

Pekka Korhonen, *The Origin of the Idea of the Pacific Free Trade Area: A Study of Japanese Rhetorical Categories and Discussion on International Integration 1945-1968*. Jyveskylä: University of Jyveskylä, 1992 (Jyveskylä Studies in Education, Psychology and Social Research 92). 220 pp.

The present book deals with the Japanese discussion on integration. The central concept are 'themes' and 'integration' around which the bulk of the study is organized. The 'themes' are the basic rhetorical categories over which more specific discussion of Japan's integration was conducted. To identify the themes that have been basic to the integration discussion, Korhonen mainly studies a selection of published texts by two economists, Kojima Kiyoshi and Okita Saburo, and one politician, Miki Takeo who as foreign minister adopted economic cooperation in the Pacific region as a main task for Japanese foreign policy. Korhonen's study of these texts makes him conclude that there have been five themes which have functioned as central undercurrents to the post-War discussion: The first is the image of Japan as a small country in terms of material attributes, psychological feelings of weakness, and a perceived lack of influence in the international system. The second is the 'economism', or "the distinct Japanese national style of concentrating on economic matters both in national and international affairs." The third and fourth are growth and development. Finally, the fifth is Japan's relationship with Asia.

In a subsequent section Korhonen focuses on the Japanese discussion of integration from the end of the War up to the end of the 1960's. He deals with the discussion on how Japan was seen to "re-enter the world" in the initial stages after the War, the budding regional cooperation with Asian countries, and the proposals for integration launched by Kojima. Korhonen shows how Japan's position as both an Asian and a Pacific country influenced the various proposals for integration, and that there is a discernible bifurcation into an Asian and a Pacific orientation.

In the concluding chapter Korhonen summarizes his findings by dividing the post-War discussion into a number of stages: the first began at the end of World War II and centered on the image of Japan as an impoverished, small, weak, and backward Asian

country. The second started around 1960 and focused on rapid economic growth and on Japan not as a backward country but as a nation in the vanguard of modernism. The third comprised the years 1962-65 and depicted Japan in the position of a leader of the Asian countries. The fourth was linked to the image of Japan as a Pacific country and to the acceptance of Kojima's proposal for a Pacific Free Trade Area as the basis for the public discussion.

In his analysis Korhonen uses qualitative textual analysis, the principal method of which he says is to read the texts: "Reading is *the* method, beyond which everything else is just auxiliary. By reading is meant emphatic reading, setting oneself into a direct relationship with the texts, and trying to understand as fully as possible what the writers have attempted to convey." The purpose of the study "has not been to test some theory against data, but to find the path a historical process of discussion has taken...The central emphasis of the study has...been the interpretation of a set of historical texts." Thus, there is no theory to be applied or hypotheses to be tested; the study boils down to a close reading of a number of texts, following the arguments and discussion of two decades. One slightly peculiar trait of this study, which probably is an outflow of Korhonen's view of reading as the central "method" for his study, is his way of quoting Japanese texts without translating them and sometimes not even indicating the contents of the passage.

According to Korhonen, the advantage of using a limited number of texts is that it "allowed for a more detailed reading, and the exclusivity of texts made it easier to analyze coherently the development of the arguments." It goes without saying that in a text analytical study centering on the reading of documents, the relevance of the analysis rests with the *representativity* of documents, and it seems to me that Korhonen has overlooked the full extent of the problem. For the result to be relevant, representativity of the chosen material is a *sine qua non*. He notes the importance of the selection of texts but does not discuss to what extent his selection of documents is representative for the Japanese discussion of integration, or for the integrationists whom he takes into account. Korhonen states that he "decided to stay strictly on the ground the texts themselves provided," and that he "worked from the central

texts by Kojima Kiyoshi in the middle of the 1960's both backwards and forwards in time , as well as sideways into the text of other economists, other disciplines and ways of thinking, looking for new texts to satisfy my curiosity."

To identify the texts to be included in his study, he used two bibliographies, *The Pacific Community Concept* (1982) published by the Japan Center for International Exchange, and Iwasaki Ikuo's *Japan and Southeast Asia* (1983) as well as surveying the Library of the Faculty of Law at the University of Tokyo. This survey made him decide to focus on the published texts from the 1950's and 1960's by Kojima, Okita and Miki. However, a check at random shows that of the around fifteen books I have on my shelves written by Okita Saburo three were published before 1968 and are relevant to the topic of Korhonen's study (*Asian Economies and Japan*, 1952; *Conditions for An Advanced Country: What is Required by Japan*, 1965; *The Japanese Economy in Asia*, 1966) but none of them is included in Korhonen's source materials.

According to Korhonen, the principal "defect" of the material underlying his study is that it "left so much unsaid, only hinting at things which were supposed to be known to contemporary readers of the texts, while they certainly were not known to me." The problem is, however, that what is left unsaid in the documents is not only things hinted at, but also facts and aspects not at all dealt with by the proponents of the integration idea. This has led to the curious result that a study purportedly dealing with 'the origin' of one important Japanese post-War integration idea leaves untold the very relevant (at least in the eyes of the present reviewer) pre-War and wartime forerunner of the idea, the notorious Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. This historical burden is one of the chief reasons why most integration ideas have met with limited success in Japan. If one of the "heros" of Korhonen's study is Okita Saburo, a leading economist and once Foreign Minister, Korhonen maybe should have thought about the possible impact of Okita's background on his later thinking: as some other prominent proponents of ideas of integration, not only was he working with the Japanese war-planning but was also born in Japanese-occupied territory. Similarly, if he includes texts by one politician (Miki Takeo) into his analysis, there are also other politicians that perhaps

should be included. One such case is, e.g., the prominent LDP politician Kajima Morinosuke who now is mentioned only in passing despite being a vocal proponent of so-called Pan-Pacific economic integration.

A problem of Korhonen's approach turns out to be that the five themes and the three rhetorical categories he has chosen as analytical instruments are not used so much in actual analysis but only pop up now and then. This indicates that they were not so relevant as he thought at the outset, hinting at too narrow an analytical framework and that perhaps other themes being equally important. Korhonen is aware of the inherent danger of restricting too much the scope of the analysis. To find out post-War social themes of discussion, he used two main general interest magazines, *Sekai* and *Chuo Koron*. From articles published in these journals "relevant articles by economist of the 1940's and 1950's" were culled. Here is no doubt one of the weak points of Korhonen's approach to his object of study: A study of these two magazines would show the virtual impossibility of excluding political factors from an analysis of international economic integration. Korhonen actually admits this, noting that post-War themes could be constructed differently from those that he uses in his analysis, such as democratization, rearmament, participation in the Cold War, pollution, corruption, world peace, etc. For any reader of *Sekai* and *Chuo Koron* this is certainly a plausible assertion.

This minor criticism notwithstanding, Korhonen's study is most welcome since not much research has been done on developments of the public discussion in Japan on integration prior to the mid-1960s, and since it gives a valuable overview of Japanese discussion on foreign economic relations, a topic the importance of which is constantly increasing with the growing Japanese role in Asia and in the world.

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