including this writer, met to discuss the possibility of holding a scholarly conference to commemorate the 1911 Revolution centennial. The discussion began with nothing on the table, opening with the question of whether a conference should be held at all. This is mainly because the Society of the 1911 Revolution Studies, which had been active in the Kanto region since 1967, had disbanded in 2005, four years after the 90th anniversary conference held at Japan Women’s University in 2001, creating the problem of who would succeed the society in sponsorship. That being said, it cannot be denied that we did enter the deliberations with expectations that certain universities, public agencies, private foundations, and local governments would probably commemorate the centennial in some way, so the meeting began with a definite air of discreetness. Despite the fact that among younger scholars

there existed both little interest in the 1911 Revolution or Sun Yat-sen and doubts about the validity of “commemorative history,” after investigating and discussing the problem points we came to feel strongly about the positive significance of holding a conference, and through a gradual mustering of kindred spirits in the history of modern and contemporary China, the Centennial Conference Organizing Committee was set up in March 2010 under the chairmanship of Yamada Tatsuo 山田辰雄 (professor emeritus, Keio University). Then at the committee’s first meeting on March 2010 the following prospectus, dated 30 June, was determined.

### Statement of Intent

The year 2011 marks the 100th year anniversary of the 1911 Revolution. There are probably a number of events and conferences to commemorate this anniversary. Looking back, in 1981 there were symposia organized in Wuhan and in Honolulu to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the 1911 Revolution and, with the impetus from the Chinese opening and reforms, scholars from overseas, including Japan, engaged in a fruitful dialogue with Chinese scholars at these two events. However, as everyone knows, Revolution, such events greatly influenced the development of scholarship in Japan not only with respect to the study of the 1911, but in relation to the study of modern and contemporary Chinese history in general. Moreover, in 1991, with the 80th anniversary and in 2001, with the 90th anniversary, there were conferences in China, Taiwan and Japan, and so there were increasingly intense scholarly interactions that transcended regional boundaries.

In the past 30 years, as we looked back at such international conferences, and at the same time at the themes and conditions of Chinese studies in Japan and also total vision of “China” in the humanities and social sciences. As a result, we concluded that, through allying ourselves with activities in the scholarly realms in China and Taiwan, Japan could organize conference that makes a unique contribution to the scholarly field as well as to the social realm.

To this end, we had a number of meetings to discuss the form that such a conference would take. Fortunately, we could connect with the Sun Zhongshan Foundation in Kobe and as a result we plan to organize a symposium commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 1911 Revolution in Tokyo and Kobe in the end of the year 2011. In this context, there we nominated the seven promoters of the conference listed below and these people would initially form the “The

Committee for the Conference Commemorating the 100 anniversary of the 1911 Revolution.”

The discussions related to the preparatory stage concluded that we do not want to organize another conference based on the model of commemorative history. Rather, we would like to inquire into the place of the 1911 Revolution in history and the significance of this revolution for Japan. In this context, we have established the below three themes for organizing the conference.

“The 1911 Revolution in Global History”: To think about the place of the 1911 Revolution both diachronically in relation to the premodern Chinese past and synchronically in relation to other nation’s “revolutions” and to assess the relations between these two.

“The 1911 Revolution as Seen from Japan”: To think about the modern relationship between China and Japan and the visions of China in modern Japan through examining the 1911 Revolution.

“A 100 Years of being a Republic/having a Constitution and the 1911 Revolution”: To examine the formation of a “Republic” in the 1911 Revolution and from this to examine the various experiences from late Qing constitutionalism, the Republican period, Communist period and Taiwan.

Of course, the above three themes are only initial ideas and the committee will continue to deliberate. We will also think about the program and form of the symposium next spring.

With respect to the place and time, we have decided to hold the conference in December, 2011. We would like to invite scholars from Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Korea and the United States. We will send out a Call for Papers to young scholars (PhD. Students, Post doctoral researchers, and Assistant Professors). The three languages of the conference will be Japanese, Chinese and English.

Under the 20-member organizing committee was placed an executive staff of volunteers who would make all the arrangements for the conference. After the conference the coalition would be disbanded. The coalition aimed at a completely independent organization and operation, free

from support of universities or research associations and co-sponsorship of overseas institutes, meaning that funding would start from scratch and that it would take nearly two years of work to make the necessary preparations. In the words of organizing committee vice-chairman Kubota Bunji 久保田文次, “as opposed to implementing [the 70th anniversary conference] plan with the approval of the political establishment and the appearance of the country’s academic leaders, [the centennial conference Tokyo session] was in principle to be planned, arranged, organized, and implemented by a group of specialists with the organizing committee taking ultimate responsibility... and was the result of improved relations among the scholarly communities of Japan, China, the United States, etc., and conditions favorable to the free exchange of the academic ideas between the Chinese Mainland and Taiwan” [Kubota 2012:509]. In fact, the conference, which was attended by scholars from all over the world, including China and Taiwan, all with freely issued visas, was conducted in an atmosphere of equanimity and academic rigor even regarding controversial issues of politics and historical perception. It was proof of the tremendous changes that had occurred in the academic environment over the 30 years since the 70th anniversary. Despite some friction in the way in which the conference was organized in the spirit of academic independence—for example, in the choice of participants and style of implementation—in the end its objectives were all achieved as planned. In terms of the conference’s agenda, the Tokyo session should probably be evaluated as an ambitious endeavor in the sense of 1) pushing a “glocal” (global as well as local) frame of reference, 2) following the executive staff’s lead in selecting participants on the basis of the generational transition among scholars, and 3) extending a “call for papers” to younger scholars. Therefore, of utmost importance was holding a scientifically significant conference with proceedings rich in new information and insight for future generations, while at the same time sufficiently recognizing the tradition of “commemorative history.” We invite anyone who may entertain doubts about the above claims to pick up a volume of the published proceedings, *Sōgō kenkyū Shingai Kakumei* 総合研究辛亥革命 (A comprehensive study of the 1911 Revolution) [Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen... 2012], and see for him/herself.

Of course the success of the conference should not be attributed solely to the achievements of the organizers, but first and foremost to the cooperation of everyone concerned, participants and staff alike. Then there is the role played by the rich human resource network that was formed out of exchange and cooperation over decades prior to the conference, including the experience gained from the field of “commemorative history,”

in bringing the Tokyo session to fruition.

### 3. MAJOR FINDINGS AND PENDING ISSUES

After a special lecture held at the Toyo Bunko on the eve of the conference (2 December), the proceedings moved to the Komaba Campus of the University of Tokyo, where for 2 days historians of modern and contemporary China representing regions and countries from all over the world presented original, rigorous research papers and discussed them with panels of commentators and audiences made up of specialists and members of the general public. In particular, many of the papers adopted the view of global connections and interregional relationships in reconsidering the character and historical context of the revolution; and there were attempts to reconsider its history from new points of view, such as gender, region, ethnic groups and their peripheries, and the relationship between state and society. The conference program and proceedings [Shingai Kakumei Hyakusyūnen... 2012] can be divided in the following five aspects in terms of its main points of discussion and new research trends it generated.

#### (1) The Leadership Role of the Constitutionalists

Now that the hot debates of yesteryear have cooled down, in particular the ebbing of the bourgeois-revolution interpretation on the ground in mainland China, what we have been treated to instead is a revisionist view of the “revolutionary historical view” reconsidering the role in and contribution to the revolution’s success of the royalist = constitutionalist faction, which heretofore had been considered an enemy of the revolutionary faction and looked upon in a negative way as a politically weak group of compromisers. The representative research focusing on the leadership played by the constitutionalists during the revolution has been done by Zhang Pengyuan 張朋園 [1969] and the aforementioned work done by Wright [1968]. The former raises doubts about the conventional historical narrative that has developed concerning Sun Yat-sen and the Kuomintang, pointing to the Sun hagiography and the contradictions rife within the revolutionary faction, before beginning to evaluate the constitutionalists. The latter’s work is the first serious English-language study of the revolution and contains the results of joint research that deserves to be read with much appreciation. In this weighty tome’s introduction entitled “The Rising Tide of Change,” Wright describes the year 1900 as



an important turning point in the history of modern China and proceeds to discuss the character and significance of the 1911 Revolution from such diverse aspects as imperial court reforms, the formation of a new society, and the relationship between ideology and how the revolution was organized. It should be noted that her emphasis on the series of reforms promoted by the Qing dynasty and the activities of the constitutional faction elite, while evaluating Sun Yat-sen and revolutionary faction as contributing little to the revolution, has pioneered today's revisionist standpoints.

The political groups known as the constitutionalist faction indicate members of the gentry and intelligentsia who took advantage of the imperial decree on a provisional constitution issued in 1906 to demand the establishment of a constitutional monarchy and across-the-board innovations in political, economic, social, and cultural institutions. Given its intellectual trends and social class base, the faction was not at first acting in complete solidarity, but was rather based on the idea of “melon cut (*guafen* 瓜分) of the empire by revolution” in opposing the immediate introduction of a democratic republic, pressing the dynasty to implement thorough constitutional reform, and demanding nationalistic policies aimed at the recovery of foreign concessions and promotion of industrial development. After the deaths of Emperor Guangxu and Empress Dowager Cixi in 1908, even royalists in exile, like Kang Youwei 康有為 and Liang Qichao 梁啟超, began to lend support to the reformist forces within the imperial court, and in fact merged with the constitutionalists to form a wing of the constitutional government movement. It was in 1909, at the time when provincial assemblies (*zhiyiju* 諮議局) were set up in all the provinces, that the constitutionalist faction made its public debut on the political scene, demanding the immediate establishment of a national assembly and advocating reform through such means as wide ranging movements to petition the Qing government. These efforts aiming at constitutional reform promoted a series of institutional innovations under the precondition of Qing dynasty governance and aimed ultimately at a modern constitutional monarchy consisting of free elections, a national assembly, and the promulgation of a national constitution.

After the outbreak of the revolution itself in 1911, the revolutionary faction, whose domestic power base was weak and whose military strength was inferior to that of the Beiyang group centered around Yuan Shikai 袁世凱, reigned “victorious” thanks to the constitutional faction, which had run out of patience with the inability of the imperial court to lead the nation and had become caught in the landslide heading for republicanism. As a matter of fact, when considering the Wu-

chang Uprising = Mutiny as ending in mutual compromise and agreement about the emperor's abdication and north-south peace negotiations, the contribution of the constitutionalist faction was enormous in its correct anticipation of the Beiyang group's eventual turn towards republicanism, providing various routes to facilitate mediation between the Beiyang and the revolutionary faction. When held up to individual historical facts the bourgeois revolution interpretation that views the revolutionary faction as members of China's rising new middle class becomes clearly untenable. Therefore, in the future it will at some time become necessary to unravel the political groups known as the revolutionary and constitutionalist factions and their crisscrossing social class and status relationships within the context of the actual, concrete political process of the revolution.

## (2) Change and Continuity

There is no doubt among anyone that the 1911 Revolution led to tremendous changes in China's political institutions, urban culture, etc. No matter to what extent it has been deemed "incomplete," it represented a great social and cultural "revolution." That being said, the problem still remains about the extent to which the revolution changed the economic structure and social composition of rural China. From the aspect of culture and thought, change may be said to have been external to the type of rural society depicted in Lu Xun 鲁迅's *The True Story of Ah Q*. Even at our centennial conference's Tokyo session, there was the opinion that the changes that occurred in the aspect of gender following the revolution were minuscule when compared to the changes which occurred in the aftermath of the May 4th Movement, so insignificant as to be ignored. This is one example of the revolution's incomplete character as a social change. On the other hand, as Wu Jen-shu 巫仁恕 [2012] has shown, the frequent popular uprisings marking the middle of the Ming period were in some aspects continued in the urban movements during the 1911 Revolution, but greatly accelerated by innovations in communications technology in the form of the telegraph and the press. Liu Shilong 劉世龍 [2012] also emphasized the importance of mass media in mobilizing the masses during the revolution.

In addition, the revolution developed upon local leadership in the form of southern provinces declaring their independence from the center. Those who assumed such leadership were also political forces on the scene, called provincial elite and local power holders, a newly rising segment of society whom the Qing court's "new policy" gave birth to. They had also made up the forces demanding the return of foreign concessions

and promotion of industrial development during the last decade of the Qing dynasty. The rise and activities of this new elite possessed a new and completely different character not seen thus far in the revolution's political culture.

As brought up in many of the papers presented at our conference, the revolution by no means brought about uniform changes in either the economic or social spheres, but rather the kinds of change that must be considered in terms of time lags and different intensities. Moreover, continuity in the form of accumulating political issues left unsolved in the realms of institutions and norms must also be taken into account. In this respect, Kaneko Hajime 金子肇 [2012] clearly put reforms in the fiscal framework into perspective by depicting the often frustrating process of distinguishing between national and local taxation. In contrast to the lack of progress in the institutionalization of national integration following the revolution, the presumption of parliamentary politics to represent the "will of the people" functioned as the mandated theoretical norm, even during the chaotic time of Yuan Shikai's attempt to assume the vacated imperial throne. This leaves no doubt that the reforms at the end of the Qing period constituted a significant transformation in Chinese politics. It was in this way that the political style of the era of the revolution with its mixture of transformed elements (interruption) and unchanged elements (continuity) will reveal the "contemporaneous nature" of the revolution which can be overlaid upon the political problems that face China today in areas like the transition to democratic institutions and the determining the relationship between central and local forces.

### (3) Integration of the Periphery and "Ethnic" Autonomy

The 1911 Revolution has surfaced as an important topic concerning the framework of the sovereign state entity known as China, as an historical moment marking the rise of conflict and competition among various political forces aiming at the national integration and independence of that entity. In particular, in regions like Mongolia and Tibet which experienced under Qing dynasty rule the growth of indigenous governance systems and cultural institutions, the revolution marked a point of transition towards increasing political centrifugality in the wake of the dynasty's fall. However, within the conventional historical narrative centered upon the revolution, one notices attention being merely given to the character of its nationalistic fervor and call for the expulsion of the Manchus under the hypothesis that the Qing dynasty was none other than an imperial court of foreigners, thus ignoring the revolution's implications for China's pe-

riphery and ethnic diversity.

In this respect, the rise of “Han ethnic supremacy” worked to distort historical perception, thus blocking off our view of the periphery, as observed in the provocative research done by James Leibold [2012]. Nevertheless, in recent years much attention based on rethinking the “center” and “majority” in terms of the “periphery” and “minorities” has been directed at issues about the integration of the periphery and ethnic autonomy before and after the 1911 Revolution. The increasing reference to the national-integration slogan of “Five races under one union” issued during the first year of the republic is also relevant to such developments and may as well form the backdrop against which the issue of ethnic nationalism has been inserted into the day-to-day concerns of a contemporary China that has inherited the territory and borders once governed by the Qing dynasty.

At the conference’s Tokyo session, due attention was drawn to Tachibana Makoto 橘誠’s paper on Mongolian “independence” [2012] and Kobayashi Ryōsuke 小林亮介’s paper on Tibet [2012]. While indicating that Mongolia’s response to the outbreak of the revolution was by no means uniform, there being both pro-independence and pro-dynasty (Mongolian princes stationed in Beijing) political forces, Tachibana argued that even the choice made by the Inner Mongolian people was far too complicated to be depicted as a simple question of “yeah vs. nay.” Focusing his attention on social trends in Tibet during the revolution, Kobayashi described a similarly complicated political process defying compartmentalization into “independence” vs. “integration,” by unraveling for us the complex interwoven web of relations between the Dalai Lama government and the local Chinese officials within eastern Tibetan regional society. What these two presentations bring to the forefront is that the political dynamism involving the reorganization of the “China” framework is a phenomenon of interdependence and conflict inherent to modern nationalism, in which what constitutes ethnic consciousness, like “Mongolian” and “Tibetan” identity, evolves. The conditions under which Han-centered Chinese nationalism, which was born out of fears concerning territorial disintegration, stimulated uniform ethnic consciousness in places like Mongolia and Tibet and gave rise to continuous unrest and resistance in regions on the “periphery” may have first become readily apparent during the 1911 Revolution, but the problems to which they gave rise have by no means been resolved today, one hundred years later.

#### 4. THE QING DYNASTY AND THE BEIYANG ARMY GROUP

Probably the most noticeable change that has occurred recently in the 1911 Revolution research is a shift of emphasis from the standpoint of the “revolutioners” to that of the “revolutionized.” The earliest indications of this shift which occurred in the United States [Wright 1968; Esherick 1976] stressed the positive effects brought about by political reform implemented during the last decade of the Qing dynasty, while de-emphasizing the roles of Sun Yat-sen and the revolutionary faction. It was not until the reform and open-up policies got started in the 1980s that scholars on the Chinese mainland began to reevaluate the accomplishments of late Qing-period reformers in such policy areas as drafting a preliminary constitution, education, promotion of commerce and industry, and economic protection. As Joseph Esherick indicated at the conference’s Tokyo session [2012], the shift that has occurred from a negative to positive evaluation of those reform efforts is the greatest indicator of how the study of the 1911 Revolution has changed over the years, since those who once interpreted such reforms as an arrogant, reactionary response on the part of the dynasty and its final atrocity perpetrated on Chinese society have all but disappeared from academia. Moreover, if it were not for the many innovations introduced by the reform regime—a modernized military, modern schools, commercial associations, journalism, and network of railways and communications, to mention as few—the 1911 Revolution and the industrial development and economic growth that followed under the Chinese Republic would have been impossible; and even if those reforms are characterized as attempts at self-preservation by those who promoted them, there is no doubt that they marked an important step in the process of China’s modernization.

It was in February of 1912 that Censor Yun Yuding 惲毓鼎 upon hearing that the Qing emperor had been dethroned broke into tears and lamented the “the three demons” of China’s demise: the students studying abroad in Japan, the new military establishment, and the national and provincial assemblies. From the standpoint of the Qing dynasty, the implementation of the reforms that had been more or less forced upon it had rung its death knell in the wake of the unexpected outbreak of war. The panorama produced when looking from the perspective of the Qing court reveals much more than just a legacy of enlightened reform that would mark the starting point of China’s modernization. Now also subject to critical reflection is the conventional revolutionary historical point of view centered around Sun Yat-sen and the revolutionary faction consisting of a chain of events in a success story which begins with the

1895 rebellion led by the Society for China's Regeneration, then takes us through the degrading Xinchou Treaty (Boxer Protocol) concluded in 1901, and ends with the toppling of an imperial regime in the name of driving out the Manchus and reinstating native Han rule. In this narrative, particular focus has been placed on the historical evaluation of the role played by the Beiyang group led by Yuan Shikai, which the Sun Yat-sen-centered bourgeois revolution interpretation of the events of 1911 casts in a definitely antagonist's role, with Yuan as a "usurper" who merely plucked the fruits of the revolution.

On the other hand, from the standpoint of the Beiyang group, which interprets the meaning of the "Xinhai Reform" in terms of "republic" rather than "revolution," the historical view of the Tomenghui (Kuomintang) constitutes an ideology for legitimizing its armed struggle of resistance, arguing that in actuality the term "revolution" was never an effective rallying cry within Chinese society during the early years of the republic. As Tang Chi-hua 唐啓華 argued before the conference's Tokyo session, Yuan's political prowess was to the contrary highly regarded within Chinese public opinion for quickly bringing the chaos caused by the revolution under control and setting up a republic under peaceful circumstances; and in fact the revolutionary faction including Sun Yat-sen unanimously supported Yuan's presidency in the hope that his regime would result in political stability. If so, then the conventional notion that the Republic of China was a revolutionary regime which had cut all ties with the authority of the Qing dynasty needs to be reconsidered. Because it is apparent according to Tang that "the Beiyang regime was not the successor to the Nanjing government, but rather took the place of the Qing dynasty; and from the Beiyang point of view Xinhai was more a continuation than a definite cut-off point." Thereby, the conventional framework of perception in describing the political process of the early Republic—placing the 1911 Revolution at the root of the developments from the Second Revolution of 1913 to the War for National Protection (Third Revolution) of 1915–16 on an axis of a confrontation between the Constitutional Protection Movement led by Sun Yat-sen out of Guangdong (1917–22) and the republic government in Beijing—should also come under further scrutiny.

Of course, there is no doubt that the dethronement of the Qing emperor and the fall of his dynasty was an irreversible process and a progressive step in the future of China, meaning that discussing issues from the viewpoint of the dynasty should neither excite nostalgia for the past nor refute the revolutionary character of the republican regime in favor of abdication and restoration of the *ancien regime*. Despite the establish-

ment of the republic, the “last emperor” Puyi remained ensconced at his “petit court” in the Forbidden City until being suddenly driven out of the palace by the troops of Feng Yuxiang 馮玉祥 on 22 October 1924. And until that time the Beijing government had acquiesced to all the imperial protections and prerogatives established in the dethronement edict, including paying the court’s expenses out of a very austere fiscal budget. The decision to no longer honor those commitments was made by Feng (who would become supreme commander of the Republican Army two days later) in conjunction with Sun Yat-sen’s reorganization of the Kuo-mintang and the founding of the Whompoa Military Academy. This can be said to have marked the second stage of the revolution characterized by the actual collapse of the peace established between north and south in 1912. The newly discovered historical landscape representing China up to the end of the 1911 Revolution in 1924 now takes on topographical features other than slaughter and desolation.

## 5. THE PROCESSES OF MEMORY AND COGNITION

The reforms implemented during the last years of the Qing dynasty that paved the way for the 1911 Revolution not only brought about institutional and legal changes, but also marked a radical transformation in the structure of knowledge. The progress of institutional reform and transformation of understanding being the result of the interaction between them, a recently popular topic of study in such areas of conceptual history and the history of science, was touched upon at the conference’s Tokyo session in the detailed discussion of Sang Bing 桑兵’s concrete examples of center vs local, town vs country, ethnicity, and education [2012], as well as Hazama Naoki 狹間直樹’s presentation on the term “republic (*gonghe* 共和)” as a keyword in the institutional reforms implemented during the Xinhai era [2012].

On a somewhat different note, another recent rapidly developing topic of research is the various ramification of historical memory. To begin with, understanding the series of political changes that began in October of 1911 and continued into the following February as the “Xinhai Revolution,” is the task that has been taken up at all the related “commemorative national events” since then, and as a result, we have come to discover that the term “revolution” means different things to different people in different locals with differing class affiliations and conflicting political views. Although the term “Xinhai Revolution” came into existence almost simultaneously with the date, the first year of the Republican China, it did

not immediately take hold within Chinese society at large. Instead, such terms as “restoration (*guangfu* 光復)” and “return to normalcy (*fanzheng* 反正)” echoed in the streets, and what was being commemorated was not “the revolution” but “republic.” The term Xinhai Revolution did not permeate society until 1921, ten years after the Wuchang Rebellion [Liang Qichao, “The Significance of the Xinhai Revolution and the Tenth National Day of Optimism”]. For both the Qing dynasty and Beiyang group the change of political regime that occurred in February 1921 was marked by neither a “revolution” nor the “birth of a nation,” but rather the abdication of the emperor. Moreover, as far as Yuan Shikai was concerned, the political change that had brought him to the highest seat of power should be understood as “governmental reform.”

It was in this way that during the same time and among the principle actors, the ideas of “republic” and “revolution” became the objects of various different interpretations and perceptions, and as time went on so the “recollective history” of the 1911 Revolution as a struggle over political legitimacy flourished and burgeoned. With regard to the recollection and commemoration of the revolution, the four-volume work by Luo Fuhui 羅福惠 and Zhu Ying 朱英 [2011] describes in detail all the different aspects of not only the “commemorative system” set up by the Chinese governments and political parties, but also the activism of civic groups and biographical evaluations of the major figures. For example, while establishing during the early days of the republic 12 February as the holiday for commemorating the proclamation establishing the republic and the unification of north and south, over time, together with the fall from power and later fate of Yuan Shikai (who was installed as the republic’s first president on that very date), it was erased from the people’s memory, which is illustrative of the whole process by which the ideas of “republic” and “revolution” have been recollected, a two-sided phenomenon involving the interpretation of the 1911 Revolution for the sake of political ideology and the legitimization of power. We can also conclude that the field of “commemorative history” can be dated as far back as the first year of the Republican era.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Turning to the results and influence of the Tokyo session of a conference that was rather presumptively pronounced, but hardly planned and executed, as a “once in a hundred year event,” let us mention in concluding the series of lectures opened to the general public at the time. Prior



to the session's start, on 20 August 2011, the hundred year anniversary of the 1911 Revolution and the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance (Zhong-guo Tongmenghui) was held at the Okura Hotel, the birthplace of the latter when it was still the palatial mansion of Sakamoto Kin'ya 坂本金弥, one of Sun Yat-sen's most influential Japanese supporters. The event was marked by three lectures given by Kubota Bunji (professor emeritus, Japan Women's University) on the alliance's founding convention, Wang Wan 汪婉 (research fellow of the Institute of Modern History, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) on efforts to promote and spread public education just prior to and following the revolution, and Murakami Katsuhiko 村上勝彦 (professor, Tokyo Keizai University) on the contribution made by enterprise magnet Ōkura Kihachirō 大倉喜八郎 to the Chinese revolution. In addition, the opening day of the Tokyo session scheduled special lectures to be given at the Toyo Bunko, featuring Wang Jianlang 王建朗 (head of the Institute of Modern History, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) speaking on the diplomatic affairs of the Nanjing Provisional Government based on newly discovered source materials and Bae Kyuon-gan 裴京漢 (professor, Silla University) addressing the subject of the 1911 Revolution in the broader light of East Asian history. Due to the popularity of the event, which was attended by 70 ardent listeners, the Toyo Bunko added two more special lectures to its schedule to be delivered on 5 February 2012 by Kubota Bunji on the contribution of revolutionary entertainer Miyazaki Tōten 宮崎滔天 to the 1911 Revolution and Murata Yūjirō on how the Qing dynasty viewed the revolution. The lectures attracted an audience of over 200, including Tōten's granddaughter and great grandson together with a contingent from his hometown of Arao in Kumamoto Prefecture.

The Toyo Bunko Museum also participated in the festivities with an exhibition from October 2011 to the following February of artifacts related to Tōten, who befriended Sun Yat-sen in Japan and followed him into battle during the revolution. The exhibition included such items shown to the public for the first time as a fragment of a recorded conversation between Sun and Tōten, letters written to Tōten by Mao Zedong and to Konoe Fumimaro 近衛文麿 by Chiang Kai-shek, a declaration of solidarity autographed by his revolutionary comrades, and hanging scrolls authored by such revolutionary figures as classicist Zhang Binglin 章炳麟 and author-philosopher Lu Xun, all depicting the unmistakable role played by Japan in this world shaking event and reminding visitors of the strong historical ties that bind the two countries.

Of course, commemorating events reminds us that the task of reflecting upon the revolution and confirming its true historical significance is

not yet over. Rather, as we view the ongoing raveling and unraveling of Sino-Japanese relations, the 1911 Revolution continues on as a beacon to light the way in our efforts to tackle the issues presented to the conference participants in transcending the vagaries of “commemorative history.”

\* This review essay contains a number of points already covered in [Murata 2012:1–18] and follows that work’s practice in abridging the names, titles, and occupations of conference participants.

—Originally written in Japanese

## NOTES

- 1 Among the main events were “The 1911 Revolution and Asia” sponsored by Kanagawa and Tsinghua Universities and the Association of Chinese Historians held on the campus of Kanagawa University during 5–6 November; “The Centennial Symposium of Xinhai Revolution: Re-examination on Asianism and Modern Nationalism,” sponsored by the Society of Chinese Professors in Japan, held on the University of Tokyo’s Hongo Campus during 19–20 November; and “The Xinhai Revolution and East Asia” sponsored by the Japanese Association of Modern East Asian History, the UNESCO Association of Fukuoka, et al. at ELGALA Hall in Fukuoka during 29–30 November.

## SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Esherick, Joseph W. 1976. *Reform and revolution in China: The 1911 Revolution in Hunan and Hubei*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- (ジョセフ・エシェリック). 2012. Shingai Kakumei saikō 辛亥革命再考 (Reconsidering the 1911 Revolution). In Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen Kinen Ronshū Henshū Iinkai 2012, 553–71.
- Hazama, Naoki 狭間直樹. 2012. Higashi Ajia niokeru “Kyōwa” shisō no keisei 東アジアにおける“共和”思想の形成 (The formation of “republican” thought in East Asia). In Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen Kinen Ronshū Henshū Iinkai 2012, 21–40.
- Ichiko, Chūzō. 1968. The role of the gentry: An hypothesis. In Wright 1968, 297–317.
- Kaneko, Hajime 金子肇. 2012. Minkoku shoki no kaikaku to seijiteki tōgō no airo 民国初期の改革と政治的統合の隘路 (The bottleneck encountered

- in achieving political integration: Reformation and political strife during the early Republican era). In *Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen Kinen Ronshū Henshū Iinkai* 2012, 105–26.
- Kobayashi, Ryōsuke 小林亮介. 2012. *Shingai Kakumeiki no Chibetto* 辛亥革命期のチベット (“Tibet” during the era of the 1911 Revolution: Aporia over demarcating territory). In *Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen Kinen Ronshū Henshū Iinkai* 2012, 323–46.
- Kubota, Bunji 久保田文次. 2011. *Sekaishi niokeru Shingai Kakumei* 世界史における辛亥革命 (The 1911 Revolution in the world history). In *Sonbun, Shingai Kakumei to Nihonjin* 『孫文・辛亥革命と日本人』 (Sun Yat-sen, the 1911 Revolution and the Japanese), 171–218. Tokyo: Kyūko Shoin 汲古書院.
- . 2012. *Atogaki nikaete* あとがきにかえて (In lieu of an afterword). In *Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen Kinen Ronshū Henshū Iinkai* 2012, 590.
- Lefebvre, Georges. 1939. *Quatre-vingt-neuf*. Paris: Maisoi du Livre Français.
- Leibold, James (ジェームズ・レイボルド). 2012. *Torikomareyuku henkyō* 取り込まれゆく辺疆 (Absorbing the frontier: Three mirrors onto the 1911 Revolution and China’s ethnic frontier). In *Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen Kinen Ronshū Henshū Iinkai* 2012, 347–69.
- Liu, Shilong 劉世龍. 2012. *Hakuwabun to shakai dōin* 白話文と社会動員 (Vernacular Chinese and social mobilization: The case of the Sichuan railway protection movement during the late Qing period). In *Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen Kinen Ronshū Henshū Iinkai* 2012, 485–506.
- Luo, Fuhui 羅福惠 and Zhu Ying 朱英, eds. 2011. *Xinhai Geming de bainian jiyi yu quanshi* 『辛亥革命的百年記憶与詮釋』 (The recollection and interpretation of the 1911 Revolution over the past hundred years). 4 vols. Wuhan 武漢: Huazhong Shifan Daxue Chubanshe 華中師範大学出版社.
- Murata, Yūjirō 村田雄二郎. 2012. *Joshō: Gurōbaru Hisutori no naka no Shingai Kakumei* 序章：グローバル・ヒストリーの中の辛亥革命 (The 1911 Revolution in global history). In *Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen Kinen Ronshū Henshū Iinkai* 2012, 1–18.
- Nihon Sonbun Kenkyūkai 日本孫文研究会 (Association for Sun Yat-sen Studies), ed. 2013. *Gurōbaru Hisutori no naka no Shingai Kakumei* 『グローバル・ヒストリーの中の辛亥革命』 (The 1911 Revolution in global history). Tokyo: Kyūko Shoin.
- Nozawa, Yutaka 野沢豊. 1972. *Shingai Kakumei* 『辛亥革命』 (The 1911 Revolution). Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 岩波書店.
- Sang, Bing 桑兵. 2012. *Shingai Kakumeiki no chishiki to seido no tenkan* 辛亥革命期の知識と制度の転換 (Turning points in knowledge and institutions during the 1911 Revolution era). In *Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen Kinen Ronshū Henshū Iinkai* 2012, 65–84.
- Shi, Xiaofeng 史曉風, ed. 2004. *Yudingchengzhai riji* 『毓鼎澄齋日記』 (The diaries of Yun Yuding). 2 vols. Hangzhou 杭州: Hangzhou Guji Chubanshe 杭州古籍出版社.

- Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen Kinen Ronshū Henshū Inkaishi 辛亥革命百周年記念論集編集委員会 (The Editorial Board of the Organizing Committee for the International Conference of the 1911 Revolution), ed. 2012. *Sōgō kenkyū Shingai Kakumei* 『総合研究辛亥革命』 (A comprehensive study of the 1911 Revolution). Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Tachibana, Makoto 橘誠. 2012. Shingai Kakumei to Mongoru 辛亥革命とモンゴル (The 1911 Revolution and “Mongolia”). In Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen Kinen Ronshū Henshū Inkaishi 2012, 301–22.
- Tang, Chi-hua 唐啓華. 2012. Hokuyōha to Shingai Kakumei 北洋派と辛亥革命 (The northern army party and the 1911 Revolution). In Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen Kinen Ronshū Henshū Inkaishi 2012, 529–51.
- Wright, Mary Clabaugh, ed. 1968. *China in revolution: The first phase, 1900–1913*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press.
- Wu, Jen-shu 巫仁恕. 2012. Toshi no mimpen kara Shingai Kakumei e 都市の民変から辛亥革命へ (From urban popular uprisings to revolution). In Shingai Kakumei Hyakushūnen Kinen Ronshū Henshū Inkaishi 2012, 127–44. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Yokoyama, Suguru 横山英. 1977. *Shingai Kakumei kenkyū josetsu* 『辛亥革命研究序説』 (An introduction to the study of the 1911 Revolution). n.p.: Shin Rekishi Kenkyūkai 新歴史研究会.
- Zhang, Nan 張枬 and Wang Renzhi 王忍之, eds. 1960. *Xinhai Geming qian shinian jian shilun xuanji* 『辛亥革命前十年間時論選集』 (Selected political commentaries from the decade before the 1911 Revolution). 3 vols. in 5 bks. Beijing: Shenghuo Dushu Xinzhi Sanlian Shudian 北京：生活·讀書·新知三聯書店.
- Zhang, Pengyuan 張朋園. 1969. *Lixianpai yu Xinhai Geming* 『立憲派与辛亥革命』 (The constitutionalist party and the 1911 Revolution). Taipei: Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan Jindaishi Yanjiusuo 中央研究院近代史研究所 (Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica).
- Zhonghua Minguo Kaiguo Wushinian Wenxian Bianzuan Weiyuanhui 中華民國開國五十年文獻編纂委員會 (Committee for the Compilation of Bibliography of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Founding of the Republic of China), ed. 1961–74. *Zhonghua Minguo kaiguo wushinian wenxian* 中華民國開國五十年文獻 (Bibliography of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Republic of China). 21 vols. Taipei: Zhonghua Minguo Kaiguo Wushinian Wenxian Bianzuan Weiyuanhui.
- Zhongguo Guomindang Zhongyang Dangshi Shiliao Bianzuan Weiyuanhui 中國國民黨中央黨史史料編纂委員會 (Chinese Nationalist Party, Committee for the Compilation of Party Historiography), ed. 1957. *Guofu quanji* 『國父全集』 (Collected works of Sun Yat-sen). 6 vols. Taipei: Zhongyang Wenwu Gongyingshe 中央文物供應社.
- Zhongguo Renmin Zhengzhi Xieshang Huiyi Quanguo Weiyuanhui Wenshi Ziliao Yanjiu Weiyuanhui 中國人民政治協商會議全國委員會文史資料研究委員會 (Committee for the Study of the Historical Materials of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference),

ed. 1961–81. *Xinhai Geming huiyilu* 『辛亥革命回憶錄』 (Memoirs of the Revolution of 1911). 8 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju 中華書局.

Zhongguoshi Xuehui 中国史学会 (Chinese Historical Association), ed. 1957. *Zhongguo jindaishi ziliao congkan: Xinhai Geming* 『中国近代史史料叢刊：辛亥革命』 (Modern Chinese historiography series: The 1911 Revolution). 8 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe 上海人民出版社.