

Survey Results of the Japanese Communist Party Hiroshima Local Committee Newspapers During the Early 1950's Division Based on Materials Held at the Hiroshima Prefectural Archives

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Abstract: The *Katsuhara Sumio Materials* (且原純夫資料) in the *Fujiwara Hironobu Collection* (藤原浩修氏収集資料), housed at the Hiroshima Prefectural Archives, contains all copies of the Japanese Communist Party's newspapers published since the early 1950s division. These materials are unsorted at present; hence, their specific contents are unknown. The author examined these materials in May 2024, confirming their titles, issue numbers, and contents. Consequently, this paper examines the journals included in the *Katsuhara Sumio Materials* and assesses their research potential.

Keywords: *Japanese Communist Party, Early 1950's Division, Hiroshima, Archives*

1. Introduction

This paper presents the findings of a survey conducted in 2024 on materials housed at the Hiroshima Prefectural Archives. The author analyzed documents, including published articles from the journals of the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) in Hiroshima during the early 1950s, the “Early 1950's Division” (1950–1951). The term “Early 1950's Division” refers to the internal factional disputes initiated within the JCP in January 1950. The party was divided into mainstream and international factions, owing to conflicting opinions regarding the policies of the international communist movement at the time. This division within the JCP—a major force in Japan's peace and labor movements—had a critically negative impact on subsequent social movements in Japan.

One of the author's key research objectives is to trace the development of the 1950's peace movement through primary sources. Previous studies by the author have examined “Postwar JCP-related Materials” preserved at the Ohara Institute for Social Research at Hosei University and Kwansei Gakuin University Museum. The findings were published as material research reports and academic articles (Nagashima 2023a; 2023b; 2023c). Herein, the author identified journals published in 1951 by the international faction of the JCP in the Kansai and Chugoku regions. However, almost no journals published in 1950 were available.

Subsequently, the *Fujiwara Hironobu Collection* at the Hiroshima Prefectural Archives has approximately 50 documents known as the *Katsuhara Sumio Materials*. These materials were mostly journals published in Hiroshima in the early 1950s.¹ The documents are currently

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1 <https://www.pref.hiroshima.lg.jp/site/monjokan/sub6-01.html> (Confirmed on December 20, 2024.)

unorganized and their contents are not listed on the archive's website; nonetheless, they are openly accessible. This paper examines the contents and research potential of these materials based on a survey conducted in 2024. To better contextualize the descriptions within these documents, the author also referenced articles from *Akahata* (Red Flag)—the official newspaper of the JCP.

2. Journal of the Chugoku Regional Committee of the JCP During the Early 1950's Division and the *Katsuhara Sumio Materials*

Existing literature on the JCP activities in Hiroshima and Chugoku during the “Early 1950's Division” includes testimonies on general party activities (Watanabe et al. 1995). In addition, the memoirs of Matsue Kiyoshi, a key activist, have been published (Matsue 1984; 1995). During the peak of the “Early 1950's Division” (1950–1951), several journals were issued by JCP-affiliated organizations, including *Heiwa Sensen* (平和戦線; 10 issues; April 24–June 30, 1950), *Heiwa no Tōshi* (平和の闘士; 14 issues; July 7–August 30, 1950), *Taishū Shimbun* (大衆新聞; 5 or 6 issues; September 1950), and *Minzoku no Hoshi* (民族の星; 63 issues; October 10, 1950–September 5, 1951) (Imahori 1960; Izumiya 1995). Moreover, the official party newspaper, *Kakumei Senshi* (革命戦士), was published.

To date, the existence of the following issues has been confirmed: *Heiwa no Tōshi* (issues 6, 8, and 12), *Kakumei Senshi* (issues 17, 18, 20–24, and 32), and *Minzoku no Hoshi* (issues 1, 15, 17–35, 39–48, 51, 52, 54–59, and 61–64).² Meanwhile, among the *Katsuhara Sumio Materials*, the following bulletins, unidentified in previous investigations, were confirmed: *Heiwa Sensen* (issues 1, 2, and 4–9), *Heiwa no Tōshi* (issues 2, 4–7, 9–11, and 13–15), *Kakumei Senshi* (issue 27), and *Minzoku no Hoshi* (issue 16). Although *Heiwa no Tōshi* was believed to have ended with issue 14, the author has verified the existence of issue 15.

Furthermore, the presence of *Chiku Tōhō* (地区党報; issues 1–3), *Hiroshima Mimpō* (広島民報; issue 19), and *Chūgoku Tōhō* (中国党報; issues 14, 15, 2, and 3), along with *Kaihō* (解放; issue 8), has been confirmed. Issue numbers for *Chūgoku Tōhō* were reset: issues 14 and 15 were published before issues 2 and 3. All issues related to *Chūgoku Tōhō* were published by the Chugoku Regional Committee of the JCP.

All items in the *Katsuhara Sumio Materials* are photocopies of the original documents, and some journals are partially illegible. From the comprehensible sections, the author identified various details related to social movements conducted by the JCP. One such event was the Peace Conference held on August 6, 1950, during the U.S. Occupation, commemorating the atomic bombing. During that time, the Korean War had been initiated, and the JCP was effectively outlawed. Many police officers were deployed in Hiroshima on that day, and the conference was banned. Hiroshima was effectively under martial law. Because demonstrations and conferences were prohibited, the activists staged a symbolic act by dropping leaflets from the rooftop of a department store in central Hiroshima (Kurokawa 2013).

The mainstream and international factions clashed over the holding of the Peace Conference on August 6, 1950. The international faction wanted to conduct the event in central Hiroshima, whereas the mainstream faction sought to organize it elsewhere with personnel drawn from other regions (Imahori 1960). The *Katsuhara Sumio Materials* include issue 8 of *Heiwa no Tōshi* (August 9, 1950), which indicates that the conference was held under martial law, with thousands of police officers mobilized. The issue also contains a peace declaration and related accounts from the event.

2 *Minzoku no Hoshi* (issue 64) was discovered during a previous survey by the author.

In addition, *Kakumei Senshi* (issue 27; December 3, 1950) highlighted the trends and shortcomings of the youth movement following the Peace Conference of August 6, 1950. Additionally, these descriptions are relevant for understanding the trajectory of the mainstream faction's local organizations. The mainstream faction of the JCP established the Young Fatherland Front (青年祖国戦線) in April 1950, mobilizing youths, particularly students and workers, for social movements. *Kakumei Senshi* (issue 27) refers to a part of these youth movements. The *Katsuhara Sumio Materials* also contain records of the Young Fatherland Front's activities in the Chugoku region. For example, *Chūgoku Tōhō* (issue 15; May 1, 1950) features an article discussing the importance and challenges faced by the organization. This article refers to the group's involvement in the peace movement in Osaka, Matsue, and at Yamaguchi and Kyushu University and calls for further expansion of the movement.

Heiwa Sensen (issues 1 and 9; April 24 and June 27, 1950) documented efforts to establish the Young Fatherland Front in Tottori and Yamaguchi prefectures, respectively. Furthermore, issue 8 (August 9, 1950) describes a fierce confrontation between the international faction (right-wing opportunistic faction) and the mainstream faction within the Young Fatherland Front over the Peace Conference on August 6, 1950.

Considering the activities of the JCP-affiliated youth during that time, research has been conducted on the direct actions of the *Zengakuren* (全学連), the international faction's student organization (Hasegawa 2019). Scholars have also examined the JCP's position under the U.S. Occupation (Dower 2000), Hiroshima's cultural movement during the Korean War (Kawaguchi 2022), and the postwar activities of Marxist intellectuals (Gayle 2003). However, to our knowledge, no comprehensive study has been conducted on the Young Fatherland Front.

Information about the central organization of the Young Fatherland Front can be found in *Akahata*. For example, issue 763 (August 11, 1949) announced a planned rally in Hibiya Park and introduced the slogan of the movement. Later, issue 1002 (April 11, 1950) included an appeal from the JCP Central Committee's Secretariat directed at all youths in Japan, before the official establishment of the Young Fatherland Front. Issue 1011 (April 20, 1950) reported that the Committee of Anti-Fascist Youth of the Soviet Union had sent greetings to mark the establishment of the Young Fatherland Front.

The Young Fatherland Front was created as part of a broad solidarity movement with socialist countries. However, *Akahata* provides limited details about the actual conditions of local organizations. After the publication of *Akahata* was suspended by the General Headquarters in June 1950, further information on the Young Fatherland Front's activities could only be gleaned from other sources. The writings in *Chūgoku Tōhō* and *Heiwa Sensen* remain valuable in this regard, as they documented local youth-led peace movements affiliated with the JCP.

3. Future Research and Studies

While examining the *Katsuhara Sumio Materials*, several issues of *Heiwa Sensen* and *Heiwa no Tōshi* were confirmed. These survey findings contribute to research on the development of the JCP-affiliated peace movement in Hiroshima in 1950.

A note within the *Kakumei Senshi Materials* mentioned issues 16 and 19 of *Kakumei Senshi*; however, these issues could not be verified. Another memo referenced the *Izumiya Hajime Materials* (泉谷甫資料), which lists items not found in the *Katsuhara Sumio Materials* — namely, *Heiwa no Tōshi* (issues 1, 3, and 4) and *Minzoku no Hoshi* (issues 1–14 and 36–38). However, the existence of these specific journals remains unconfirmed.

The *Fujiwara Hironobu Collection* comprises the *Katsuhara Sumio Collection*, *Fukagawa*

Munetoshi Collection (深川宗俊資料), and *Komiyama Tomie Collection* (小見山富恵資料). To date, the author has surveyed the *Katsuhara Sumio* and *Fukagawa Munetoshi Collections*. The *Komiyama Tomie Materials* are related to Buraku issues and require screening for access; thus, the author could not review the entire collection. Although unlikely, some materials in this survey may not be readily identifiable.

Concerning *Izumiya Hajime Materials*, the author could not locate *Heiwa Sensen* (issues 3 and 10) and *Kakumei Senshi* (issues 1–15, 25, 26, 28–31, and 49). The author intends to continue investigating these issues.

In conclusion, this paper has provided new insights into the activities of the young generation (mainstream faction) of the JCP from Hiroshima, as reflected in the archival materials and in the descriptions found in its official newspaper, *Akahata*. Until now, the author's research has focused primarily on the international faction; however, in the future, the author will seek to collect and analyze materials related to the mainstream faction as well.

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