

Japan Academy Prize to:

Shiro YAMAZAKI
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for *The Materials Mobilization Plan during the Pacific War*

***Outline of the work:***

Most studies of Japan's war economy during the Japan–China War and the Pacific War, as instituted by such respected scholars as Profs. Yoshio Ando, Takafusa Nakamura, and Akira Hara, have not contributed greatly to positive analysis. This is because few official economic statistics were published after 1939, and the bulk of the secret historical materials generated by the administration of the war economy were destroyed or lost at the end of war. However, Profs. Akira Hara and Shiro Yamazaki found and edited 59 volumes of bureaucratic materials concerned with the controlled economy, published by Contemporary Historical Materials Publishing Co. (Gendaishiryō-shuppan (Tokyo)) from 1996 to 2004. This was an epoch-making publication, which constituted the basic condition for the positive analysis of the war economy of Japan.

Prof. Yamazaki also published *The Study on the System of General Mobilization of the Wartime Economy* in 2011, *The Materials Mobilization Plan and the Formation of a Plot of Co-Prosperity Sphere* in 2012, and *The Materials Mobilization Plan during the Pacific War* (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Hyoronsha Ltd.) in 2016. In this third work, Prof. Yamazaki investigated the details of the plan for the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere in its expression in the entire Japanese war economy through the analysis of the mobilization plan for the production, transportation, and allotment of fundamental materials. The materials mobilization plan consisted of yearly plans for supply and allotment. As many as 100–300 kinds of important materials were estimated in terms of their possible supply, production demands or consumption groups, and responsible offices, whether military or governmental. Then, the materials were allotted to war-related industries, expansion plans for productive power, government services in transportation and other areas, manufacturing and materials for export, and production of consumer goods. Following this plan, demand for machinery and equipment was allocated as amounts of raw materials, such as steel, copper, and cement.

Studies published by Prof. Yamazaki in 2011 and 2012 indicated that the Japanese government and military authorities, who noted that the First World War was fought largely by mechanized units focusing on tanks and airplanes, began to implement their plan for expanding productive power to develop heavy industry and chemical production in 1937. Prof. Yamazaki drew attention to the expansion of civil industry under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, which became subordinated to the war industry under the military authorities after including the plan for expanding productive power in the materials mobilization plan created for the Japan–China War, which began in 1937. He also showed that the decisive factor in the wartime materials mobilization plan was its marine transit power, which included not only shipments from homeland but also supplies of iron ore, coal for coke, salt, cereals from the colonies and occupied areas to the center, and imported oil and bauxite from third powers.

In Chapters 1 to 4, the 1942, 1943, 1944, and 1945 materials mobilization plans are explored in reference to the settlement of each year's plan and the quarterly reconciliation, which mainly exhibited revisions downward due to the tide of war, the plan of marine transit, and the planning and results for supply and demand. No total accounting for the supply and demand for oil is clear in the historical data of the materials mobilization plan, because the Planning Bureau was excluded from the ability to make allotments of the entirety of oil resources, only administering the oil that remained after the military authorities took their share from the oil-producing areas of South Asia.

How was the materials mobilization plan created? Disputing that the Planning Bureau refused sufficient profit to factories, which decreased production and that production then recovered from stagnation after 1943 thanks to the actions of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, which guaranteed sufficient profit to factories, Prof. Yamazaki concluded that the Planning Bureau had allocations for marketability in the materials mobilization plans from the first. He maintained that the most important factor that prevented the plans from being attained was rather the loss of civil marine transport power resulting from the unexpected turning of the tide of war. Transportation by the Korean Railway did not, on this view, contribute enough to cover the loss of marine transit power.

Against the contention that the downward amendments of the plan resulting from the development of outside factors implied that the plan was irrational, Prof. Yamazaki's assessment was that the frequency of the emergency accommodations of the plan shows that the plans had a political function, naturally resulting from the fact that the plan's system of execution in wartime was unstable and required favorable war conditions.

What was the fundamental reason for the downfall of the materials mobilization plan? The allotment of materials to the military and civil sectors was balanced so that a minimum standard of living could be maintained. The army and navy were discontented by this allotment and attempted to break free of the plan, bringing about a reduction in the scale of economy. To respond to this reduction, central allotments were limited to five key industries: iron, light metals, coal, ship production, and airplane production, particularly the last two. Naturally, the general standard of living suffered. Beginning in August 1943, the supreme commanders of the army and the navy began to act to the detriment of the economic plans by interfering in how they were drafted at the Planning Bureau or the Ministry of Military Supplies. The Koiso Cabinet, which succeeded the Tojo Cabinet at the time of collapse of the Absolute National Defense Sphere caused by the fall of the Saipan Island in July 1944, decided to continue the Pacific War, ignoring the warnings of the Ministry of Military Supplies that the economy of Japan might go to rack and ruin. The plan for the final phase of the war in Japan proper, which was drafted in June 1945 by the Suzuki Cabinet, was absolutely irrational because it depended on "the fighting spirit of the people," not concrete materials. Consequently, the core members of the Cabinet, who knew that widespread starvation was imminent due to the cessation of the supply of salt and food, made up their minds to accept defeat in the war.

As noted, Prof. Yamazaki contributed a great deal toward the study of Japan's war economy. However, his analysis did not include a complete assessment of the materials mobilization plan, concentrating instead on policy. The details of the actual conditions, such as the mobilization of workers and changes in business systems, require further study. Although it was claimed that the controlled economy in Japan followed the Nazi model, some scholars have indicated that it was instead closer to Soviet central control of the economy. This comparison may be accurate. However, whatever follow-up is necessary, there is no doubt that Prof. Yamazaki's work is an epoch-making academic contribution, which elevated study of the war economy of

Japan and is worthy of the Japan Academy Prize.