

it produced results. Even revolutionaries in the southern labor movement recognized that capitalism was here to stay after the early 1930s, and fought like hell to get even the smallest pragmatic advances for workers. Throughout the book, Goldfield seems to feel that it could have all been different “if only” workers and their union leaders had taken the right path. At times, he seems to think the working class could have been a revolutionary force with different leadership, something that seems unlikely. He also argues “against the preoccupation with laws, legal frameworks, and the agency of the state” (p. viii), and downplays the importance of government protections for the right to organize and for due process and fairness at the workplace. He places a refreshing emphasis on working-class agency as he takes us back into the efforts of mine workers, wood workers, steel workers, longshoremen, and others in the South, who often organized themselves. But he downplays, it seems to me, the tremendous power of repression and repressive labor laws in America. The tragedy of southern labor organizing, to me, goes back to the overwhelming power of the police, of government, vigilantes, courts, prisons brought to bear to crush working people and their unions. The US has the most violent anti-labor history in the Western world, with a plethora of daunting examples of how repressive and anti-union corporations and the state have forced southern workers into a box where they are damned if they do – getting fired, beaten, or, even worse, for unionizing – and damned if they don’t – not resisting and falling into the trap of pessimism and failure to exercise their agency to change the situation. And some of them becoming hopeless and hapless and even voting for Donald Trump.

Understanding and dealing with “the Southern key” remains central to which way the US will go. Will the US become, or is it already, a stagnant backwater of racial and economic inequality and injustice, contaminated by right-wing politics that teaches people to fight each other and shields corporate and political power from working-class agency? Or will grass-roots movements once again build up a head of steam and challenge racial capitalism at the workplace and the ballot box? Goldfield offers both hopeful and frightening signs of where things may go in the future, but how we get to a better place in the US remains unknown. For all those who care, Goldfield’s book is essential, as he takes us on a deeply rewarding journey toward understanding the past in order to shape the future.

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LINKHOEVA, TATIANA. *Revolution Goes East. Imperial Japan and Soviet Communism.* [Studies of the Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University.] Cornell University Press, Ithaca (NY) [etc.] 2020. x, 281 pp. \$27.95. Open Access.

With its ninety-eight-year history and approximately 280,000 members, the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) is Japan’s oldest political party and the largest communist party among developed capitalist countries. Research on Japanese left-wing social movements

both generally and in the fusions, feuds, and splits of the JCP in particular – work that is most often undertaken by movement-related scholars and their sympathizers – has reached such magnitude that historians within this field must now periodize the research history into several developmental phases.

Given the nature of *Revolution Goes East: Imperial Japan and Soviet Communism* as a political history of post-World-War-I Japan for non-Japanese readers, Tatiana Linkhoeva, for good reason, chooses not to dive into the historiographical quagmire by refusing to provide an antithetical hypothesis on the infiltration of socialist thought and practices in Japan. Therefore, the title of the book, *Revolution Goes East* and its cover, a regional map depicting red smoke swallowing Japan and North East Asia, are misleading. Readers keen on the Japanese socialist movement per se will find little to their taste in this book. For, as the author explains in the introduction, “this book explores Japan’s disparate responses to the Russian Revolution during the 1920s and demonstrates how the debate about Soviet Russia and its communist ideology became a debate over what constituted modern Japan” (p. 1). In order to include the various interest groups in modern Japan’s political spectrum in the picture, Linkhoeva divides her book into two parts: Part I focuses on Japan’s political and military policymakers, and Part II homes in on the leftist non-governmental groups.

The book’s first chapter, “Before 1917”, traces the long history of Japan’s “northern problem”, which dates back to the seventeenth century. Here, Linkhoeva argues that Russia’s push into North East Asia was a continuing geopolitical threat for Japan and had deeply affected Imperial Japan’s domestic and foreign policy (p. 17). She discovered that the Japanese held two contradictory views of Russia that had gradually taken shape over years of extended Russo-Japanese interaction. The first, vocally advocated by mid-level military officers and grass-roots nationalist groups, emphasized the expansionist nature of Russia and depicted the country as a direct threat. The second, espoused by politicians close to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the South Manchuria Railway Company, deemed the peaceful coexistence and cooperation with Russia vital for the stability and prosperity of Japan and East Asia (p. 16). In addition to highlighting the extremely tense Russo-Japanese geopolitical and diplomatic relations at the *fin de siècle*, this chapter gives equal attention to the extraordinary abundance of Russian works of literature and politics translated and circulating in Japan in the pre-1917 era, which, according to Linkhoeva, offered Japan “alternative progressive visions to Western modernity” (p. 30). However, the author certainly overstates the case when placing the causal link between the Japanese affinity for Russian cultural production in pre-1917 years and the active reception of socialist/communist ideology in Japan in the 1920s.

Focusing on Japan’s response to the initial Bolshevik government, Chapter Two carefully examines the policymaking mechanisms of the Japanese side during the Siberian Intervention. Through an analysis of reports, memorandums, correspondence, and published works of Japanese political elites and experts on Russia, Linkhoeva concludes that, in the immediate aftermath of the 1917 events, there was “little awareness on the Japanese side that the Bolshevik takeover was the harbinger of a radically new ideology” (p. 47). Therefore, the plea by the army, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Japanese trade mission in Vladivostok for an intervention was not for ideological reasons, but rather due to economic concerns (p. 52). The author’s familiarity with the Russian cultural context enables her to capture the great emotional impact the Japanese intervention had on Russian people. She explains that the deployment of Japanese troops and their brutality in the Russian Far East, which culminated in the alleged burning alive of the communist leader Sergei Lazo in a locomotive firebox, sparked unprecedented anti-Japanese sentiment

that was skilfully manipulated by the Bolsheviks, helping them to transform themselves into a militarized bureaucratic regime (p. 48).

Chapters Three and Four address Japan's engagement with "two Russias", the term the author uses to describe the Soviet's "dual and contradictory diplomacy" conducted by both the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Comintern (p. 68). Among post-World-War-I Japan's various non-governmental groups, the pan-Asianist circles, argues Linkhoeva, were most profoundly attracted to Soviet Russia because "it presented itself as a radical break from Western capitalism and imperialism" (p. 69). Due to their deep involvement in the oil and fishery businesses, and further in Japan's foreign policy, the pan-Asianist circles, ideologically represented by Mitsukawa Kametarō and real-politically backed by Gotō Shimpei, lobbied for a rapid rapprochement with Soviet Russia. However, simultaneous with negotiations for the normalization of Russo-Japanese relations, the Comintern's intervention in both Korean and Chinese affairs provoked widespread anti-communist fervour in Japan. Linkhoeva correctly points out that the anti-communism espoused by Japanese liberals, conservatives, and a new generation of nationalists (who proliferated after the 1910s) was indifferent to the Marxist anti-capitalist agenda; rather, they were anxious about whether this "dangerous foreign thought" would damage the unity and coherence of Japan's domestic community (p. 120).

Part II, titled "The Japanese Left and the Russian Revolution", examines Japan's various streams of leftist thought, together with their history and deadlocks. The left-wing political spectrum in post-1917 Japan resembled that of the European communist parties' "founding moment" (1918–1923) described in Marcel van der Linden's *Transnational Labour History: Explorations*.¹ The independent-radical socialists and their national "initial solution" to social problems played a vital role in the overall left-wing social movement of the time. Japanese anarchism, with its well-established network in pre-1917 East Asia, was once considered the most promising faction to undertake a social revolution to replace capitalism and imperialism. In October 1921, the meeting of Ōsugi Sakae, the renowned anarchist, and Grigori Voitinsky in Shanghai signalled the beginning of a short-lived cooperation between Japanese anarchists and the Comintern-controlled socialist movement. The anarchists, however, soon withdrew their support after the fierce "ana-boru debate" (1921–1924), where they insisted on direct action and militant takeover. The national socialists, gathering around Takabatake Motoyuki, found in the Soviet-type single-party regime and planned economy an ideal state form. In rejecting international Marxism, they went their own way after the JCP was established in 1922. Those radical socialists who continued to collaborate with the Comintern constantly found themselves confronting Moscow's ignorance of Japanese affairs and facing the contradictory lines designed for Japan by different Comintern "nerve centres". Linkhoeva then reconstructs in great detail the personal clashes, ideological contradictions, and organizational splits among Japanese communists stimulated by their contradictory stances toward orthodox Marxism and the missions the Comintern assigned to Japan. She offers a convincing argument for the thesis advanced in recent Japanese scholarship that the JCP was by no means an obedient subsidiary of the Comintern, but rather acted to a large extent on its own (p. 160).² The vital strife between the Comintern and

1. Marcel van der Linden, *Transnational Labour History: Explorations* (London, 2003).

2. Kurokawa Iori 黒川伊織, *Sensō, kakumei no higashi ajia to nihon no komyunisuto (1920–1970) 戦争・革命の東アジアと日本のコミュニスト (1920–1970)* [East Asia in War and Revolution and Japanese Communists (1920–1970)] (Tokyo, 2020).

the JCP lay, according to Linkhoeva's observation, in their differing positions on Japan's role in the international proletarian revolution. After the Shanghai massacre in April 1927, the JCP's stubborn domestic line ultimately clashed with the 1927 Comintern Thesis on Japan, in which Bukharin asked for the re-establishment and strengthening of the JCP to fight against bourgeois democrats for the sake of the Chinese revolution. At this point, Yamakawa Hitoshi, Arahata Kanson, and some other early communists left the JCP. Their rejection of the Comintern's assessment of Japan's developmental stage and revolutionary goal marked the end of an era in which conflicts between the JCP and the Comintern came chiefly from their different interpretations of theories of revolution.

Linkhoeva insightfully highlights the determining role of the Chinese revolution in the twists and turns of the Comintern's engagement with the Japanese left. However, she is oblivious to her reader's need for a basic factual introduction to the Comintern's manoeuvres in the First United Front between the nationalists and communists in China. In addition, in the same context, the famous debate over the Asiatic mode of production (1927–1931) sparked by the failure of the Chinese revolution surprisingly finds no mention in the book. In 1931, this debate was brought to an end by a highly political solution, which rejected any geohistorical peculiarities of the Orient and declared the unilinear developmental path to be authoritative doctrine. The restated official world historical view, later articulated in Stalin's *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* (1938), had not only determined the Japanese left's historiography on China, it even cast a long shadow over Japan's historical writing in general in the postwar era. In spite of these flaws, Linkhoeva's book is a welcome contribution that goes beyond the traditional genre of the history of social movements. By providing us with a vivid and multi-faceted picture of Japan's highly diverse response to the 1917 revolution, this volume successfully brings to light the entanglements and interactions of various political factions in the political chorus of post-World-War-I Japan.

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ALIGMAGHAM, POUYA. *Contesting the Iranian Revolution. The Green Uprisings*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 2020. xvii, 315 pp. Ill. £74.99. (Paper: £24.99; E-book: \$26.00.)

Pouya Alimagham's monograph is a welcome addition to the growing number of books and articles dedicated to the so-called Green Movement of Iran. The volume focuses on the slogans and mobilization strategies utilized by the protesters in 2009, discussing how they have built on the existing local activist knowledge dating back to the revolutionary movement of 1978–1979, yet reappropriating and subverting it – contesting the revolution, as the title reads.

Examining an impressive set of online material and documents, the author demonstrates how relevant the local history of activism is to subsequent opposition movements, even