



Eisaku Kihira. *Pakkusu Amerikana heno Michi: Taido Suru Sengo Sekai Chitsujo (The Path to the Pax Americana: The Rise of the Postwar World Order)*. Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppan Sha, 1996. xxiii + 302 pp.

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The Rise of the United States in the International Community

The end of World War II symbolized a defeat of totalitarianism over democracy and brought about a new order to be set up in the world. The United States, Britain, China, and the Soviet Union moved to take charge of the establishment. Many studies have covered what the Allied nations worked on and their results, and still this field calls for much attention. Professor Eisaku Kihira, a specialist of Modern U.S. History at Kyoto University, explores the twentieth century world with a special emphasis on America's international involvement. The title indicates the golden age of the United States, but this work is not merely a reference to the American achievement of leadership in the world. Rather, it goes further and shows how the Pax Americana has emerged as the essence in world structure, interacting with the rise of regional powers throughout the capitalistic sphere.

Kihira opens his discussion introducing the post-war world order that the Americans began to describe in the middle of World War II. While involved with the second international conflicts, in 1943, the United States began to design the establishment of universal principle in the post-war world. Clinging to the Wilsonian spirit was too idealistic. The world had to own a force to restrain injustice. Under the supervision of collective organization, popular sovereignty and self-determination should become the foundation of the principle. Consequently, the United States had the responsibility to control the western imperialism and to restrain Russian influence. It also was to create a coalition regime by the four major powers to maintain world peace. As planned, the United Nations emerged immediately after the end of war, holding most

of the ideas that U.S. officials had discussed. The United States became master of the international affairs and secured a way to get involved with issues of other nations.

However, the invention of atomic bombs changed the situation. The broad security in the international community became unrealistic. The U.S. Department of Army became ambitious about preserving nuclear knowledge and the supremacy of its military power in the post-war strategic plot. In addition, with the apparent disagreements between the United States and the Soviet Union, the former introduced a series of policies to contain Communism by 1947. At the same time, the firm attitudes to Communism tightened the relations with Western Europe. Kihira argues that subsequently, this worked to tangle the capitalistic economy in the international community. The Marshall Plan was the ultimate goal that the United States had been designing as its post-war international plot since the beginning of World War II. The United States had framed the world plot as to insure its economy and security.

The last half of the twentieth century became the revival of traditional western powers under the United States' initiative. The revived powers had influence over politics, economy, and culture in the international context. With the rise of new block, Canada and Japan, the United States manoeuvred to create the world order along with their interests. Therefore, Kihira argues, in spite of the dynamic progress of industries and technologies, the present international relations remain the same as the previous centuries. Immediately after World War II, Asian, African, and Latin American nations faced

frequent wars, and these non-European nations missed the opportunity to reconstruct their economy or stabilize their politics. Sequentially, despite their given independence or self-determination, the situation invited the direct or indirect subjugation to the previous powers. By 1960, Western Europe had recovered from the war and became world powers again while third world nations remained unchanged with their conventional image.

Kihira has spent five years executing this research. Shedding light on the major incidents in world politics, he furthers the discussion how developed countries completed the present regime in the world along with the American post-war plot. The accounts of talks and decisions regarding atomic bombs that he brings up are just breathtaking. This book invites readers to join one of

the most fascinating chapters of history: transformation of traditional western power to the capitalistic domination of politics and economy in the world order. Maps, figures, graphs, and pictures are appropriately provided and help readers to grasp the facts easily. Kihira uses an abundant amount of primary sources and various secondary sources, such as magazines, newspapers, memoirs, diaries, and others. They certainly contribute credibility and reliability to this study. This is an outstanding scholarly work with a unique approach to place the late twentieth century in the history of human activities.

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