

Reconstruction China: Japanese  
technicians and industrialization in the early  
years of the People's Republic of China  
AMY KING

Yoshida Honoka



1949-1953

Reconstructing China  
by Chinese Communist  
Party

The existence of the expertise of Japanese technicians are the technological and industrial basis of national power of China

THE SITUATION OF CHINA (1949-1953)

- 8year War of Resistance against Japan
- the plundering of Northeast China's industrial basis by the Russian army
- Civil war between the Communists and the Nationalists

The beginning of a long-term reconceptualization of national power, and the role of technology and industrial capability

# The existence of the expertise of Japanese technicians are the technological and industrial basis of national power of China

- 1) rehabilitated Japan by US
- 2) Korean War in 1950



## Rapid technological and industrial development was a necessary first step for the economic development and strengthening China

Before China could be turned into 'a great socialist state', the Chinese Communist Party must first 'transform China from an agrarian country into an industrial state'.

(Mao Zedong, Mar 1949)

# The existence of the expertise of Japanese technicians are the technological and industrial basis of national power of China

Soviet Union is the ideal model

BUT - China was too industrially backward to begin Soviet model

- China's extreme lack of indigenous technology and industrial skills
- Not enough assistance from Soviet Union until 1951



- the foundations of Japanese factories
- Importing Japanese industrial goods and materials←embargo
- 2400 Japanese technicians

## The dilemma to draw on the Japanese expertise

- 1) Chinese had negative images against Japanese by propaganda
- 2) During the Korean War, Japanese were regarded as enemies  
→ CCP tried to change the image of Japanese as common victims by American occupation
- 3) the exist of Soviet Union in China from 1952  
→ Japanese didn't welcome them and their inferior technology  
+ Soviets thought Japanese might leak their industrial secrets to Japan or US

# dependence on Soviet Union and Socialist bloc countries from 1950s



the rate of the GDP, PPP Source: Bert Hofman (2019), World Bank

<https://www.visualcapitalist.com/china-economic-growth-history/>