THE JAPANESE CONTRIBUTION TO LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

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Japan has maintained rather intense contact with various parts of Latin America, previously through migration and recently through economic relations. Japanese scholarly production about Latin America, however, has never matched that contact. Although thousands of technical reports, travelogues, and general books on Latin America have been produced in Japan, scholarly works of value have been scarce. There are, however, a few works researched and written by Japanese, both in Japan and in overseas Japanese communities, that could contribute to, or at least add new source materials to, the study of Latin America; they are relatively unknown to foreign scholars, mainly because of the barrier presented by the Japanese language.

This article, tracing some of these works, is intended as an overview of the process of development of Latin American studies in Japan. It attempts to supplement the previous, similar articles by Hiroshi Mitani (1965) and Gustavo Andrade (1973),[1] not only by covering recent developments of the 1970s and early 1980s, but also by giving a somewhat different view of the previous period.

Early Works

Japan's relations with Latin America before the Second World War were dominated by the issue of migration, which began in 1899 to Peru and in 1908 to Brazil. Migration reached a peak during the late 1920s and early 1930s and resulted in many reports on conditions in the areas that the immigrants entered. The interest in migration also produced broader works on Latin America as a region, with a concentration on Brazil, Mexico, Peru, and Argentina. Later, when confrontation with the U.S. increased, so too did the number and scope of books written by Japanese and dealing with the Western Hemisphere from a strategic point of view, with Panama added to the coverage. Some of these general works and reports contained detailed descriptions and observations, though they lacked scholarly criticism and thus generally did not stir any interest in intellectual circles.[2] Emigrants sailed for Latin America from the port

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city of Kobe; thus, Kobe University, where Latin American studies originated (although limited to economy and migration), had the finest library collection on Latin America in Japan. It was superseded only when Sophia University in Tokyo expanded its Latin American collection in the 1970s.

A good overview and a detailed inventory of works published from before World War II to 1964 is given by Mitani, who explored the materials existant in the National Diet Library of Japan.[3] The well-prepared, annotated bibliography by Smith also serves as a useful reference for studies on Brazil by Japanese.[4]

Immigrants' Social Studies

The immigrants themselves started to study their adopted societies, especially in Brazil. Although the problems of assimilation and miscegenation were hotly discussed in the Japanese community in Brazil before the Second World War, real studies of Brazilian society started after the war. The Japanese community, confused by internal violence and loss of motivation, was in quest of its social identity within Brazil, where many immigrants had decided to stay permanently. In 1948, a group of Japanese immigrants in São Paulo started to meet regularly to concentrate on the scientific study of Brazilian society and the role of the Japanese community in it. Some of them were influenced directly by visiting foreign and Brazilian scholars, such as Donald Pierson, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Emilio Willems, but the majority were self-taught. These people, who would later form the Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros in 1965 and continue their activities until the present day, started to publish the results of their studies, mostly in Japanese, after 1953, through publishers in Brazil and Japan. They strongly influenced the formation of the image of Brazil, and to some degree of Latin America, among Japanese readers.[5]

A few of their works are noteworthy. The results of the 1958 census, compiled by Teiiti Suzuki, was probably the most complete and detailed census ever carried out for any ethnic group in Latin America.[6] Inspired by the visiting Japanese anthropologist Seiichi Izumi, it covered 430,135 Japanese and their descendents in Brazil and analyzed their social and economic conditions and mobility. Although not a work of Brazilian or Latin American studies per se, it still offers valuable source material. Of other works on the Japanese-Brazilian community, Saito and Maeyama's collects the best articles on that community from a sociological perspective; one should also see the previously mentioned bibliography by Smith.[7]

The Japanese as Witnesses of Contemporary Latin American History

Most Japanese immigrants entered as *colonos* (contracted farm workers), and were witnesses to social and economic history in rural and frontier Brazil. Yet, they left few solid memoirs of colono days. Handa's and Koyama's memoirs certainly fill the vacuum, but many more of these experiences remain untold.[8] The immigrants did, however, contribute quite a few novels dealing with their experiences.[9] The Japanese have also been keen recorders of Brazilian flora and fauna, and have noted many ecological changes in rural Brazil; yet, few of these have been transformed into contributions available to the public.[10] (There has, for instance, been no equivalent of the great German contribution to Brazilian natural history.[11])

Some Japanese became involved, almost by chance, in significant political events in Latin America. A few had the opportunity to see the Mexican Revolution close at hand or even from inside: Minister Kumaichi Horiguchi, who protected the Madero family during the tragic confinement of the president; Asajiro Tanaka, an immigrant who became a trusted servant to President Madero and his family; and soldiers and captains in the Revolution.[12] They could have offered unique insights into the history of the Revolution, but, except for Horiguchi's rather brief account, there are no first-person records.[13] The few attempts by oral historians to record stories directly from witnesses in the late 1960s and early 1970s were rather unsuccessful, and it is no longer possible to carry out this task for the earlier decades of the twentieth century because there are no remaining witnesses.[14] However, for some of the unusual Japanese involvements in Latin American politics during a later period, especially close to World War II (such as the Japanese financing of the exiled Carlos Ibáñez del Campo in the hope that he would initiate a pro-axis coup in Chile), there are still good chances to excavate untold facts via oral history.

In the postwar period, Japan became extremely cautious and reluctant to involve itself in political events abroad. Because of its increasing economic power, however, it sometimes played a rather significant role in the politics of Latin American countries. For example, after Cuba broke away from U.S. influence, Japan's importation of sugar increased to and held at a million tons a year until the mid-1970s. Thus, Japan became the biggest provider of hard currency for Cuba, despite the displeasure and protests of some Latin American governments. Oral history efforts might bring to light the reasons behind this move and how it was reconciled with U.S. interests.

Arrival of Japanese Academics and the Development of Andean Studies

Immigrants began studies of their host countries more or less independently of Japanese academic circles; in the 1950s, however, these two came to know of and influence each other, and thus furthered the development of studies by Japanese in both Japan and Latin America. Again, migration paved the way. From 1952 until 1956, with the revival of migration, the Japanese government sent a group of social scientists to Brazil to survey Japanese settlements there. They were helped by the São Paulo Japanese researchers and produced extensive and penetrating works on frontier Brazil.[15]

These survey trips stirred the interest of Japanese anthropologists in Latin America and provided opportunities to make contacts there. Meanwhile, at the University of Tokyo, anthropologists and archaeologists were developing an ambitious plan for comparative studies of the origins of civilizations in the Old and New Worlds. The director, Seiichi Izumi, chose the Central Andes as the place for his group's fieldwork. A Japanese immigrant in Peru, Yoshitaro Amano, a successful businessman and self-taught intellectual and archaeologist, offered indispensable help. He would later found the Museo Amano in Lima, one of the best private museums of New World archaeology.

Under Izumi's leadership, and, after his death in 1970, that of Kazuo Terada, the University of Tokyo has sent seven scientific missions to the Central Andes, starting in 1958. After the first broad area and disciplinary studies, the missions put most of their energy into excavating formative-period sites in Peru, which disclosed significant new facts about Andean prehistory; their reports have been highly regarded by foreign colleagues.[16] Most contributions by Japanese scholars have been to archaeological studies of Latin America, followed by Andean ethnology, which has been stimulated by the establishment of the National Museum of Ethnology. The Andean mission also helped develop ethnohistorical studies. That effort was led by Yoshio (Shozo) Masuda, whose continuous publication and editing of documents on the Spanish encounter with indigenous civilizations has improved the level of Latin American studies in Japan and helped such studies achieve respectability in Japanese academic circles.

Latin American Revolutions and Japanese Intellectuals' Response

The Cuban Revolution and Latin American initiatives in North-South issues sparked new interest in Latin America within Japanese intellectual circles. For most of them, for the first time, Latin America became a subject worthy of debate; it had previously been considered "marginal" to world events. The Cuban Revolution attracted the attention of the

Japanese public in the 1960s. Most of the major works on the Revolution written by foreign authors, as well as those by Cuban revolutionaries, were translated into Japanese. Japanese journalists and scholars also wrote hundreds of articles and dozens of books; for the most part, these were sympathetic towards the Revolution. During the 1960s, Japanese studies of socialist countries tended toward idealization and lacked critical analysis. When Soviet-oriented institutionalization advanced in Cuba in the 1970s, enthusiasm for the Cuban Revolution among Japanese intellectuals diminished somewhat; however, they were never to become critical of Soviet-oriented Cuba, as were some West European intellectuals.

The Chilean Revolution and its fall attracted attention in the 1970s, because it was interpreted not only as a new type of national liberation movement in the Third World, but also as a precursor of the popular unity regime that might have a chance to arise in Western democracies, including Japan. More than a hundred articles and books were published in Japan about the Chilean Revolution in the 1970s, including some translations of foreign writers. The revolution produced polemics based on rather solid, theoretical frameworks, since the issue was considered to offer analogies to the Japanese political future and thus drew a wider range of people into debate than is usual in Latin American affairs.[17]

The two revolutions and subsequent political upheavals attracted Japanese Latin Americanists and intellectuals in general and contributed to writings on contemporary Latin American history and politics. As a result, Latin American historical studies in Japan have concentrated heavily on the contemporary period. Most of the abovementioned writings, however, have depended on theories and facts developed by foreign scholars, as Kunimoto critically observed.[18]

Original works in the field of economics have also been few. Although there have been many publications since the early 1960s, reflecting Latin American initiative in search of the new economic order and Japan's increasingly intense economic relations with Latin America, they have been mostly introductory and not too elaborate. Only a few Japanese economists, mainly those based at the Economic Commission for Latin America and other international organizations, have done any penetrating analyses and only on limited aspects of the Latin American economy or Japanese-Latin American economic relations.[19] A great deal of economic information has reached Japan through Japanese multinational corporations; the data, however, are not organized through a national network and usually are not available to research economists. They, on the other hand, are generally involved in writing short-term technical reports demanded by government and semigovernment institutions and not in long-range, elaborate studies of the Latin American

economy. It is ironic that Japan's postwar relations with Latin America have been predominantly economic, yet few of the studies done in this field have been sufficiently thorough.

Recent Developments and Perspectives

Latin American studies in Japan began to expand in the 1970s and mostly reflected efforts that were begun in the 1950s by those who were concerned about Latin America; however, other factors also helped, such as the Third World's increasing importance in the international arena and, very directly, the oil crisis that prompted Japan to diversify her external dependence and that exposed Japan's lack of attention to certain areas, including Latin America. Interdisciplinary area studies started in Japan before the Second World War as part of the colonialist scheme; real progress, however, began in the 1950s, influenced by the development of area studies in the U.S. Studies of industrialized nations, including the Soviet bloc and some parts of the developing world, with emphasis on Southeast and East Asia, were begun in the universities and at some newborn research institutes, such as the Institute of Developing Economies, established in 1959. Latin American studies were usually given low priority; one exception was Sophia University, whose Ibero-American Institute, under the able directorship of Gustavo Andrade, has gradually accumulated a fine library collection and has played an important role in bringing information about Latin America to the Japanese public.

As the concept of area studies itself became better accepted, some recognized the importance of Latin America and started to establish Latin American studies programs. Noted among them was Kenichi Nakaya, long-time head of American (U.S.) studies at the University of Tokyo. Latin American studies did indeed expand throughout the 1970s: the National Museum of Ethnology and the University of Tsukuba, both new national institutions, developed extensive Latin American programs involving a considerable number of researchers; quite a few other institutions, if they did not actually establish a new department, did add Latin American courses to their programs. Today, Latin Americanists in Japan find considerably better opportunities for teaching or research jobs, and greater access to research materials and fieldwork in Latin America than was the case twenty years ago. Broadly defined, Latin Americanists now number about two hundred; the Japan Association for Latin American Studies was founded in June 1980, and LASA President Carmelo Mesa-Lago was the keynote speaker at their first convention.

The number of publications concerning Latin America increased notably during the 1970s and early 1980s, although works of high aca-

demic standing are still few.[20] The weak points in Latin American studies in Japan are a scarcity of empirical studies based on primary sources or of original theoretical structure; a relative lack of serious and thorough polemics; and a concentration on major countries, especially Mexico, and the neglect of smaller countries.[21]

Despite this, however, there are signs that there will be more serious productions in Japan, especially because younger Latin Americanists, many of whom have received training at foreign academic institutions, are oriented towards specific works and primary sources rather than general and introductory ones. Japanese experiences in twentieth-century Latin America have certainly been unique; present-day relations with Latin America are also unique. Although now part of the industrialized world, the memory of past poverty and underdevelopment is still fresh, and the Japanese share with Latin Americans ambivalent feelings about the values represented by the Western "metropolis"; on the other hand, Japan's egalitarian social composition, stoic ethics, and positive attitude towards adopting modern European and American technology contrast strongly with Latin America.[22] Although Japanese Latin Americanists in the past have contributed comparatively little of their unique observations, increased institutional support and interest generally are motivating solid scholarship on Latin America.

NOTES

1. Hiroshi Mitani, "Latin American Studies in Japan," in Earl J. Pariseau, ed., *Handbook of Latin American Studies*, No. 27, Social Sciences (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1965), pp. 457–63. Gustavo Andrade, "Latin American Studies in Japan," *LARR* 7, no. 1 (Spring 1973):147–56.
2. See, for example, Ryoji Noda, *Sekai no daihōko nanbei* [South America: treasure house of the world] (Tokyo: Hakubunkan, 1912); Yoshizō Yamazaki, *Burajiru* [Brazil] (Tokyo: Ōokayma Shoten, 1925).
3. Mitani, "Latin American Studies"; Mitani, *Nihon no raten-amerika chōsa-kenkyu gaisetsu* [An introduction to Latin American studies in Japan] (Tokyo: Raten Amerika Kyōkai, 1965). The latter is a detailed annotated bibliography not translated into other languages.
4. Robert J. Smith et al., *The Japanese and Their Descendents in Brazil: An Annotated Bibliography* (São Paulo: Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros, 1967).
5. Takashi Maeyama, *Hisōzokusha no seishin-shi: Aru nikkei burajirujin no henreki* [The ethics of the disinherited: the life history of a Japanese immigrant in Brazil] (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobo, 1981). A well-written and well-documented biography of Kumaki Nakao, a self-educated immigrant, who started as a contract farm worker and house servant and later became a successful businessman. He patronized immigrants' intellectual activities, and his many writings include the first Portuguese grammar for Japanese immigrants. See also Zempati Ando, *Burajiru-shi* [A history of Brazil] (Tokyo: Kawadeshobo Shinsha, 1956). Hiroshi Saito, ed., *Atarashii burajiru* [New Brazil] (Tokyo: Saimaru Shuppankai, 1975).
6. For statistical tables, in both English and Japanese, see Comissão de Recenseamento da Colônia Japonesa, *The Japanese Immigrant in Brazil* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1964). For the revised narrative part in English, see Teiiti Suzuki, *The Japanese Immigrant in Brazil: Narrative Part* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1969).

7. Hiroshi Saito and Takashi Maeyama, *Assimilação e integração dos japoneses no Brasil* (Petropolis: Editora Vozes Ltda., 1973).
8. Tomoo Handa, *Imin no seikatsu no rekishi–Burajiru nikkeijin no ayunda michi* [A history of the life of an immigrant—the path of Japanese-Brazilians] (Tokyo: Ienohikarisha, 1970). About a third of the original Japanese version is translated into Portuguese; Tomoo Handa, *Memórias de um imigrante Japonês no Brasil*, tradução de Antonio Nojiri (São Paulo: T. A. Queiroz, Editor, 1980). Rokuro Kōyama, *Kōyama Rokuro Kaisoroku–Burajiru dai-ikkai imin no Kiroku* [Memoir of Rokuro Koyama—record of an immigrant of the first group to Brazil] (São Paulo: Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros, 1976).
9 Takashi Maeyama, "Iminbungaku Kara mainoritii bungaku e" [From immigrant literature to minority literature], in Colonia Bungakukai, eds., *Colonia shosetsu senshu* [Selected Colonia novels], vol. 1 (São Paulo: Colonia Bungakukai, 1975), pp. 306–20.
10. The achievements of the immigrant botanist Goro Hashimoto should be mentioned. He discovered quite a few new plants and founded a museum in Sete Auedas, Parana. Because he did most of his writing in Japanese, his influence on Brazilian and foreign naturalists was limited.
11. Carlos H. Oberacker, Jr., *A contribuição teuta à formação da nação brasileira*, 2d ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Presença, 1968), pp. 461–500.
12. Iyo Kunimoto, "Japan and Mexico, 1888–1917" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1975).
13. Kumaichi Horiguchi, *Sekai to sekaijin* [The world and world man] (Tokyo: Daiichi Shobo, 1936). W. Dirk Raat, "Mexico's Global Revolution: Recent Trends in Mexican Revolutionary Studies in Japan, the U.K., and Europe," paper presented at the VI Conference of Mexican and United States Historians, Chicago, Sept. 1981.
14. Raten Amerika Kyōkai, ed., *Mekishiko Ijushi* [History of Japanese migration to Mexico] (Tokyo: Raten Amerika Kyōkai, 1970); Julia de Muria and Fumio Nakagawa, "Entrevista con Alberto Asajiro Tanaka, diciembre 1973" (México, D.F.: INAH Archivo Sonoro, on tapes).
15. Seiichi Izumi and Hiroshi Saito, *Amazon: sono fūdo to nihonjin* [The Amazon: its natural features and the Japanese] (Tokyo: Kokon Shoin, 1954). Seiichi Izumi, ed., *Imin: Burajiru imin no jittai chōsa* [Immigrants: a report of a survey of the immigrants in-Brazil] (Tokyo: Konon Shoin, 1957). Fumio Tada, ed., *Amazon no shizen to shakai* [Nature and society in the Amazon] (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1957).
16. Seiichi Izumi and Kazuo Terada, eds., *Excavations at Kotosh, Peru, 1963 and 1966* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1972). Reports are being printed for the excavations of 1975 and 1979.
17. For the list of major publications in the Japanese language (including translation of foreign publications) concerning the Cuban Revolution, see Yuzo Kamo, ed., *Kyūba Kakumei* [Cuban revolution] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1973).For the list and an overview of publication concerning the Chilean Revolution, see Akira Ishii et al., "Nanajūnendai nihon ni okeru hatten-tojo-chiiki-kenkyu—Raten Amerika" [Japanese studies of developing areas in the 1970s—Latin America] *Ajia Keizai* 19, no. 1–2 (Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies, Feb. 1978), pp. 234–57. The part on Chile is by Hideho Yoshida.
18. Iyo Kunimoto, "Investigaciones y estudios históricos sobre América Latina en Japón: situación presente y problemas," *Iberoamericana* 11, no. 1 (January 1980):66–67 (Tokyo, Sophia University Ibero-American Institute).
19. Akio Hosono, "Industrialización y empleo: experiencias en Asia y estrategias para América Latina," *Revista de la CEPAL* 1, no. 2 (June 1976):119–60; ECLA and International Development Center of Japan, *Towards New Forms of Economic Cooperation between Latin America and Japan* (Santiago and Tokyo: ECLA and IDCJ, 1980).
20. For the list and an overview of publications in Japan about Latin America during the 1970s, see Akira Ishii et al., "Raten Amerika."
21. Since the mid-1970s, among all Latin American countries, Mexico is the one for which most publications have been produced in Japan. This is mostly a result of the extensive exchange of person programs between Mexico and Japan started in 1971

through which younger Japanese Latin Americanists came to have more contact with Mexico than other countries. Brazil, for which most publications had been produced until the mid-1970s, stands second today.

22. R. P. Dore, "Japan and Latin America Compared," in JohnJ. Johnson, ed, *Continuity and Change in Latin America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964), pp. 227–49.

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