

Recent Studies in Japan on the History of Chemistry

Masanori ÔNUMA* and Tatsumasa DÔKE**

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Since 1965, the *Kagakushi Kenkyû* (*Journal of History of Science Japan*) has been publishing in serial form an annual bibliography of the history, of sciences and techniques in Japan. Mainly based on that bibliography, the present paper gives a general review of studies in Japan on the history of chemistry and also of the views of scholars of the history of chemistry in this country during the period 1965 to 1972.¹

Japan's economic growth has been rapid since 1955 and has brought on various social problems in contrast to the scientific and technological progress. One such problem is Japan's increased military capability and another is environmental pollution so serious as to be unequalled in any other part of the world. In the face of Japan's rapid economic growth, the problem remains of what position should be allocated to sciences and techniques in the Japanese people's life. This has turned the attention of many Japanese historians of sciences and techniques to the question of how Japan, since the Meiji restoration, has imported and built up modern civilization from Europe.

The publication of "Nippon Kagaku Gijutsushi Taikei" (History of Science and Technology in Japan) in 26 volumes compiled by the Japanese Society of the History of Sciences ("Nippon Kagakushi Gakkai") was started in 1964 in commemoration of the centenary of the Meiji restoration (1868) and completed in 1972. The importation into and fostering in Japan of modern chemistry are analyzed in Volume 13.² One of the editors, Minoru Tanaka, in the introduction to the above publication divides the history of chemistry in Japan into the following five stages: I, the sprouting stage (Tenpô 8 to Keiô 3 or 1837-1867); II, the transitional stage (Meiji 1 to 9 or 1868-1876); III, the build-up stage (Meiji 10 to 33 or 1877-1900); IV, the independent development stage (Meiji 34 to Shôwa 5 or 1901-1930); and V, the current stage (from Shôwa 6 onward

* Tôkyô College of Economics.

** Tôkyô Institute of Technology.

¹ Annual Bibliography 1965-1972 (J): *Kagakushi Kenkyû* (*Journal of History of Science, Japan*), No. 78 (1966); No. 82 (1967); No. 86 (1968); No. 90 (1969); No. 94 (1970); No. 98 (1971); No. 103 (1972). (in Japanese=J).

² 'Butsuri Kagaku' (Physical Science): *Nippon Kagaku-gizyutusi Taikei* (History of Science and Technology in Japan), No. 13, Daiichi Hôki (Tokyô, 1970) (J).